

CEP Conference Recruiting and Training of Probation Agents in Europe

The Austrian System of Probation

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NEUSTART – Bewährungshilfe, Konfliktregelung, Soziale Arbeit

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www.neustart.at

Historical development of the probation service system

NEU**START**

- ... **1957 Probation Service for juveniles offenders - a private initiative**
- ... **1961 - juvenile court act**
1969 - Probation service act
1975 - the „great“ Criminal Law reform
- ... **1994 - General Contract between Federal Ministry of justice and the VBSA (Association for probation and social work) Privatisation of probation service.**
- ... **2000 – Act on Diversion Measures (mediation in penal matters, community services, fines etc.)**
- ... **Change of name: NEU**START** instead of VBSA**

Mission Statement

Living without delinquency – we help ...

Two Main Objectives:

- ... **NEU**START** gives offenders the opportunity to be integrated and to gain acceptance as citizens within society to prevent recidivism.**
- ... **NEU**START** offers services for conflict resolution taking into account the true interests of the victims.**

Services run by NEU**START**

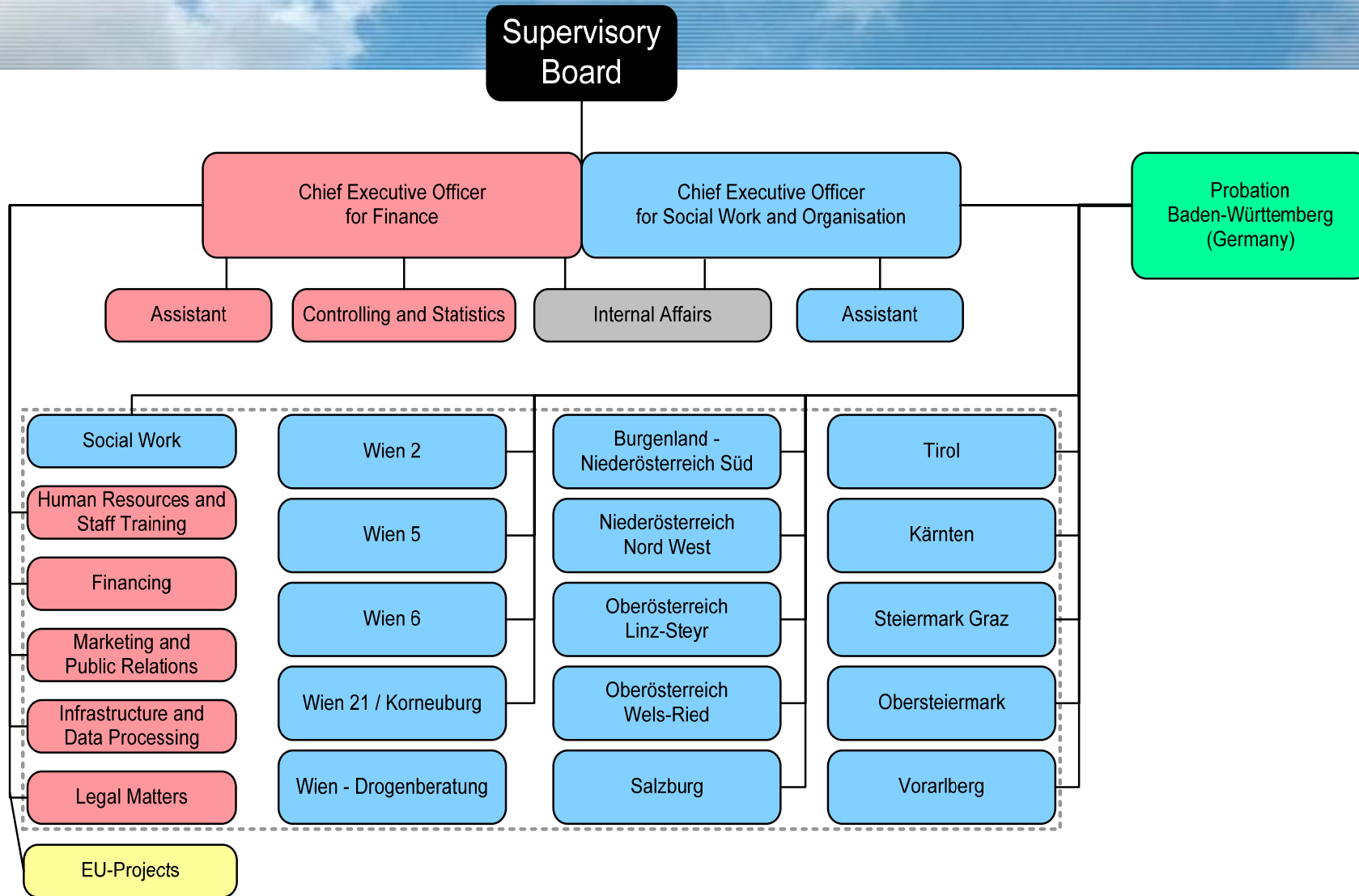
- ... **Probation service** (adults and juveniles)
- ... **Aftercare services**
 - ... Pre release counselling
 - ... Communication centres
 - ... work training measures
- ... **Aftercare hostels**
- ... **Mediation in penal matters (VOM)**
- ... **Community Service (only as diversion measure)**
- ... **Other regional projects:**
 - ... **Social work in schools**
 - ... **Court support for juveniles**
 - ... **Online support**

