

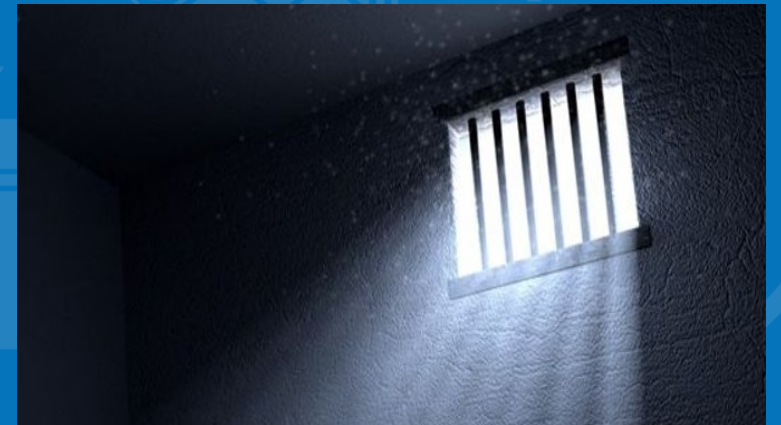


**Trinity College Dublin**  
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath  
The University of Dublin

# Familiarity with Prison Oversight Bodies

*Sophie van der Valk, Eva Aizpurua & Mary Rogan*

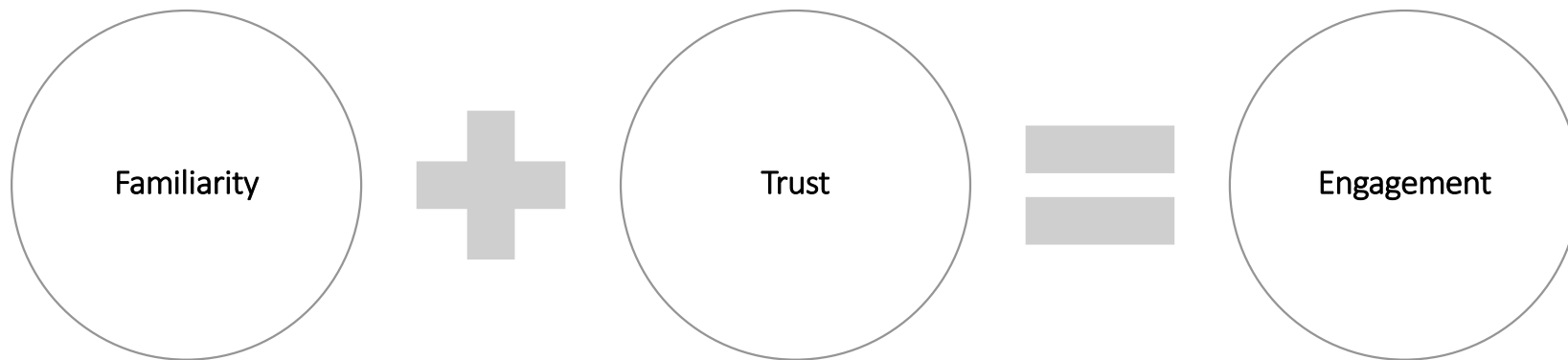
*PRILA*



# Prison Oversight Bodies



Prison inspection and monitoring bodies are important safeguards against breaches of human rights



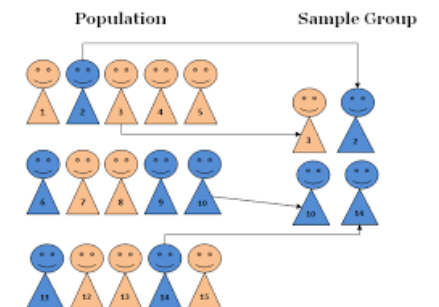
# Methods

- Semi-structured interviews (44)
- Surveys (N = 509)
- Random selection
- 3 medium male security prisons



survey

#236968115



**Trinity College Dublin**  
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath  
The University of Dublin



# Objectives of Study

Wider project exploring prisoners' perspectives of oversight bodies

## Current Objectives

1. To examine awareness and familiarity amongst prisoners of oversight bodies
2. To identify characteristics associated with degree of familiarity



