



### **General Information**

- Number of inhabitants: 10.016 million at end of 2009.<sup>1</sup>
- Prison population rate per 100,000 inhabitants: 147.<sup>2</sup>
- Link to Probation Service:
  - [www.kih.gov.hu](http://www.kih.gov.hu) (Office of Justice - Probation Service).
- Links to websites:
  - [www.irm.gov.hu](http://www.irm.gov.hu) (Ministry of Justice and Law Enforcement);
  - [www.maposz.hu](http://www.maposz.hu) (Association of Hungarian Probation Officers).
- Member of CEP: April 2004.

### **Characteristics of the Probation Service**

- After three decades separate existence of juvenile service and adult probation, a united National Probation Service was created by the Ministry of Justice in July 2003.
- The National Probation Service is subordinated to the Central Office of Justice (like other services: Victim Support Service, Legal Aid Service), which works under the supervision of the Ministry of Justice and Law Enforcement. The Office is a central authority with national competence and a separate budget.
- The Central Office of Justice has 20 County Offices and several local offices. Each County Office has its own Probation Unit with two departments:
  - the adult offender department;
  - the juvenile offender department.

### **Tasks**

The Probation Service has the following tasks:

- expert work in court decision preparation (social inquiry report, pre-sentence report);
- supervising and assisting offenders (probation supervision);
- supervising community service;
- preparatory work in prisons prior to furlough or release, supervision during parole, voluntary aftercare;
- victim-offender mediation.

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<sup>1</sup> The Hungarian Statistical Office (2010): First Release. Release date: 26th January 2010. Serial: 14. Available online at:

[http://portal.ksh.hu/portal/page?\\_pageid=38,119977&\\_dad=portal&\\_schema=PORTAL](http://portal.ksh.hu/portal/page?_pageid=38,119977&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL)

<sup>2</sup> On 31 December, 2008. The Hungarian Prison Service website at:  
[www.bvop.hu/?mid=33&lang=en](http://www.bvop.hu/?mid=33&lang=en)

In 2009, the Probation Service worked on 82,564 cases, of which the most are related to activities mentioned below under 'Probation during the different stages of the criminal procedure'. Any person, released from prison has the right to have voluntary aftercare provided by the Probation Service. The purpose of aftercare is both social work and prevention. Probation officers help their clients with solving housing problems, unemployment crisis and coping with institutional exclusion by the authorities.

**Number of staff** (on 31 December 2009)

- Probation officers: 388
- Support staff: 70
- Total: 458**

- Daily average number of offenders/clients dealt with: 95.8 cases per officer at the end of 2009. There are only a few volunteers who provide some help to clients. However, their support does not belong to the above mentioned core tasks of the Probation Service.

**New developments**

- In addition to individual casework, the Probation Service increasingly uses group learning programs since 2005. At the beginning the Probation Service employed several external experts to teach different methods and conduct group work programs. According to the recent years' tendency some probation officers are trained to be program tutor in the field of career development, self-awareness and anger control groups for probation clients.
- In 2007 mediation was introduced as a new probation task. From 1 January 2008 few trained practicing lawyers also have the right to mediate beside of trained probation officers.
- From the 1st of May 2010 the Hungarian penal system shall include some new sentencing options. These newly introduced alternative sentences such as the partially suspended sentence, the multiple sentencing (the possibility to impose more than one criminal sanction to the offender), as well as the new category of the 'violent recidivist offender' (whose prison sentence can be longer than the average means) shall produce an additional case load for the Hungarian probation officers.

**Probation during the different stages of the criminal procedure**

|   | <b>Pre-trial stage</b> | <b>Trial stage</b> | <b>Post-trial stage</b> |
|---|------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Preparing a Social Enquiry reports                        | x                      | x                  | x                       |
| Supervision/assistance etc. to offenders whose cases were | x                      |                    |                         |

|  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| conditionally waived (postponement of accusation)    |   |   |   |
| Mediation  | x | x |   |
| Supervising/organizing etc. community service        |   | x |   |
| Supervising/organizing training or learning projects | x | x | x |
| Supervising etc. drug/alcohol treatment programs     | x | x | x |
| Day Centre activities                                | x | x | x |
| Pre-sentence report                                  | x | x | x |
| Supervising etc. sanction of probation               |   | x |   |
| Supervising etc. suspended sentence                  |   | x |   |
| Supervising etc. special measures for drugs addicts  | x |   |   |
| Supervising etc. a conditional sentence              |   | x |   |
| Assistance/support to prisoners in prison            |   |   | x |
| Supervising etc. conditional release/parole          |   |   | x |
| Advisory report with respect to amnesty/pardon       |   | x | x |
| Probation work in reformatories                      |   | x |   |

This summary is based on the country chapter in the book *Probation in Europe*, the most comprehensive survey of probation systems and services in Europe today. If you wish to order it, please click [here](#).

