

**MANAGEMENT AND  
CREATIVITY DURING A  
PANDEMIC SITUATION.  
HOW THE ROMANIAN  
PROBATION SERVICE REACTED  
TO A PANDEMIC CRISIS.**

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**SUCEAVA  
APRIL 2021**



# CONTEXT

## MARCH 2020

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- Incredible stories from our local hospital. A quarter of covid infection cases at the national level are confirmed in Suceava city.
- The local hospital has no more medicine for the infected patients. There are no protective equipments for the medical staff. 181 medical employees are infected, more than 600 covid cases are treated in the local hospital by 10 generalist doctors, located in the covid ward, because all the infectionist doctors from the hospital are infected and isolated in special places from the community (local hotels) in the beginning of March.
- Suceava, March 2020. There is a long line at the morgue. Suceava city is dying little by little. In the air there is a smell of death instead of spring. We feel fury, frustration, pity and a lot of sadness.
  - Titles from local newspapers

# HOW DO WE ADAPT TO NEW CHALLENGES?

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- 12 of March – In the first hour of the morning, after I consulted my team and my colleagues from the region, I decided to suspend all face to face meetings with our clients. The convicted persons were announced by phone or by email that the meetings were cancelled until the medical situation is stable. For the clients who already came to the meetings, we prepared flyers with our contact details (phone numbers, email addresses and the name of the probation counsellors) at the main entrance from the Palace of Justice.
- More than 80 convicted persons were planned for meetings at the probation service on the access lists on 12 of March. This was our daily quota of meetings.
- I informed our general director that we suspended all of our meetings, until we received the new working procedures, adapted to the pandemic context.

# HOW DO WE ADAPT TO NEW CHALLENGES?

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- We notified the prosecution units and the local courts and demanded:
  - to take into consideration a postpone for the legal terms for presentence reports, after May 2020, because we temporarily suspended all the evaluations face to face;
  - to take into consideration a postpone for executing the noncustodial educative measures for minor offenders;
  - to take into consideration a delay regarding the confirmations for executing the sentences for adult offenders.

# HOW DO WE ADAPT TO NEW CHALLENGES?

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- All the public institutions where the community work is executed were informed that the activities with probation clients will be suspended, until further notice and until the medical situation will be stable.
- The therapists in relation with probation service were also informed to suspend all the activities with probation clients, until the medical situation was stable.
- All the home visits were suspended because of the high risk of infection for probation counsellors.
- The access to the probation service was not allowed for the institutions, lawyers, judges, prosecutors, police officers, making the recommendation for online communication.

# HOW DO WE ADAPT TO NEW CHALLENGES?

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- In order to adopt the same practice, we decided to write a list with the sentences which were not executed (sentences in risk), to have a database when we would restart the meetings face to face with our clients. These lists were completed daily and transmitted to the local manager.
- Starting from 18th of March, I decided that all the probation counsellors start teleworking by rotation, except the local manager, who will be working everyday in the office. Also, I decided that the teams should be cut in half.
- Starting from 25th of March, taking into consideration the high rate of infections at the Palace of Justice and in the city, I decided that all the probation counsellors will work from home and everybody received a mobile phone to keep in touch with the clients.

# HOW DO WE ADAPT TO NEW CHALLENGES?

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- The whole team had access to the new working procedures, adapted to the crisis through a whatsapp group. At the end of the week the probation counsellors wrote down a few impressions about the teleworking, about the problems were they need supervision from the manager and about their emotional and mental state.
- The convicted persons sent support messages to our team, like: „Hello! I hope that you are fine and safe these days! Take care of you! This situation won't last forever and soon we will return to normality. Please stay safe!”.
- The same support came from the university teachers who we collaborated with on students practice in probation field: “ Dear colleagues from Suceava, I think of you hoping that the team is safe and brave! I wish you inner strength and trust that you'll pass through these difficult times. Best wishes and health! Our thoughts are pointed to Anca and the team from Suceava!”

# RETHINKING THE PRACTICE

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- Starting with 18th of May, when the city quarantine finished, the team returned to office.
- 181 cases were in risk of nonexecution in May, when we restarted the meetings face to face with our clients. We prioritized the cases in this way: the noncustodial educative measures for minors, the high risk of recidivism cases (violent offenders, clients with known mental illnesses, short probation terms) and the conditional released offenders.
- In our evidences from 2020, 1308 new probation cases were registered.
- The team counted 10 probation counsellors in daily activities.

