

CEP, The European Organisation for Probation

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INTRODUCTION

CEP has existed now for more than 30 years. It has developed into an active organisation that plays a leading role in the development of probation in Europe.

In this article we give a short description of CEP's goals, its mission and values and its members.

GOALS

CEP was founded in 1981 on the initiative of probation services from ten European countries. The reason for the establishment of CEP was that by the end of the 1970's many Western European countries witnessed an increasing number of non-national Europeans in their prison population, which at the time was a new phenomenon. Consequently, there was a growing need for inter-European co-operation in the field of probation all across Western Europe. Very soon after the first two conferences on the topic of the foreign offender it became clear that there was a general willingness to share policy, practice and research on probation matters across Europe.

The overall goals of CEP are formulated as follows:

- to bring together practitioners, managers, academics, stakeholders and others working in the field of probation and criminal justice from all over Europe
- to improve professionalism in this field
- to raise the profile of probation on a national and a European level

CEP achieves these goals by:

- exchanging of experience and information
- compiling and disseminating information concerning legislation, jurisprudence and social work practice in European countries in the field of community sanctions and measures
- identifying solutions to common problems
- influencing public opinion
- supporting and contributing to scientific research in the field of community sanctions and measures
- organising conferences, seminars and other activities
- providing expert assistance in the development of community sanctions and measures

On this basis, CEP has developed a full set of activities, ranging from conferences (six per year), a dynamic website, a bi-monthly email newsletter, a Register of Experts, a regularly updated overview of probation systems in Europe, and, starting in 2010, a tri-annual European journal on probation (EuroVista), to regular contacts with European institutions (EU, Council of Europe) and visits to member states and beyond to promote probation on a national level.

CEP is headed by an international Board, consisting of nine people, each from a different European country. The working languages of CEP are English, French and German.

MISSION AND VALUES

The CEP Board in consultation with its membership has in the past six years paid a lot of attention to formulating what binds us together in the CEP. A mission was developed, and the values were identified.

The mission

CEP is committed

- to promoting pan-European cooperation in the development and delivery of community sanctions and measures
- to enhancing the profile of probation and to improve professionalism
- to achieving just outcomes, increased public protection and community involvement in the reduction of offending across all the countries of Europe-based on the tenets of human rights, well thought out policies, evidence based practice and the best use of public resources
- to uniting organisations and individual persons all over Europe sharing these same principles

Values

- **Social Inclusion**

A society built on the principles of social inclusion provides the best protection for communities from the harm and distress caused by crime. Crime is committed in the society and must therefore be resolved in communities.

- **Ability to change**

Human beings are able to change their behaviour and accept responsibility for taking steps to stop offending and to make reparation.

- **Human rights**

Social inclusion requires a response from the community, which recognizes a mutual responsibility. Probation therefore closely relates to the basic human rights and responsibilities as formulated by the UN and the Council of Europe.

- **Delivery of effective sentences**

To reduce re-offending, consistent and fair options, stemming from evidence-based practice and from principles that ensure human dignity, have to be developed.

Membership

At the beginning of 2011, CEP has almost 80 member organizations (probation services, Ministries of Justice, NGOs, universities, individual members) representing 31 European countries or 35 European jurisdictions. As such, CEP covers the vast majority of EU Member States. Only two EU Member States are not represented in CEP: Slovakia and Cyprus.

CEP has at the moment 47 full members: institutions and organisations which provide probation services or who carry responsibility for the development of such services; mainly Ministries of Justice.

CEP also has twelve Associate Members. These are mainly NGOs that facilitate or lobby for probation, but we have an increasing number of universities as members (in total eleven).

FUTURE PLANS

CEP will in the coming years based on the developments within CEP so far strengthen the ties with the Council of Europe, the European Commission, the prison sector and the academic world. Special attention will be given to the implementation of the European Probation Rules and the implementation of the European Framework Decision on the transfer of Probation Supervision across the EU-countries (FD 2008/947/JHA). In 2013 the first world congress on Probation will take place for which CEP has taken the initiative.