



Probation in Europe 2013-2014 Edition

Probation in Europe 2014 Edition is in many ways an update of the previous editions. Most of the sections of each chapter are the same as in the 2008 Edition. The reason we decided to keep the same structure of the book is that we believe that it serves its current purpose: to provide an accurate description of the probations systems within their own socio-economic environment.

This book is not a comparative analysis as some scholars looked at it, but a description of probation systems in 32 different jurisdictions. As Nelken (2010), we believe that *'description can provide the basis for explanation and understanding'* (16). But description is only the first step in the process of comparative analysis. In this sense, the book aims at assisting researchers, policy makers, practitioners and so on in making this first step only. In order to develop a more localized understanding of probation policy and practice in any given space, one should strive to search in depth how and why different developments took place, how are they related to cultural or societal features and so on. The fact that risk assessment instruments were developed in some jurisdictions does not mean necessarily that this tool is needed in all of them. In most cases, risk assessment is arguably associated with a culture of risk where the public is more concerned in how to protect itself and not in how to support offenders in the rehabilitation process. Therefore, risk assessment may make sense in England and Wales but would struggle to fit into the Swedish context.

In order to provide a comprehensive description, each chapter follows the same structure: introduction, historical developments, legislative basis, the organization of probation service, different stages of the criminal justice process, probation methodology, finances, accounting, registration systems and evaluation procedures, societal support and client's views, probation clients rights, developments to be expected, important publication and main addresses. Each chapter is summarized at the end in one or two pages.

While most of the sections capture the 'law in books' perspective, the authors are often encouraged to use their own judgment about how probation is deployed and implemented at the street level. To strengthen this 'law in practice' perspective and also to enhance the critical view on the developments, this edition made it as a rule to have at least two authors for each chapter: one from the probation system and one from the academic world. By doing so, we hope to encourage a more objective and critical description of the probation systems in Europe.

Another departure from the previous edition is the use of the European Probation Rules, adopted by the Council of Europe (CM/Rec(2010)1 on the Council of Europe Probation Rules). At the beginning of each main section of the chapter, the authors are invited to reflect on a selection of rules relevant to that particular section. The question that the authors should have in mind during this reflection is to what extent these rules are implemented in the national legislation and practice. The authors are also encouraged to explain what and why some rules are implemented and other are not.

By doing so, we had two objectives in mind: one was to provide the authors more checkpoints that would help them offer a more objective view on the developments. The second objective was to initiate a more vertical comparison (*Morgenstern and Larrauri, 2013*) whereby the policies and practices in different countries are described in their interaction with the norms of the European institutions.

We hope to complete the book by the end of 2014, beginning of 2015. However, to prevent the fact that some chapters written in 2013 might be outdated by 2015, once one chapter is ready to be published, it will be uploaded on the CEP dedicated website. The electronic nature of the book will allow us to up date constantly the content of each chapter and will facilitate immediate access to the book. Once we have a critical number of chapters (15-20) we will have the first attempt to write an overview chapter that will provide an airplane view on the probation landscape in Europe.

Anton van Kalmthout
Ioan Durnescu
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References:

Morgenstern, C. and Larrauri, E. (2013) 'European norms, policy and practice' in F. McNeill and Beyens, K. (eds.) *Offender Supervision in Europe*, Palgrave Macmillan

Nelken, D. (2010) *Comparative Criminal Justice* SAGE