**Trinity College Dublin**  
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath  
The University of Dublin

# The Survey



## Awareness

Inspector of Prisons

Visiting Committees

CPT

## Personal Approach

Inspector of Prisons

Visiting Committees

CPT

## Contact

Inspector of Prisons

Visiting Committees

CPT

# The Survey



## Participants

508 prisoners randomly selected from three Irish prisons (RR = 83.9%)

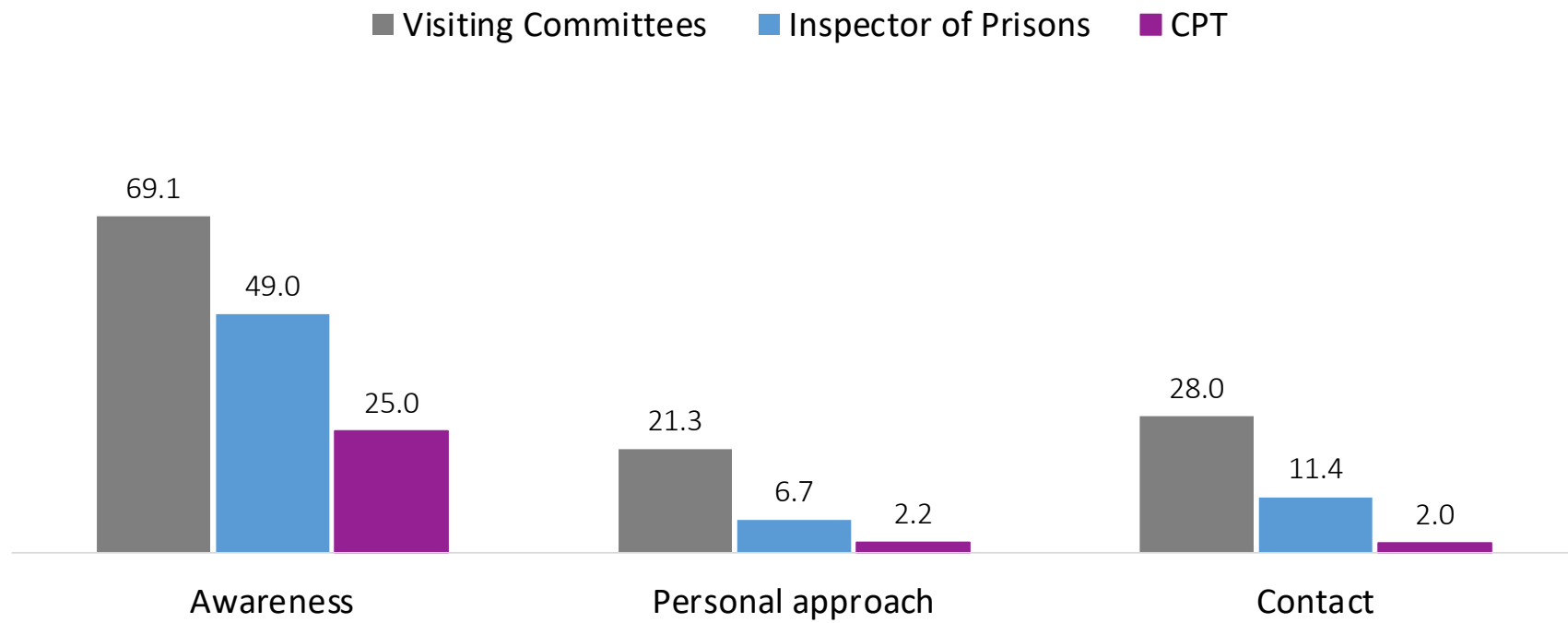
## Instrument

Self-administered paper questionnaires

## Fieldwork

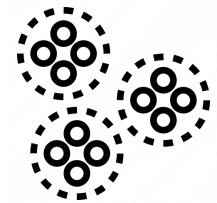
November 2018 - February 2019

# Familiarity



# Typologies

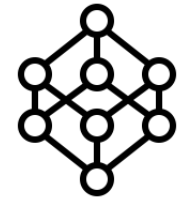
- Latent Class Analysis



Low Familiarity	Awareness only	Familiarity with the VC	High Familiarity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <b>43.9%</b> of prisoners</li><li>▪ Low levels of awareness, personal approach and contact</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <b>26.4%</b> of prisoners</li><li>▪ High awareness with low engagement</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>14.5%</b> of prisoners</li><li>• High familiarity with the VC only</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <b>15.4%</b> of prisoners</li><li>▪ High levels of awareness, personal approach and contact</li></ul>