In total: 1.490

- ... 605 professionals (431 social workers; Education: Social work, Law, Psychology) Organised in teams of up to 12 persons.**
- ... 840 volunteers in probation service.**
- ... For beginners: obligatory supervision, training program, mentoring system with senior colleagues.**
- ... Annual: training seminars for all employees.**

Volunteer probation service

About 840 volunteers support the professionals in probation work and each has a caseload up to 5 clients mostly of minor offences. Every volunteer is supervised by a probation-officer



Budget

total: 34,0 Mill. Euro

... 85,97 % for staff (salaries)

... 14,03 % for infrastructure

Clients 2008
total: 44.637

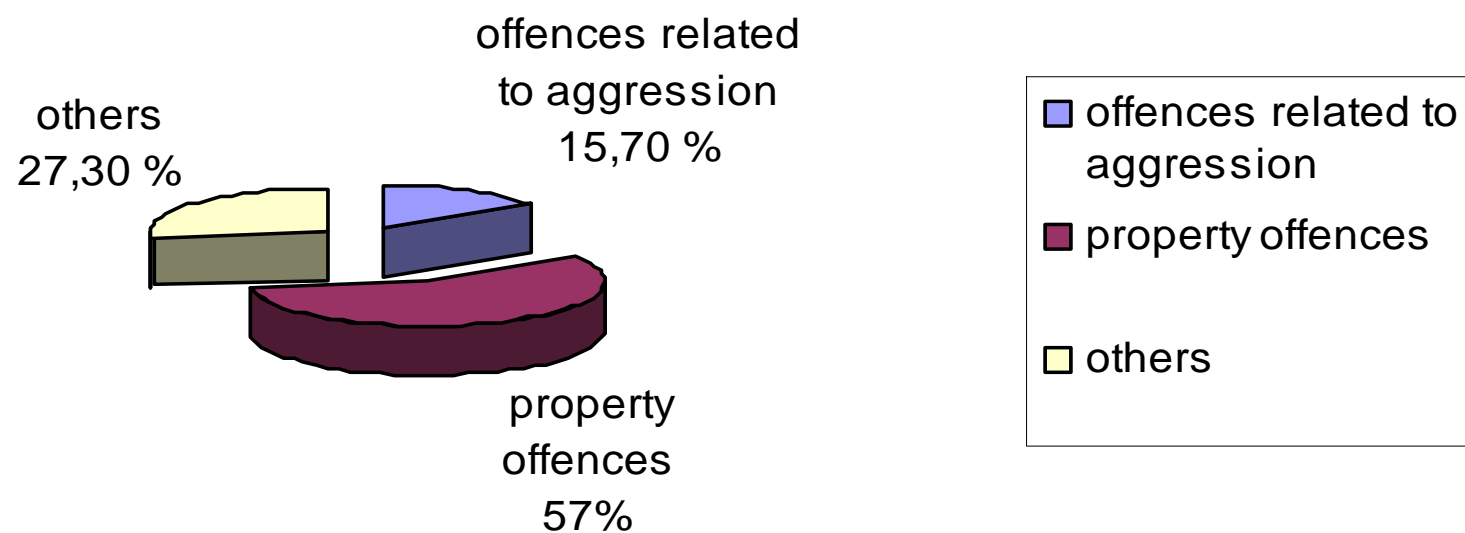
Probation

In order to suspend a custodial sentence or after a conditional release for a period between 1 and 10 years (deviant offenders).

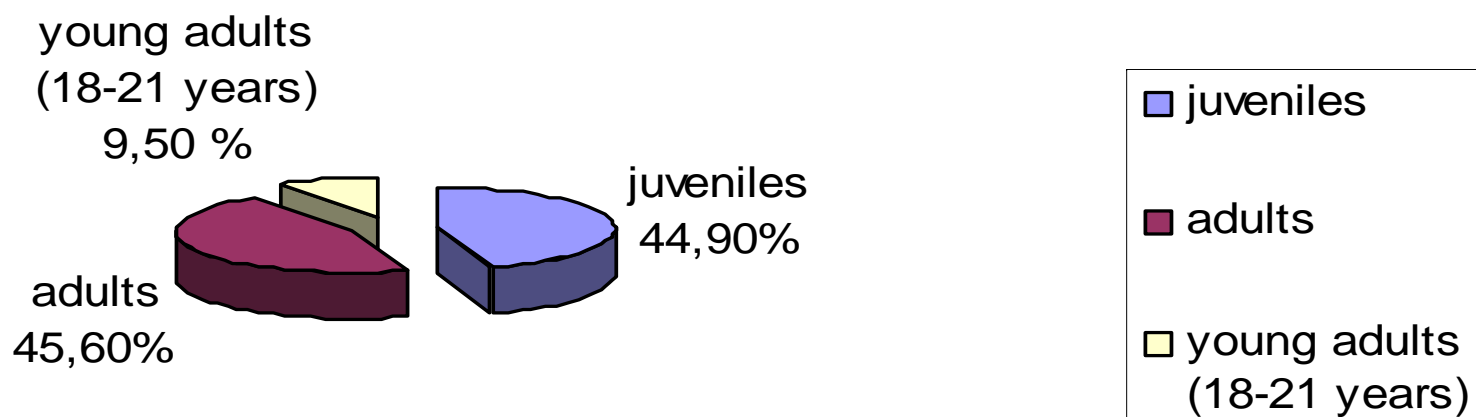
300 Probation workers (196 BA) and 892 volunteer probation workers are to help their clients solve their psycho-social and economic problems in a self responsible manner and support them in securing accommodation and income. It's help and control.

The caseload for professional probation-workers is limited by law with a maximum of 35 clients.

