

Is the day of a probation officer in Germany similar to the one of someone working in Romania? In the series 'A day in the life of a probation officer', we publish articles written by probation officers from different countries in Europe to see if their days look a like or are very different from each other. This article is written by Iulia Terpan, Probation Officer for the Moldovan Probation Service.

My name is Iulia Terpan and I am a probation counsellor within Moldovan probation service, territorial probation bureau Chisinau (Centre sector).

I have been working within the probation system since 2013. I was informed about probation activity when being a student at the Law Faculty, Moldova State University. Moreover, I carried out an internship within Penitentiary Institution No. 13, Chisinau. At that time, I interacted for the first time with professionals dealing with enforcement of criminal punishments, I learned about their life stories and felt in love with this occupation: to change the lives in a better way.

Beginning of the day



I start my day in a good mood, by checking my emails. In compliance with the probation counselor's job description, there are a lot of activities to be accomplished: supervision of the enforcement of non-deprivation of liberty punishments, drafting pre-sentence reports, conducting probation programs, providing assistance to probation beneficiaries, as well monitoring of persons exempted from criminal liability by means of conviction with a conditional suspension of execution of punishment or conditional exemption from punishment prior to the term of expiration.

Each probation counsellor has a preset agenda, for instance: court hearings, appointments with probation beneficiaries, conducting probation programs. It is hard to follow a daily working plan because, an unpredictable situation can appear and it is necessary to be immediately connected.

Afternoon

The most important challenge of our activity is the work with beneficiaries. Within our territorial probation bureau there are 300 beneficiaries, among them are addicted persons, victims of domestic violence, persons with sad and tough destinies, and our mission is to direct them to the appropriate specialized services. The counseling appointment with a beneficiary lasts about 40 minutes and during this time we try to find out the changes regarding personal data, work; we discuss about the obligations established by court and the necessity to respect them, etc. The frequency of the appointments depends on the estimated risk of recidivism and the necessities of each beneficiary apart.

During the day we can have home visits, discussions with relatives, phone discussions, police requests concerning the convict's behavior, case file work, etc.

In our country the probation service is a young institution and the involvement of civil society is benefic for the development of probation activities. We benefit from NGO-s assistance, in particular,

trainings for probation counsellors, methodological guides, support for re-socialising the inmates and many other types of assistance.

Many beneficiaries are angry about the established obligations, therefore it is difficult to ensure and maintain a good co-operation. However, there are persons who are grateful to us for the provided services and assistance and that makes us happy.

When working within the probation service it is important to acknowledge that it is an activity which involves interaction with people, while successful results can be achieved by being patient, well-balanced, without stereotypes and by having a non-discriminatory attitude.

End of the day

I verify the activities to be accomplished the next day and prepare the agenda. The volume of work is too big for five probation counsellors working within our probation bureau. Nevertheless, after five years I see myself working as well within the probation system, conducting probation programs and trying to change the lives in a better way.

If probation was a person, I would ask her to be more humane, putting accent on reintegration, to be more flexible and modern.