

Measuring Workload Effectively

The Latvian Experience

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• State Probation Service's functions



- to provide a **pre-sentence/ parole report**;
- to ensure **community supervision**;
- to ensure the development of **probation programmes** and the implementation of licensed programmes;
- to organise and manage **mediation** in the criminal proceedings and minors' cases (compulsory measure of correctional nature)
- to organise the execution of **community service** (criminal punishment and compulsory measure of correctional nature);
- to ensure **probation observation** for children (compulsory measure of correctional nature)



Workload Measurement System

The distribution of probation client cases among employees is based on the workload coefficient, which is calculated by the workload calculation system



Experience

The first steps in developing the workload calculation in Latvia in 2008

The main idea and goal

To divide client cases among employees as evenly as possible

Development

Over the years, we have achieved the most objective and easiest approach to date – the workload coefficient (level) is calculated within the probation client case management system



History

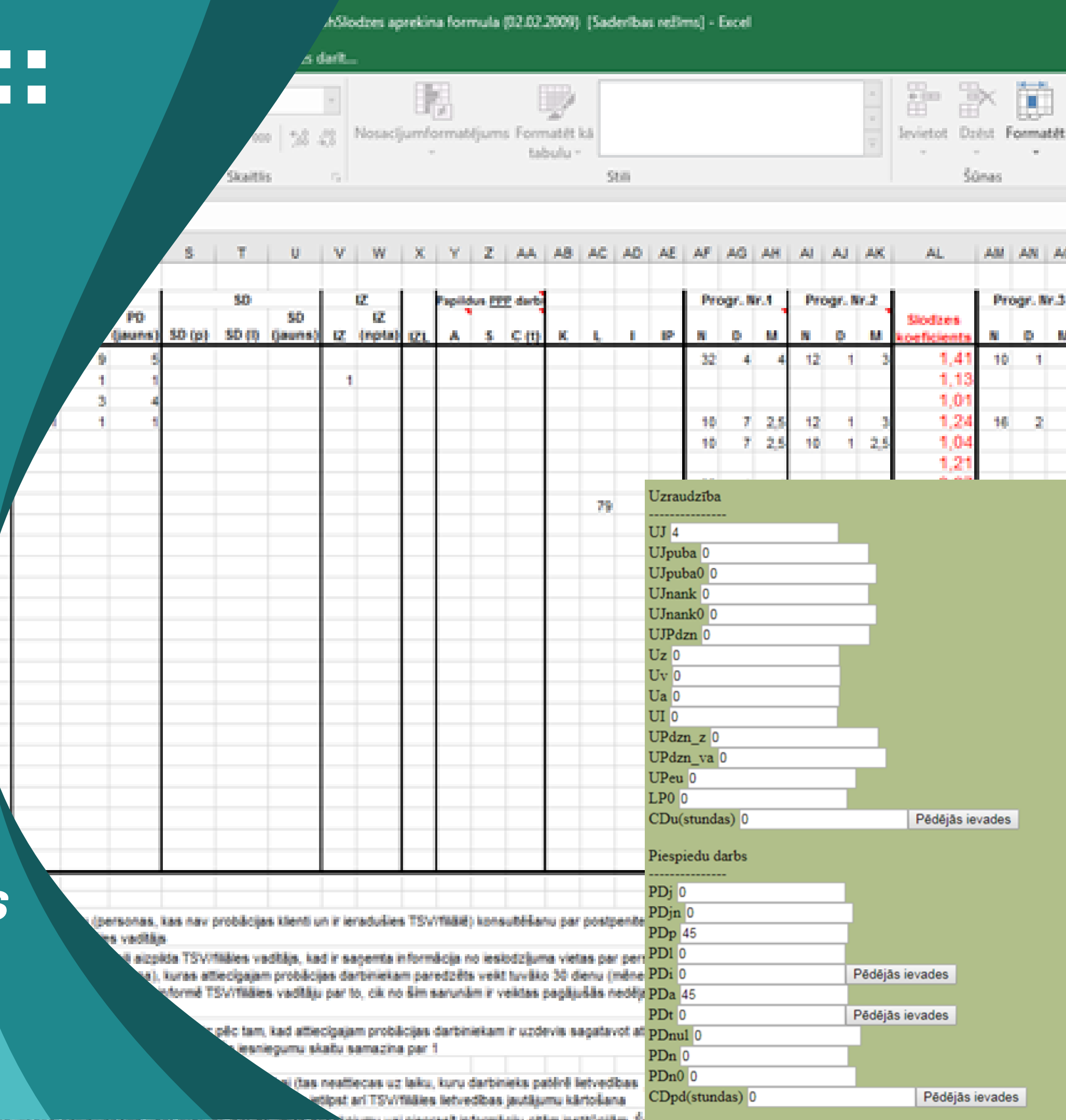
**2008 - Excel spreadsheets,
2011 - App**

