



General Information

- Number of inhabitants: 62.10 million in metropolitan France at July 2008.¹
- Prison population rate per 100,000 inhabitants: 100.
- Link to Probation Service:
 - www.justice.gouv.fr (French Ministry of Justice).
- Links to websites:
 - www.fnarsidf.asso.fr (FNARS: National federation of reception and social rehabilitation associations).
- Member of the CEP in: 1982.

Characteristics of the Probation Service

- The French Probation Service initially consisted of a committee for probation and assistance to released prisoners (CPAL) and a socio-educational service, responsible for the rehabilitation of inmates, in the closed prison environment (SSE).
- In 1999, the CPAL and SSE were combined in a single entity called the Rehabilitation and Probation Prison Service (SPIP), a regional structure that includes the old socio-educational services and the old CPAL. Each 'department' has its own SPIP, which means that there are 103 SPIP's in France. These services are headed by the prison service, which is part of the Ministry of Justice.
- Each SPIP department has a headquarter and one or more sub-branches. The sub branches are operational units of the SPIP, designed to serve both the prisons and courts in the department.
- The SPIP deals with adults as well as juveniles (persons under the age of 18 years).

Tasks

- The general tasks of probation services (SPIP's) with regard to prisoners are:
 - help to prevent the dissocialising effects of imprisonment;
 - encourage the maintenance of links with friends and family;
 - help to prepare inmates for social reintegration;
 - help, when instructed by a court, in the preparation of criminal court decisions; the services may be responsible for conducting investigations and for measures prior to the judgement. They

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

conduct investigations as to the material (amongst others indigence, illiteracy, drug addiction), family and social circumstances suspects the measures or sentence to be better tailored to the individual and encourage rehabilitation of the person.

- Where a convicted person is not imprisoned (measures to restrict freedom for instance), the SPIP's tasks are to:
 - to supervise the execution of probation sanctions and alternative measures;
 - develop an implementation plan in the case of electronic monitoring;
 - evaluate the execution of the sentence and consider the possibilities to adjust the execution if the situation requires to do so;
 - provide assistance in order to foster the social reintegration of prisoners;
 - report regularly to the judicial authorities on the execution of the measures.

Number of staff working within the SPIP's

- The different SPIP departments are managed by a Director of rehabilitation and probation prison services (84 DSPIP's), who reports to the interregional Director of prison services. The DSPIP's are assisted by:
 - 115 Directors of rehabilitation and Probation (DIP), acting on a deputy-DSPIP level;
 - 162 Heads of the rehabilitation and probation service (CSIP) and/or social technical advisors (CTSS), acting as heads of department;
 - 2,593 Prison social workers (CIP), who are rehabilitation and probation advisors or social workers;
 - 473 Administrative staff.
- Daily average number of offenders/clients dealt with: 62.252 prisoners (convicted and on remand) and 159.232 convicted persons who are given a non-custodial sentence.
- Number of volunteers: 10.295.

New developments

- A project concerning mobile GPS-based monitoring started in 2005.
- A new organization is in the process of being experimented in 11 of the 103 SPIP's and has 2 main targets :
 - to strengthen the impact of the SPIP's action by giving structure to the insertion and probation policies, methods of appropriated individual follow-up, skills to mobilize;

- to strengthen the legibility of the SPIP's action for the actors and the partners working to prevent reoffending.

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/organising etc. community service		x	x
Supervising/organising training or learning projects		x	x
Supervising etc. drugs/alcohol treatment programs		x	x
Supervising etc. electronic monitoring		x	x
Supervising etc. other community sanctions, namely:			x
A: training in citizenship		x	x
B: training in road safety		x	x
C: training in awareness of the dangers of using drugs		x	x
Pre-sentence report	x	x	
Supervising etc. sanction of probation			x
Supervising etc. suspended sentence			x
Supervising etc. semi-liberty		x	x
Supervising etc. semi-detention			
Supervising etc. the mentally ill or retarded offenders (in-out patient orders)		x	x
Supervising etc. special measures for drugs addicts		x	x
Supervising etc. conditional sentence		x	x
Supervising etc. conditional release/parole		x	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](#).

