



General Information

- Number of inhabitants: 5.34 million at May 2009.¹
- Prison population rate per 100,000 inhabitants: 67.
- Link to Probation Service:
 - www.kriminaalihuolto.fi
- Links to websites:
 - www.om.fi (Ministry of Justice)
 - www.krits.fi (Probation Foundation)
 - www.rikosseuraamus.fi (Criminal Sanctions Agency)
 - www.heuni.fi (The European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control affiliated with the United Nations)
- Member of the CEP in: 2001.

Characteristics of the Probation Service

- The non-private Probation Service is organized under the Criminal Policy Department of the Ministry of Justice since 2001. Before that time the private Probation Association, funded by the State, took care of probation work (mainly the supervision of offenders under conditional release and community service for juveniles).
- The Probation Service deals with young offenders (above the age of 15 years) and adults.
- Probation tasks are carried out by official probation workers. Private persons can be involved in probation work (for instance acting as supervisors of conditionally sentenced young offenders). The Probation Service cooperates in the Southern region of Finland with the Probation Foundation (a non-governmental aftercare organisation) within a project for under 26 year old prisoners. The project aims to create a network model to diminish reoffending after release by developing skills and thinking which support substance-free lifestyle.
- Internal organization:
 - Chief Director;
 - Probation Administration within the Criminal Sanctions Agency of the Ministry of Justice, responsible for the planning and development of the functions of the Probation Service);
 - 15 district offices.

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

- Private supervisors working under the guidance of the district offices contribute substantially to the supervision work. They do not have the same responsibility as the official probation workers. Approximately 200 clients per day are supervised by private supervisors.

Tasks

The Probation Service is mainly in charge of the enforcement of community sanctions and measures (community service, supervision of conditionally sentenced young offenders, supervision of conditionally released offenders, juvenile punishment). Juvenile punishment can be imposed on young persons, if a fine is considered insufficient and unconditional imprisonment too severe. It may consist of supervision and work, educational/psychosocial interventions and programs. The Probation Service advises the public prosecutor on the suitability of the offender for community services. To prepare the conditional release probation officers visit the prisoners in order to draft a release and supervision plan. Behavioral interventions are used in the framework of community service and supervision with regard to conditional released offenders cognitive behavioral.

Number of staff (on 31 December 2006)

- Probation workers:	260
- Management:	16
- Administrative and other staff:	54
- Total:	330
- (Private supervisors / volunteers):	316

- Daily average number of offenders/clients dealt with: 4,700 in 2008.

New developments

- Newly shaped community sanctions (community service and juvenile punishment) require that the Probation Service recruits private persons as assistant supervisors needed in the enforcement of sanctions (especially for community service).
- The emphasis of the development of community sanctions enforcement is on:
 - intensifying systematic working methods;
 - conducting assessments;
 - developing individual activity programmes.
- In the development of activity programmes used in the enforcement of community sanctions, the Probation Service since 1997 concentrates on short-term programmes (in 1997 the Service started cognitive skills-programs). The development includes strategic policies like:
 - intensifying the co-operation with local authorities;
 - building regional co-operational networks with substance abuse treatment services;
 - assessing the effectiveness of the enforcement on an individual basis.

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	
Supervising/organising community service		X	
Juvenile punishment		X	
Supervising etc. conditional sentence		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](#).