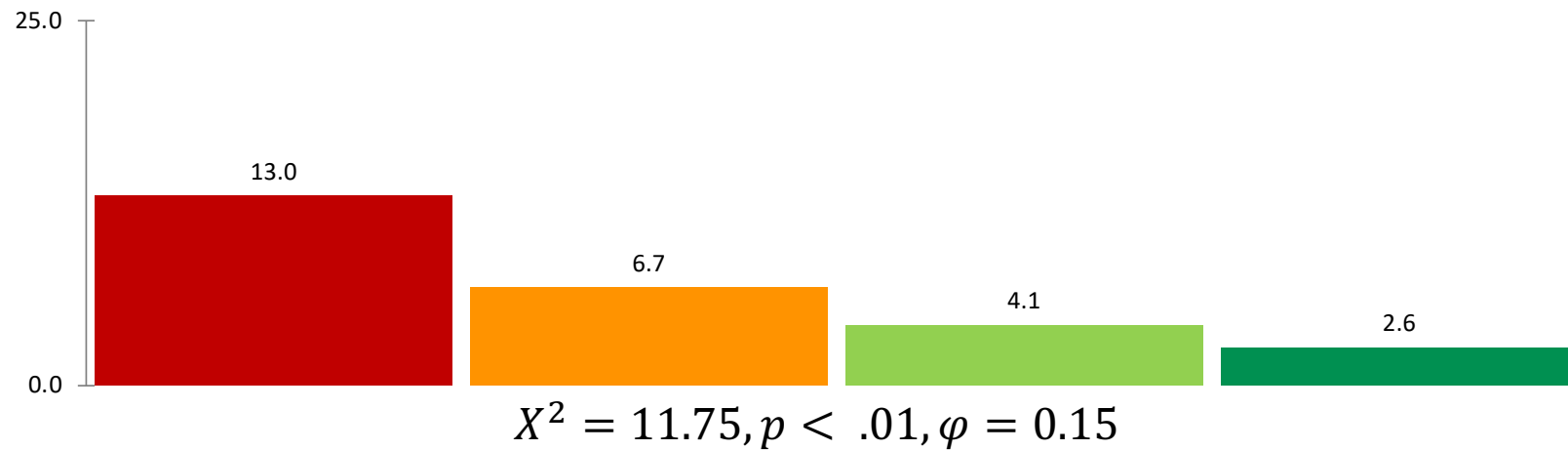


# Class Membership

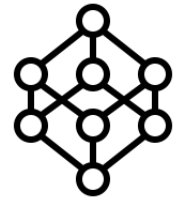


% of foreign prisoners by class

■ Low Familiarity ■ Awareness only ■ VC only ■ High familiarity

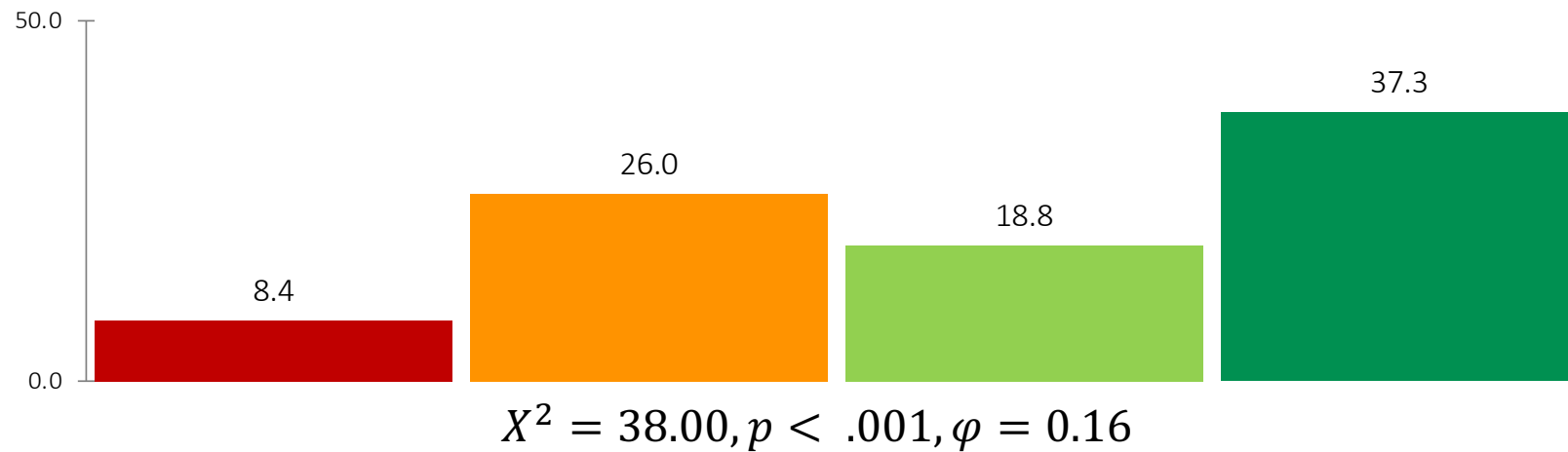


# Class Membership

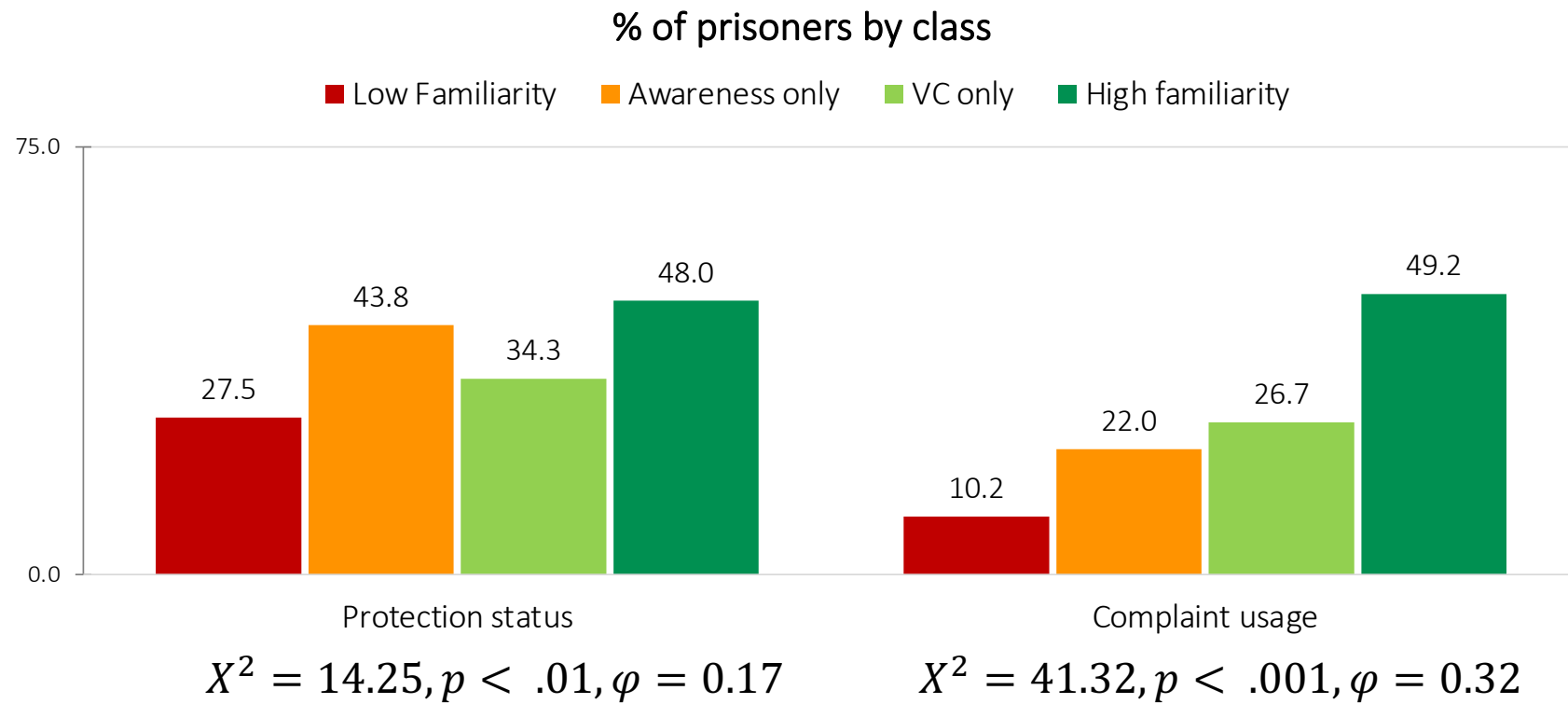
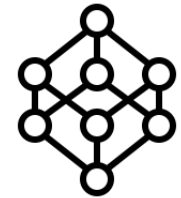