# RETHINKING THE PRACTICE

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- Starting with 25th of May we retook the meetings with our clients but the conditions were modified in this way:
  - we established fluxes of entering and leaving our area for the clients; one entrance and one exit and a waiting area;
  - there were no more than 4 meetings face to face for every probation counsellor per day;
  - we restarted the home visits with the recommendation to be held outside the clients houses;

# RETHINKING THE PRACTICE

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- we restarted the practice programme in probation field for future magistrates (judges and prosecutors);
- the public institutions where our clients were executing the obligations such as community unpaid work and counselling programmes were informed that they should restart their activities, the prioritized cases were the ones that would finish the supervision in the next 6 month; for community work we demanded that the activities should take place outside the buildings, in order to reduce the risk of infection;

# PRESENT CONTEXT

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- We have a gap of 3-4 months regarding the execution of sentences from the moment the cases are referred to the probation counsellors by the local manager until the first meeting with the client take place.
- The probation counsellors are present every day in the office, in order to be efficient in these difficult working conditions.
- We are using mostly online communication with our clients and with other professional categories.
- Team interaction is most valuable for the probation activity so we try to find new opportunities in order to motivate the team (new programmes for offenders, activities in new projects, exercising new professional responsibilities, on line trainings).

# CHALLENGES FOR 2021

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- To keep low the risk of infection for my team (strictly respecting the sanitary measures).
- 9 probation counsellors from my team are fully vaccinated (they received both doses of vaccine).
- 11 new probation counsellors will join our team starting from August 2021.
- But the best news is that after 20 years of probation in appropriate conditions, we'll have our own building and we'll return to normality.
  - Thank you for this opportunity!!



Registrul Electronic Național de Vaccinări (<https://www.renv.ro>)

Dovada vaccinării este pusă la dispoziția persoanei vaccinate fie electronic, fie pe suport de hârtie pentru a-i permite acestuia să își țină evidența între cele două vizite la centrul de vaccinare (doza inițială și rapel) și a cunoaște tipul de vaccin administrat. Precizăm că vaccinarea este gratuită, voluntară, iar adeverința de vaccinare nu este eliberată cu scopul de a condiționa sau restricționa drepturile persoanelor vaccinate.

Evidence of vaccination is made available to the vaccinated person either electronically or on paper to allow him to keep track between the two visits to the vaccination center (initial dose and booster) and to know the type of vaccine administered. Please note that vaccination is free, voluntary, and the vaccination certificate is not issued in order to condition or restrict the rights of vaccinated persons.

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1-3 Dr. A. Leonte Street, Bucharest ROMANIA  
Phone: (+4021) 318 36 20  
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Comitetul Național de Coordonare a Activităților privind Vaccinarea împotriva COVID-19 (CNCAV)  
<http://www.vaccinare-covid.gov.ro>

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MINISTERUL SĂNĂTĂȚII

**Adeverință de vaccinare**  
Vaccination certificate

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NUME PRENUME / NAME SURNAME  
NICOARĂ ANCA

Sex / Sex F Varsta / Age 43  
Judet domiciliu / Address Suceava  
Seria Numar CI (Identity card) / SV 913632

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INFORMATII DESPRE VACCIN / VACCINE INFO

Doza 1 (Dose 1) Tip vaccin(Type of vaccine): Vaccin Impotriva COVID19  
Produs (Product) Pfizer - BIONTech / LotNr (Batch no): ER7812  
Data expirării (Expiration date) 30-06-2021  
Data vaccinării (Date of vaccination) 11-03-2021

Doza 2 (Dose 2) Tip vaccin(Type of vaccine): Vaccin Impotriva COVID19  
Produs (Product) Pfizer - BIONTech / LotNr (Batch no): ET7205  
Data expirării (Expiration date) 31-07-2021  
Data vaccinării (Date of vaccination) 01-04-2021

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DATE DESPRE CENTRUL DE VACCINARE

Nume centru de vaccinare / Name of vaccination center  
Spitalul Judetean de Urgenta Suceava  
Judetul / County  
Suceava

This document is signed by

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	<b>Serial-No.</b>	10528610325548798918863849364
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