RESiZE: Vocational core profiles

A common European reference framework for professional roles in correctional work, adaptable to different national and organisational contexts.

PROFILE 1/11

CUSTODIAL OFFICER / SECURITY PRACTITIONER

A custodial officer / security practitioner keeps detention setting safe, stable and orderly, through supervision, security procedures and day-to-day contact with the people living there.

It's often the role with the most daily contact, which makes it central to spotting risks early, and to building the trust that rehabilitation depends on.

The role of custodial staff is evolving. Safety depends not only on procedures and supervision, but also on professional judgement, communication and constructive relationships, what we refer to as relational security.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN IN PRACTICE?

1.

PROFILE 1 OF 11

RESiZE · European Vocational Core Profiles

RESPONSIBLE FOR

- Conducting individual needs, strengths and risk assessments;
- developing, coordinating and reviewing care, support and sentence plans;
- ensuring continuity across support, intervention and service processes;
- coordinating multidisciplinary communication and information-sharing;
- Monitoring progress, emerging needs and wellbeing;
- Facilitating referrals and access to relevant services and programmes;
- Upholding ethical, legal and human rights-based principles in case-related practice.

ECOSYSTEM POSITIONING

Often the main point of daily contact for residents, connecting day-to-day safety and supervision to the wider processes of rehabilitation.

Works closely with: case workers, healthcare professionals, education workers, facility leaders and probation services.

Across all settings, safety, security and order remain the core responsibility.

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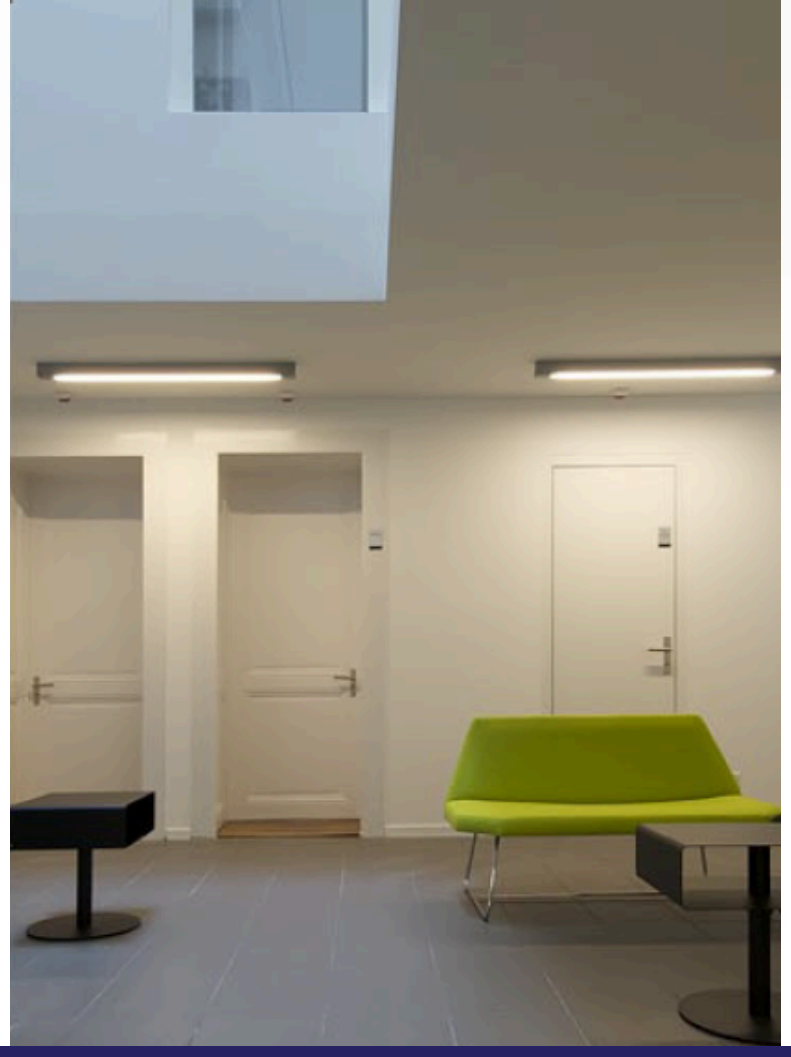
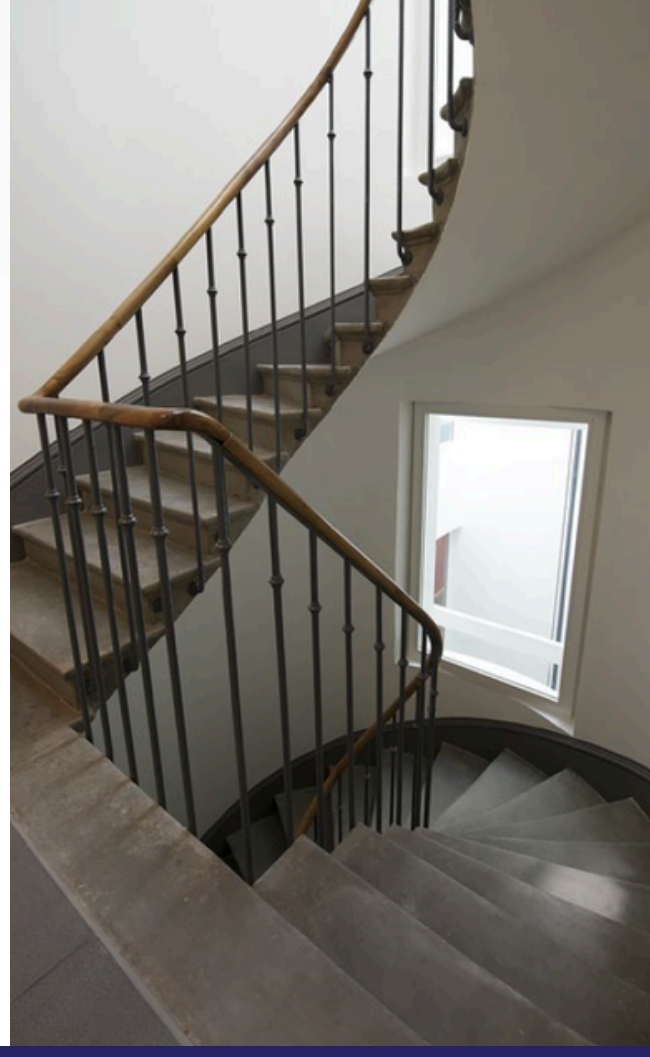
CURIOUS WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE IN PRACTICE?