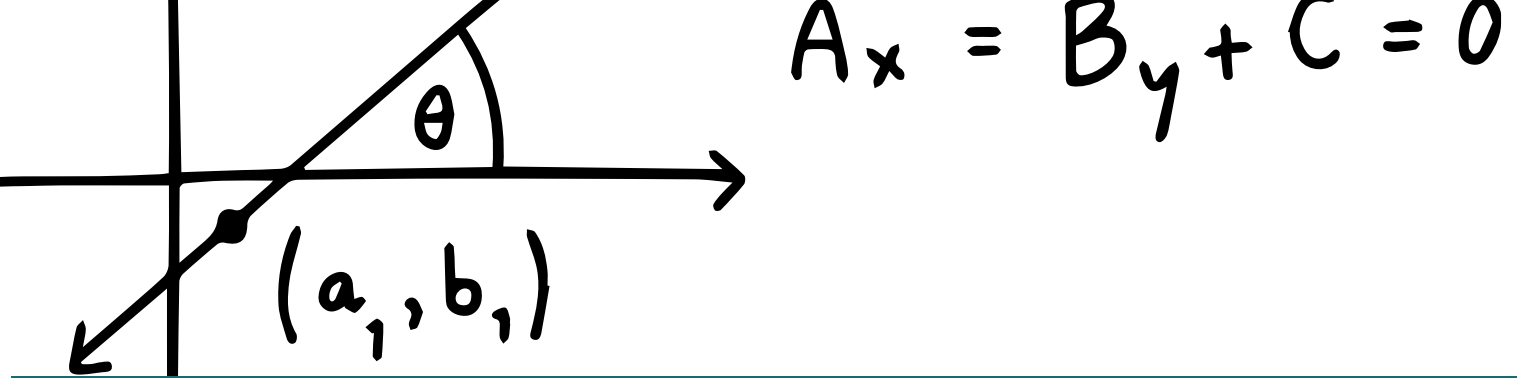
Department managers used Excel spreadsheets, later the app to understand which employee had a lower workload and to whom they could assign a new client

**Since 2020 - Automatic calculation
in the client data system**

The system calculates the workload level based on the number of clients and the activities entered into the data system

***Automatic calculation provides
a much more objective and
accurate result***



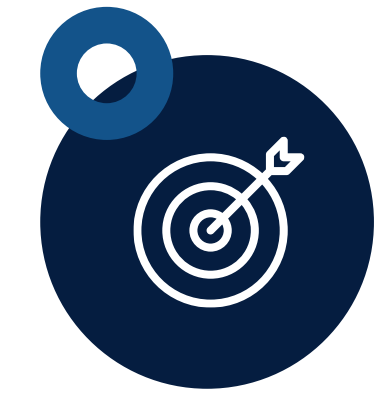


A workload coefficient of "1 " represents full use of a specialist's working hours

COUNTING PRINCIPLE

$$\frac{\text{average time X number of cases}}{\text{number of working hours}} = \text{Workload coefficient}$$

- *If the coefficient is less than 1, the specialist can be assigned new cases*
- *If the coefficient is greater than 1, it is not recommended to assign new cases*



We know how much time on average it takes to handle a client's case, depending on the type of case



We calculate the coefficient for each employee, division, region



We take into account the training period and other responsibilities not related to the work with clients

The normal coefficient (1) can vary from 8 to 100 clients, depending on the client's risk level, type or function additional activities



New employee – first 6 months **0,94**

- Additional activities - **0,1**
- Participation in training, lack of experience - **0,4**
- Supervision – low risk – **6 clients**
- Community service – **6 clients**
- **TOTAL CLIENTS: 12**



Head of Division **1,02**

- Additional activities - **0,1**
- Division management - **0,6**
- Supervision – medium risk – **3 clients**
- Supervision – high risk – **2 clients**
- Probation programme - **1 group**
- **TOTAL CLIENTS: 5 + group**



Probation specialist **1,04**

- Additional activities - **0,1**
- Community service – **6 clients**
- Supervision – low risk – **74 clients**
- Supervision – medium risk – **1 client**
- **TOTAL CLIENTS: 81**

