

**The Submission Abstract to the IFSW European Conference 2017 Marginalization and  
Social Work in a Changing Society**

**SEX-OFFENDERS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE SOCIAL WORK**

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Social Work is a relatively new academic discipline and area of science in Latvia. Criminal Justice Social Work has been developed in close cooperation with an international community of scientists. The social and economic crisis has harshly worsened the possibilities and opportunities for sex-offenders after release from their place of imprisonment. The situation in Latvia shows that social inclusion policy measures aimed at improving the situation, as well as the ones applied during the crisis, mostly target vulnerable groups, such as persons with disability, elderly, large families, etc. The targeted policy measures are aimed at the groups who are seen as “decent” for social support from the perceptions of society. The aim of the study is to find out how social work approaches are applied in work with sex-offenders.

The society’s attitude towards sex-offenders is attentive and even stigmatizing. The stigmatization could facilitate social deprivation of sex-offenders and prevent resocialization. The resocialization process of sex-offenders included methods aimed at individuals based on a cognitive-behavioural approach, but group and community work elements also could be applied. The field work done during the EC project Circles of Support and Accountability (COSA) shows possibilities and barriers for the resocialization of sex-offenders. The role of social workers in resocialization process is partly undervalued. Only close cooperation between social workers in the State Probation Service and Social Services of Local Governments could provide success in work with sex-offenders. Document analysis and focus-groups are methods used for data collection.

Key words: sex-offenders, Probation Service, resocialization, Criminal Justice Social Work