% of prisoners serving sentences of 10 years + by class

■ Low Familiarity ■ Awareness only ■ VC only ■ High familiarity



# Class Membership

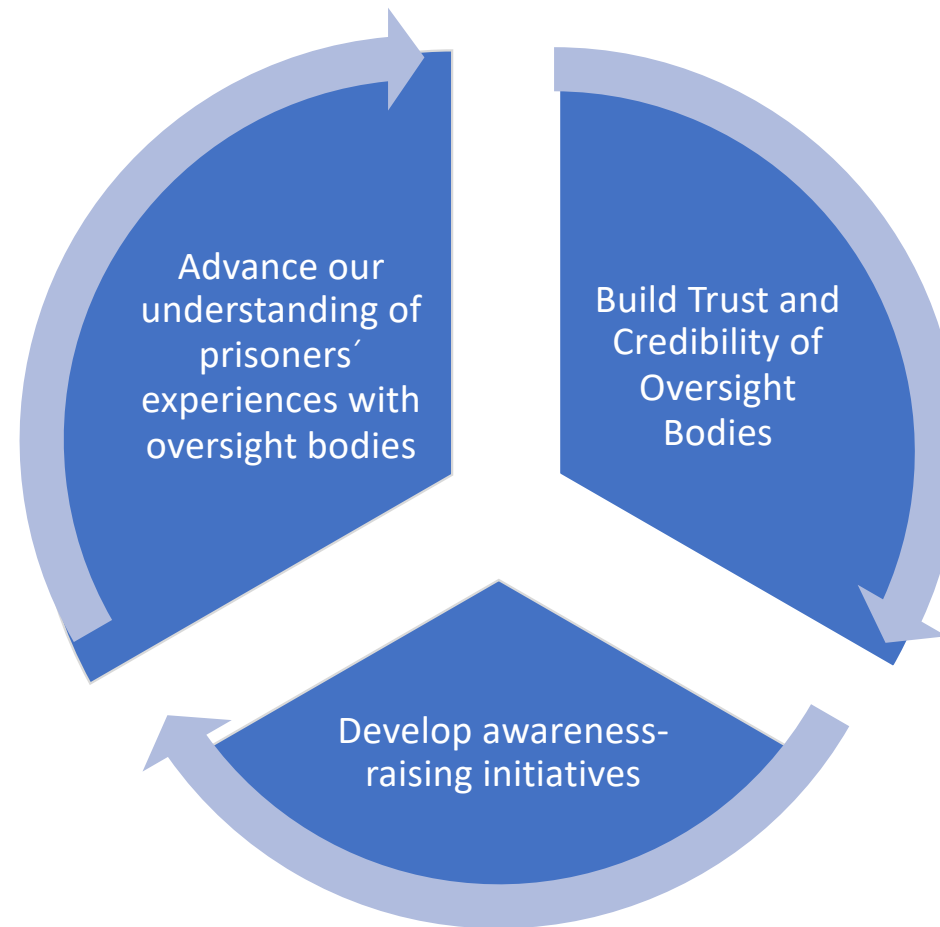


# Conclusions

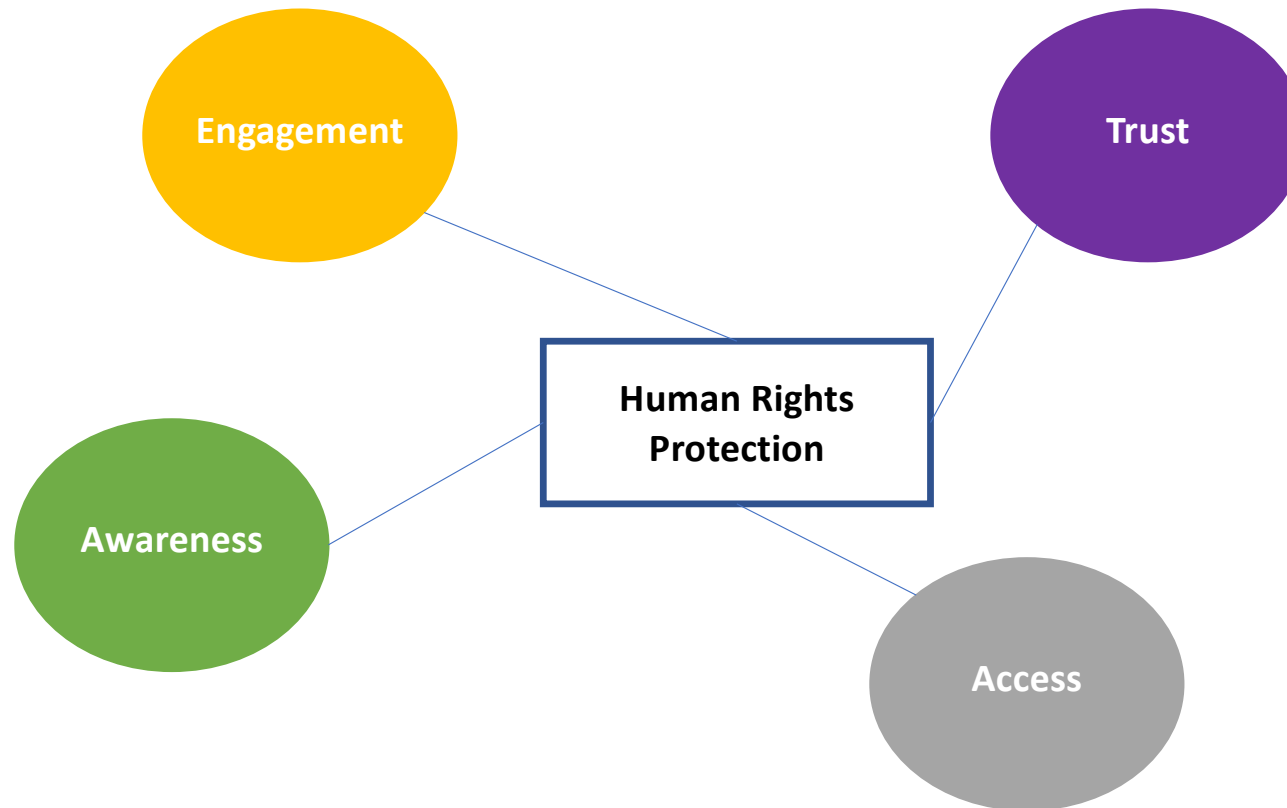


1. Diversity of experiences that prisoners have with oversight bodies  
Four subgroups of prisoners characterized by distinct patterns of awareness and contact with prison oversight bodies
2. Profiles of prisoners differ in their background characteristics and experiences in prison
  - Low familiarity (43.9%) - nationality
  - Awareness only
  - Familiarity with Visiting Committees only
  - High familiarity (15.4%) – longer sentences, protection, complaint experience

# Implications: Typologies



# Effective Oversight Protection





**Trinity College Dublin**  
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath  
The University of Dublin

# Thank you

[vandervs@tcd.ie](mailto:vandervs@tcd.ie)

