

# PROBATION OFFICERS IN THE HUNGARIAN PRISON SERVICE 2018

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Services (CDPPS)**

**Working together effectively: Management and Co-operation Models  
between Prison and Probation Services**

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# **Introduction**

**Istvan Petro**

**correctional probation officer**

- I began to work in 2004 as a probation officer in Nograd County Judicial Service**
- I started working with the inmates in Balassagyarmat as a delegate probation officer in 2005**
- because of the legislative changes in 2014 I have changed jobs and since then I work in Balassagyarmat Strict and Medium Regime Prison**

# Short history of the Hungarian Probation Service

## Before 2003

- working with juvenile offenders: county administrative offices
- working with adult criminals: county courts
- two completely separate organizations
- the cooperation existed, but it was not very effective
- there was a need for development to provide more efficient tasks



## **01.07.2003 - the Judicial Service was established**



- united the two separate organizations**
- revision of legislation, a new single regulation came to effect,**
- establish county offices with the management of the central office**
- staff development**
- continuous training and development of new professionals**
- each county judicial service delegated a person who worked in the prison of their competence area, this wasn't completely efficient, except for some prisons (for instance Balassagyarmat, there was a very close relationship - nationally unique daily level connection, creating experimental programs, cooperation in tenders)**

## **01.01.2011. – Changes in the system**

- the change of the Central Justice Service - creating a new central organization**
- the county probation offices were under the control of the County Government Offices**
- the number of probation officers decreased (for example returnees could not be replaced, status was blocked in the Government Offices)**
- further transformations in County Judicial Services,**

## **01.11.2014. – the probation officers were integrated in the Hungarian Prison Service**

- as a first step, due to legislative changes, 24 probation officers were transferred to Prison Service**
- separation of case categories- cases involving imprisonment were transferred to Prison Service**
- after continuous development of staff, more and more probation officers started to work in every prison (60)**
- depending on the number of inmates and the size of the area 2-4 probation officers working in each prison**
- the reintegration in the Hungarian Prison Service begins at the admission, in this process probation officers are present from the beginning**

# Comparison: Judicial Service- Hungarian Prison Service

## - number of employees:

- **Judicial Service: constantly decreasing**
- **Prison Service: develops flexibly**

## - case number per probation officer

- **Judicial Service: 200-500 cases**
- **Prison Service: 70-150 cases**

## - administration:

- **Judicial Service: filling up documents most of the time**
- **Prison Service: manageable, much more time for individual case management**



# Probation Officers in the Hungarian Prison Service

## System specifics:

- the client can be present at both offices (Judicial Service - Hungarian Prison Service)
- there is a need for close cooperation and daily contact with judicial probation officers,
- colleagues who have worked for the Judicial Service have the relevant competence, this is advantage for the Hungarian Prison Service





# **Probation Officers: categories of cases in the Hungarian Prison Service**

- **probation supervision**
- **supported decision-makers with expert opinions**
  - **before interruption of custodial sentence**
  - **before the decision of possibility of life imprisonment**
  - **before reintegrational custody (Electronic Monitoring)**
  - **before relaxation of the regime**
  - **Before entering social reintegration program**
  - **before probation, to establish rules of conduct**
  - **to the judge for the plea for mercy**
- **implementation of reintegrational custody**
- **participation in the social reintegration program**
- **reintegrational care (in cooperation with the reintegration officers and the prison chaplain)**
- **after-care for those released without probation supervision (voluntary)**

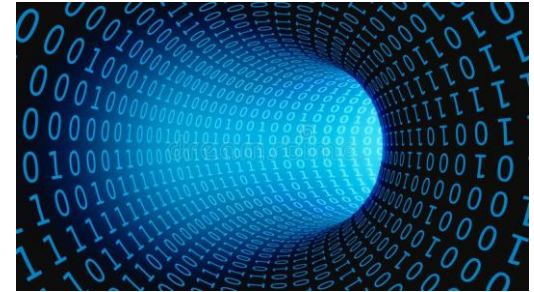


# Probation Officers in the Hungarian Prison Service

- ☐ - we use 3 nationally developed IT tools:
  - prisoner registration program
  - filing and electronic mail program
  - record keeping of probation officers
  
- ☐ - benefit: this greatly facilitates cooperation between the correctional probation officers, facilitates administration, makes work easier with colleagues in prison



# Probation Officers in the Hungarian Prison Service



**- benefit in the work:**

**- significantly more information about inmates**

**- probation officers in the prison can use the IT tools (the probation officer in Judicial Service does not have access to this), we have access to more information**

**- we can start working with the inmates earlier – during the term of imprisonment, the cooperation is established earlier, this helps a lot in preventing recidivism**

# Probation Officers in the Hungarian Prison Service

- we also acquired knowledge on their living environment and family during incarceration before release, in order to make expert opinions and reintegration case management,
- there is more time to fieldwork and contacting the partner organizations
- summarizing the above: the process of reintegration is more complex, resources are organized more efficiently, client-focused approached



# Probation Officers in the Hungarian Prison Service

- - **summary:**

- **my personal experience is that integration of the probation officers into the prison service was a good professional decision and it was definitely useful from a professional point of view**

- **example to illustrate**



Thank you for your attention!