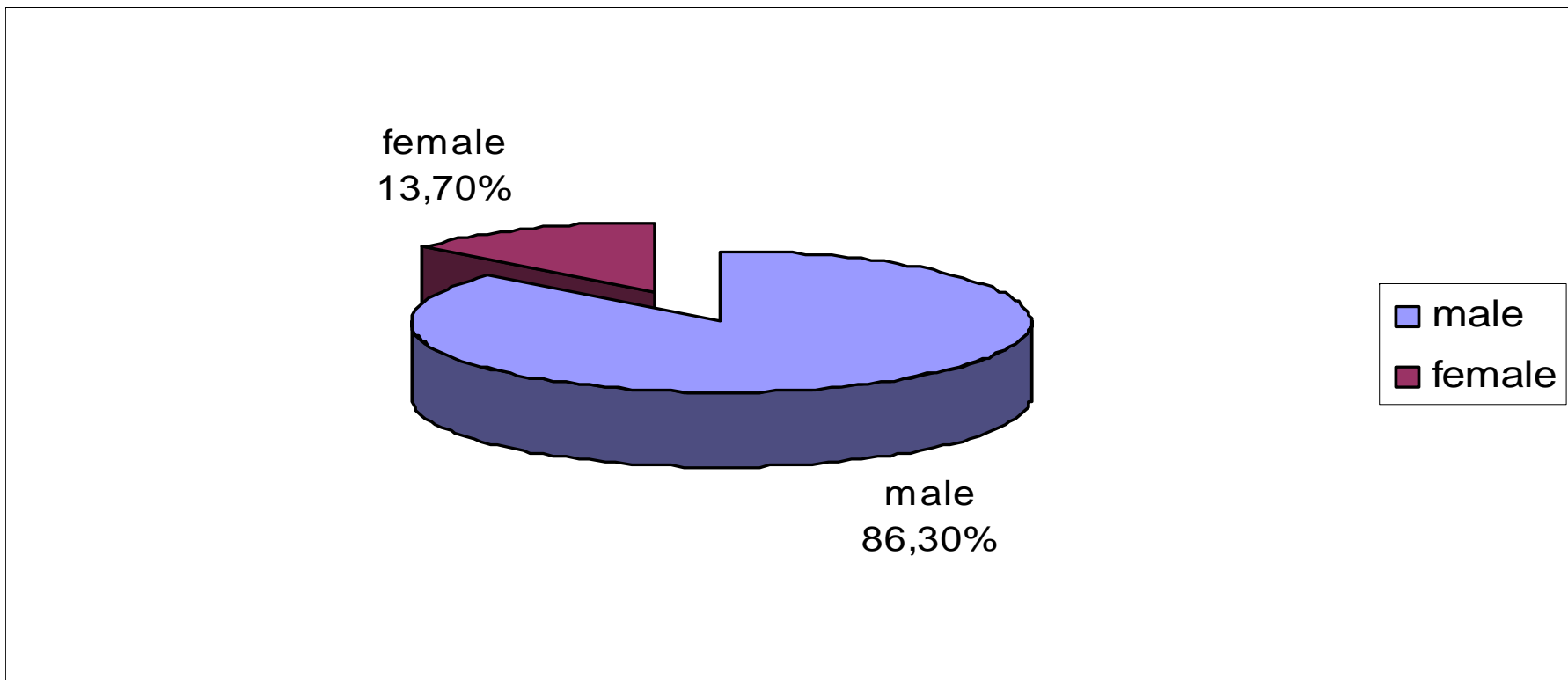
Probation cases: 12.500 (2008)



Probation Age



Probation Gender



Methods

Probation work is primarily face to face case work. For special target groups (juveniles and young adults specially in offences related to aggression we implemented group work (6-12 months).

For adequate support we have to know the life space of our clients. Therefore we visit our clients in their living environments. We call that life-orientated, problem solving casework instead of counselling in a come structure.

Reports

Six month after the order we have to report about the client to court. At the end of the supervision period we have to issue a final report (generally 2 reports are obliged).

But at any time a judge can request a report.

Contacts

- ... We work with core elements of case-work**
- ... We distinguish the contacts between average, intensive and reduced frequency. It depends on the solving problems and on the severness of the cases (specially sexual offenders, high risk offenders).**

Legal aspects of probation

By law probation has the mandate to help the offender towards a way of life and attitude which will prevent him/her in the future from committing crime.

For this purpose a court may order probation in order to suspend an imposed sanction either completely or in part for the duration of a supervised period

Legal aspects of probation

- **A sentence is suspended conditionally in full limited up to three years (custodial sentence).**
- **A part of a sentence is suspended conditionally limited up to three years.**
- **A convicted person is conditionally released from imprisonment (after serving half or two thirds of the sentence).**
- **A detainee is released from a preventive measure (mentally disordered persons who committed a crime).**

Legal aspects

If the client persistently ignores the contact with his probation officer or a further offence is committed, the court can impose an unconditional sentence.

After care service

Cases: 5.044 (2008)

~ 30 % pre release counselling

Structure of financing and budgeting