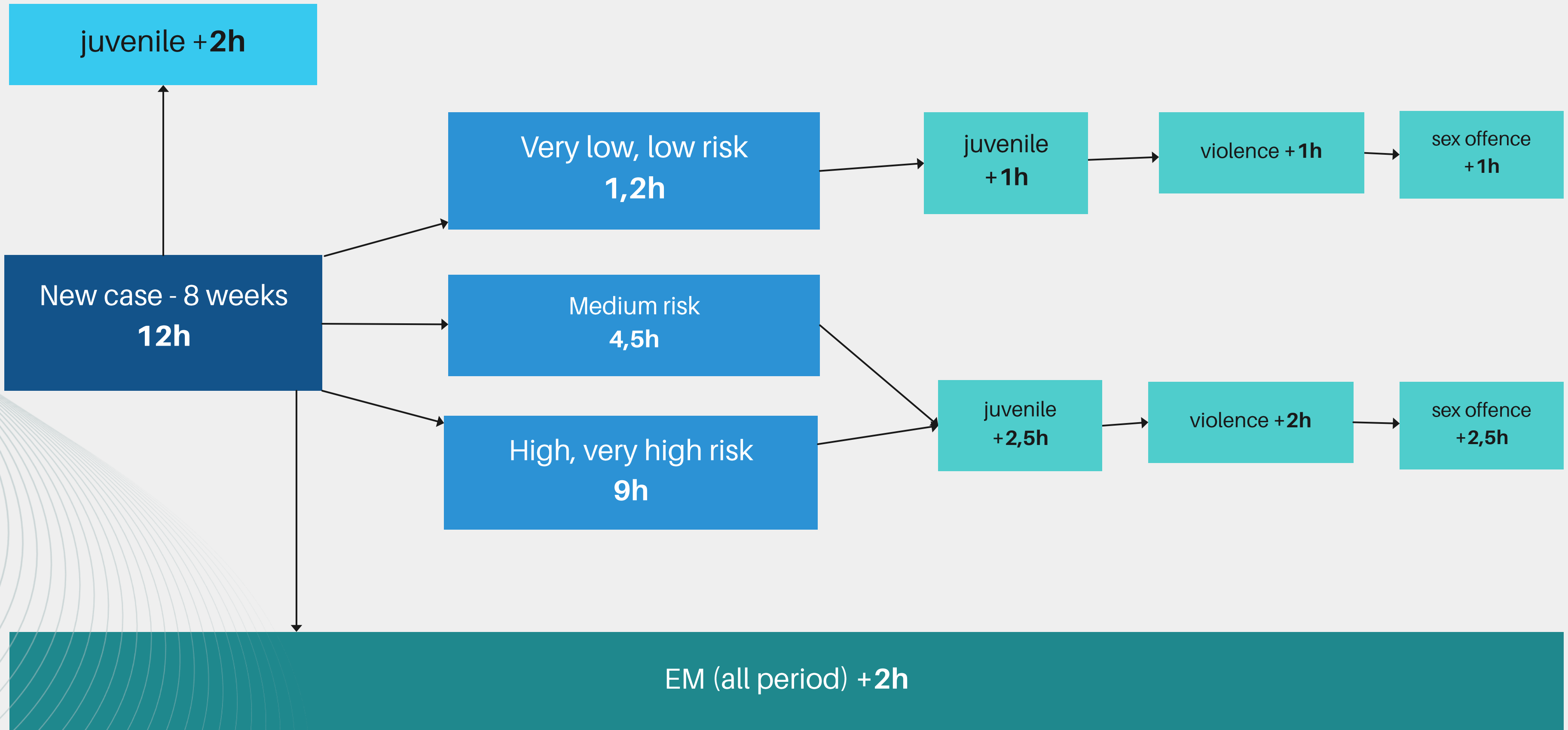


Senior probation specialist **1,04**

- Additional activities - **0,1**
- Supervision – medium risk – **10 clients**
- Supervision – high risk – **10 clients**
- Supervision – high risk (SO) – **3 clients**
- Parole report - **1 client**
- **TOTAL CLIENTS: 24**



CASE MANAGER (SUPERVISION - 1 CASE - TIME MONTHLY)



Is the Workload Calculation *Accurate*? Definitely not

Client-Side Variability

No two cases look the same. One client may require intensive emotional or social support and closer supervision. Another may be ill and unable to attend scheduled meetings. A third may have permission to leave the country, with contact conducted entirely through electronic means. These differences make any single measurement an approximation at best.

Staff-Side Variability

Specialist experience levels vary. A newly onboarded probation specialist may spend significant time reading guidance and consulting with colleagues. A seasoned specialist, familiar with all procedures, may complete the same documentation in a fraction of the time. Neither profile is an outlier — both are the reality.



The workload calculation is **not accurate** at the individual level. It cannot fully capture the complexity and variation in real-world caseloads and individual working styles.



