



General Information

- Number of inhabitants: 415.700 at November 2009.¹
- Prison population rate per 100,000 inhabitants: 120.
- Link to Probation Service:
 - <http://mjha.gov.mt/departments/corradino/structure.html>
(Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs).
- Links to websites:
 - www.um.edu.mt/criminology;
 - www.mjha.gov.mt/departments/departments.html.
- Member of the CEP in: 1997.

Characteristics of the Probation Service

- The Probation Service (created in 1957) is a government service. In 1994 the Probation Service Action Team, an NGO with the aim of revamping the Service, was set up. In 1996 a new team of probation officers was employed and in 1998, the Probation Service moved from the Ministry of Social Policy to the Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs. The Service (together with the Prison Service) fall under the Department for Correctional Services.
- Due to the small number of staff, probation workers perform various general tasks. Therefore most officers deal with adults as well as juveniles. However, some probation officers are specialized to handle juveniles.
- The Probation Service is headed by the Director of Correctional Services. Within the Service, senior probation officers supervise groups of probation officers, which are taking care of the probation tasks.
- In 2006, the total annual expenditure for the Probation Service was 216.615,- Euros, while the expenditure for the Prison Service was 6.854.417,- Euros.
- No volunteers are involved in probation work. However, the Probation Service relies heavily on the services that voluntary, state and non-governmental organisations provide. Probation clients are referred by the Probation Services to other agencies, thus multi-service collaboration is at the bases of probation practice.

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

Tasks

During trial phase, a court can request the Probation Service to provide them with a pre-sentence report in order to obtain legal, social or family related information about the accused as well as interview the victims and include recommendations to the court. For offenders who have not been found guilty, the probation service may be asked by the court to compile a social enquiry report, a variant of the pre-sentencing report. At any point between arraignment and sentencing the court may ask the Probation Services to supervise the offender through a Provisional Order of Supervision. Within the enforcement phase, an important task of the Service is to supervise offenders who have been awarded a probation order, a suspended sentence with supervision order, a community service order (CSO) or a combination order. A combination order requires an offender to be under probation supervision for a certain period and to work within the community. The Probation Service does not work in the prison set-up, as the number of probation officers is limited (around 10) and can scarcely cope with their own workload. Another reason is that there is no provision for parole prisoners, so they are released without any form of supervision rendering the work of probation in prison superfluous. However with the recent White Paper (published in 2009), there seems to be a push towards the introduction of Parole and restorative justice. With regard to aftercare, the Probation Service does not follow any offenders who come to it on a voluntary basis. Released persons who ask the Probation Service for post-detention assistance are referred to social work agencies.

Number of staff

- Average number of employed staff at the end of 2009: 14.
- Average number of offenders/clients dealt with at the end of 2009: 657.

New developments

- The 2002 Probation Act is being revised in the light of new international transfer of probation decisions and to make the law reflect the changes occurring within the Criminal Justice System.
- In 2009, various systems have been analysed by the Maltese probation services and discussions are under way in view of a possible restructuring of risk assessment methods and multi-agency collaboration.

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 etc. to offenders	x		

whose cases were conditionally waived			
Mediation/victim support		x	
Supervising / organizing etc. community service		x	
Supervising etc. drug/alcohol treatment programs		x	
Combination Orders		x	
Provisional order of supervision		x	
Pre - sentence report		x	
Supervising etc. sanction of probation		x	
Supervising etc. suspended sentence		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](#).