RESiZE mapped this role across across different European detention settings.

Here's how it plays out in Etablissement du Simplon (Switzerland) & Transition house Leuven (Belgium)





Etablissement du Simplon (Switzerland)

A team of ten uniformed, experienced guards, led by a chief surveillance officer. The guards are experienced but not formally trained in corrections. The facility's friendly, family-like atmosphere and trust are described as the foundation of every interaction. Procedures set the frame, but trust and familiarity are what make the setting feel safe day to day.

Procedures set the frame, but trust and familiarity are what make the setting feel safe day to day.

#LINKINBIO

To learn more about Etablissement du Simplon

AT A GLANCE

- **Opened** in April 2012
- **Public facility** run by the State Penitentiary Service (SPEN), canton of Vaud
- Also known as **"Simplon 43"**
- **Capacity:** around 40 residents, on semi-custodial work-release sentences

Transition house Leuven (Belgium)

This function is fulfilled by the transition guide rather than by a separately designated security role. Round-the-clock presence, being the first point of contact, and daily engagement in communal living support safety and order primarily through relational continuity, consistent with how small-scale detention houses achieve security through presence and trust rather than physical separation.

Security is created through continuous presence, trust, and relational connection

#LINKINBIO

To learn more about Transition house Leuven

AT A GLANCE

- **Opened** in June 2024
- **Run by** Foundation De Kansenfabriek ("The Opportunity Factory")
- Residents are referred to as "**participants**"
- **Focus**: reintegration in the final phase of detention

RESiZE
Reshaping Correctional Competencies through RESCALED Innovation

RESiZE brings together 23 organisations from 15 countries and is one of only 8 EU Blueprint Alliances, developing a shared European framework for the correctional workforce.

This is the first of 10 European Vocational Core Profiles. These are European reference profiles, not national job descriptions or occupational standards, providing a shared understanding of professional functions while allowing for differences between correctional systems and organisations.

EXPLORE ALL PROFILES resize.liberateskills.eu/resize-framework

NEXT WEEK

PROFILE 2 · THE CASE WORKER

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RICHTUNGS-WECHSEL

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