Is the Workload Calculation *Objective?* Definitely yes

Structured, country-wide time tracking - probation specialists across the country record exactly how much time they spend on each activity and task.

~100

Specialists Participate

Each time tracking cycle involves approximately 100 probation specialists from across country

3

Year Cycle

The process is repeated every three years to keep coefficients current with evolving practice

Time tracking

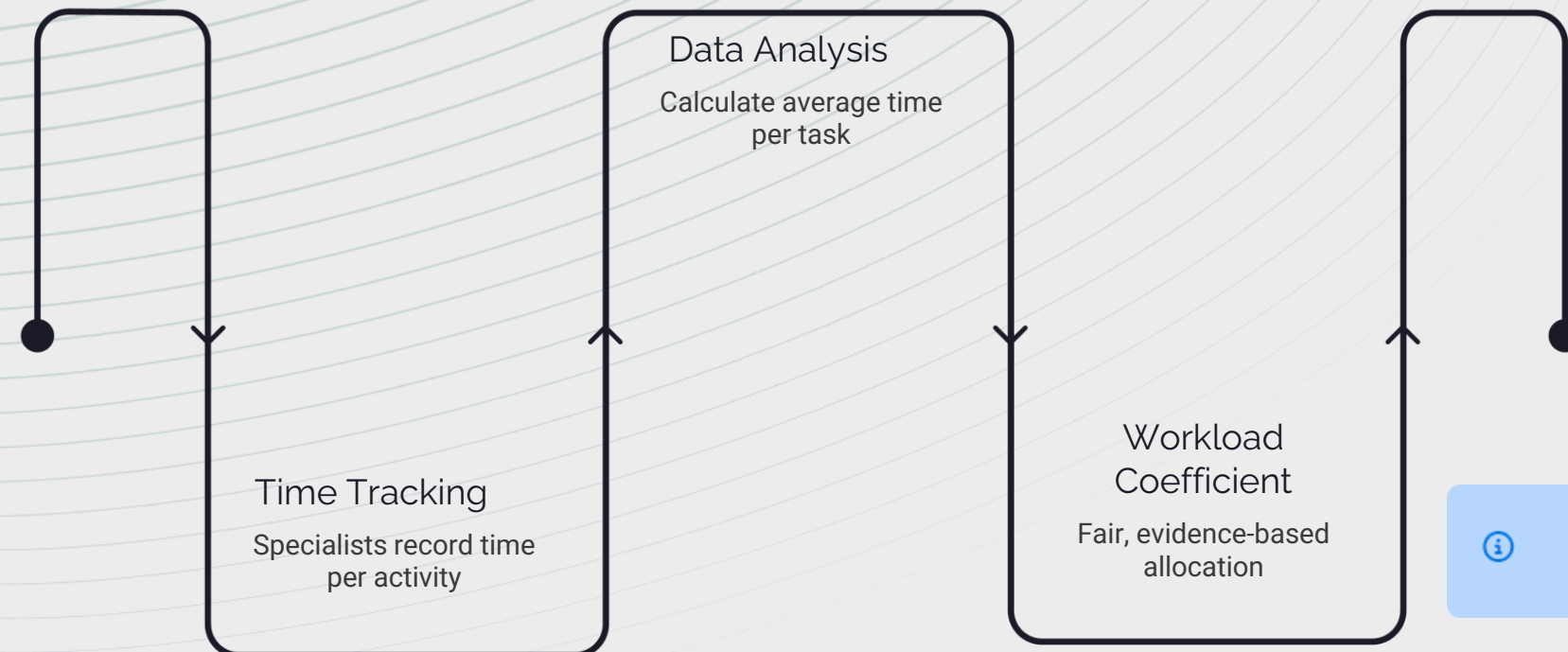
Participants are selected to reflect the real diversity of probation work – both in terms of the people doing it and the conditions they work in

Specialist Profiles

- With and without professional experience
- Younger specialists and those near retirement age
- Specialists with and without recognized specializations

Departmental Conditions

- Large and small geographic territories
- Good and poor public transport accessibility
- Departments with and without prisons nearby
- Other structural differences in working conditions



The time tracking data reveals the average time required for each activity. That average — drawn from a diverse, representative sample — forms the basis of the workload coefficient, making it as fair and evidence-grounded as any standardized system can be



Use the coefficient as a fair planning tool — not as a precise measure of any individual's actual daily workload

Statistics caseload and workload in Latvia



Number of active clients in
2025

14974

(26% of them are under
the age of 26)

