



General Information

- Number of inhabitants: 9.24 million at October 2008. ¹
- Prison population rate per 100,000 inhabitants: 74.
- Link to Probation Service:
 - www.kriminalvarden.se (Swedish Prison and Probation Service).
- Links to websites:
 - www.kris.a.se (KRIS: Criminals Return in Society).
- Member of the CEP in: 1982.

Characteristics of the Probation Service

- The Prison and Probation Service is a government agency, which is subordinate to the Ministry of Justice. The Service consists of a Head Office and six regional offices. The regional offices are head of a geographic area of remand prisons, ordinary prisons and probation units. Each regional office (which is headed by a regional chief) is responsible for the operational guidance of the different units under their command. There are totally 39 probation units.
- Independent supervision boards (30), which are appointed by municipalities, mainly deal with violations of supervision conditions. They are empowered to warn clients who violate the conditions of supervision, to require the temporary short-term arrest of clients who are out of contact, to modify the conditions of supervision and, if necessary, to recommend the revocation of probation. The boards, which are headed by an experienced judge, consist of persons who are drawn from welfare agencies and other assisting organisations.
- The age of criminal responsibility in Sweden is 15 years. Offenders under the age of 18 years may be sentenced to imprisonment only for extraordinary reasons. For offenders between the age of 18 and 21 years, imprisonment may only be sentenced if there are special reasons for doing so. Therefore, probation becomes an obvious alternative sanction. In general, the prosecution of offenders under the age of 18 is waived and the offenders are handed over to the social welfare authorities for appropriate treatment or are sentenced to close juvenile detention. The National Board for Institutional Care is responsible for juvenile detention.

¹ International Centre for Prison Studies (2009), *Prison Brief for Sweden*. London: King's College. Available online at: www.kcl.ac.uk/depsta/law/research/icps/worldbrief/

- The probation officers are assisted in their work by just over 4,500 lay supervisors, that is, ordinary citizens who maintain a close and friendly contact with just over 40% of those under supervision. As well as the help they provide in the direct supervision of offenders, notably through common sense and everyday experience, they also contribute to public insight into work with offenders.
- The total probation expenditure in 2008 was € 86.829.900. In the same year the prison expenditure was € 360.677.100.

Tasks

During the pre-trial phase of the criminal process, the Probation Service is involved in providing courts with pre-trial reports. In Sweden pre-trial and pre-sentence reports do not differ. The reports are made at the request of a court and copies are given to both the prosecution and defense. They are intended to assist the courts in their choice of sanction and, for that reason, shall clearly state whether there is a need to impose supervision. The Probation Service may also suggest a sanction especially, for example, in a case where contract treatment is desirable to counteract a risk for reoffending into crime. Within the trial and enforcement phase, probation officers are in charge of, amongst others, arranging community service, initiating and coordinating treatment plans for prisoners, undertaking intensive supervision with electronic monitoring of prisoners, preparing special measures out of prison and supervising conditionally released prisoners.

Number of staff in 2005

- Total number of professional probation officers: approximately 1,000.
- Daily average number of offenders/clients dealt with: 30 (task overlap between probation and prison work means that an exact figure of those working solely with probation cannot be given).

New developments

- From the 1st of January 2007, the Probation Service is required to initiate and coordinate all action plans to further the post-release adjustment in the community of those serving sentences of imprisonment. The change is intended to ensure that the treatment plans that are made for prisoners are fully focused on the post-release period. Before these treatment plans are finalized, the remand and ordinary prison staff exchange information with the probation staff regarding the background and eventual treatment measures.
- The Probation Service is also required to vigorously review all plans made for prisoners, probationers and parolees with a view to ascertaining the need for modification. Risk assessment and risk management are important aspects of this work. Older and more static risk assessment methods are replaced by dynamic assessments that take account of changes in the situation of prisoners, probationers and

parolees and the implications of any such changes for counteracting any risks that may arise. Rigorous follow-ups make it possible to see more clearly not only what measures are needed but also those that have become unnecessary.

- The Probation Service can now guarantee to offer all clients a series of crime-and drug related programs. The programs offered are programs for men sentenced for domestic violence(IDAP & ROS), a alcohol related program(PFL) and a relapse prevention.
- A far going cooperation is now being developed with local municipalities and the psychiatric hospitals to make it possible for mentally disordered clients to be diagnosed and treated for psychiatric problems. In Stockholm and Gothenburg there are projects going on with drug assisted therapy for clients addicted to opiates.

Probation during the different stages of the criminal procedure

	Pre-Trial Phase	Trial and Enforcement Phase	Post Release Phase
Preparing a Social Enquiry report	x		
Supervision/assistance to pre-trial detainees	x		
Supervising/organizing. community service		x	
Supervising/organizing training or learning projects		x	x
Supervising etc. electronic monitoring		x	
Pre-sentence report	x		
Supervising etc. probation sanction		x	
Supervising etc. conditional release/parole			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](#).