Community work **4347**; Supervision **7931**; Mediation **1248**;
Pre - sentence report **1380**; CMCN (11-14y/o) **52 +14**

Number of probation specialists 2025

354

(7 working hours in a working
day)

Number of cases and workload 2024/ 2025

2024:

$16052/380 = 42$ cases per specialist

The average workload coefficient in the country **0,86**

2025:

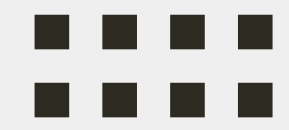
$14974/354 = 42$ cases per specialist

The average workload coefficient in the country **0,99**

The system is user-friendly and suitable for data analysis

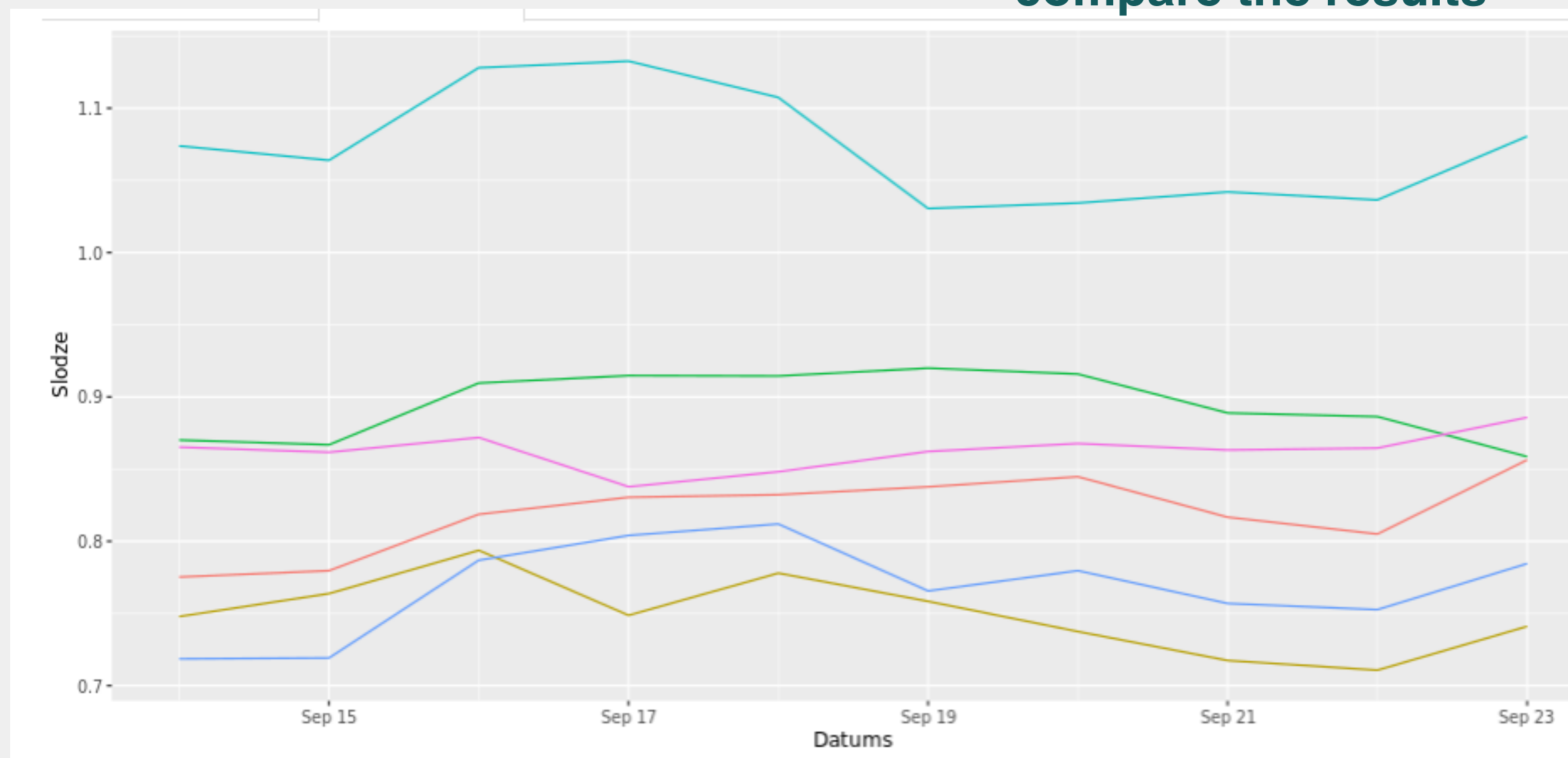
It shows the average workload coefficient at all levels – for each specialist, each division, and each region

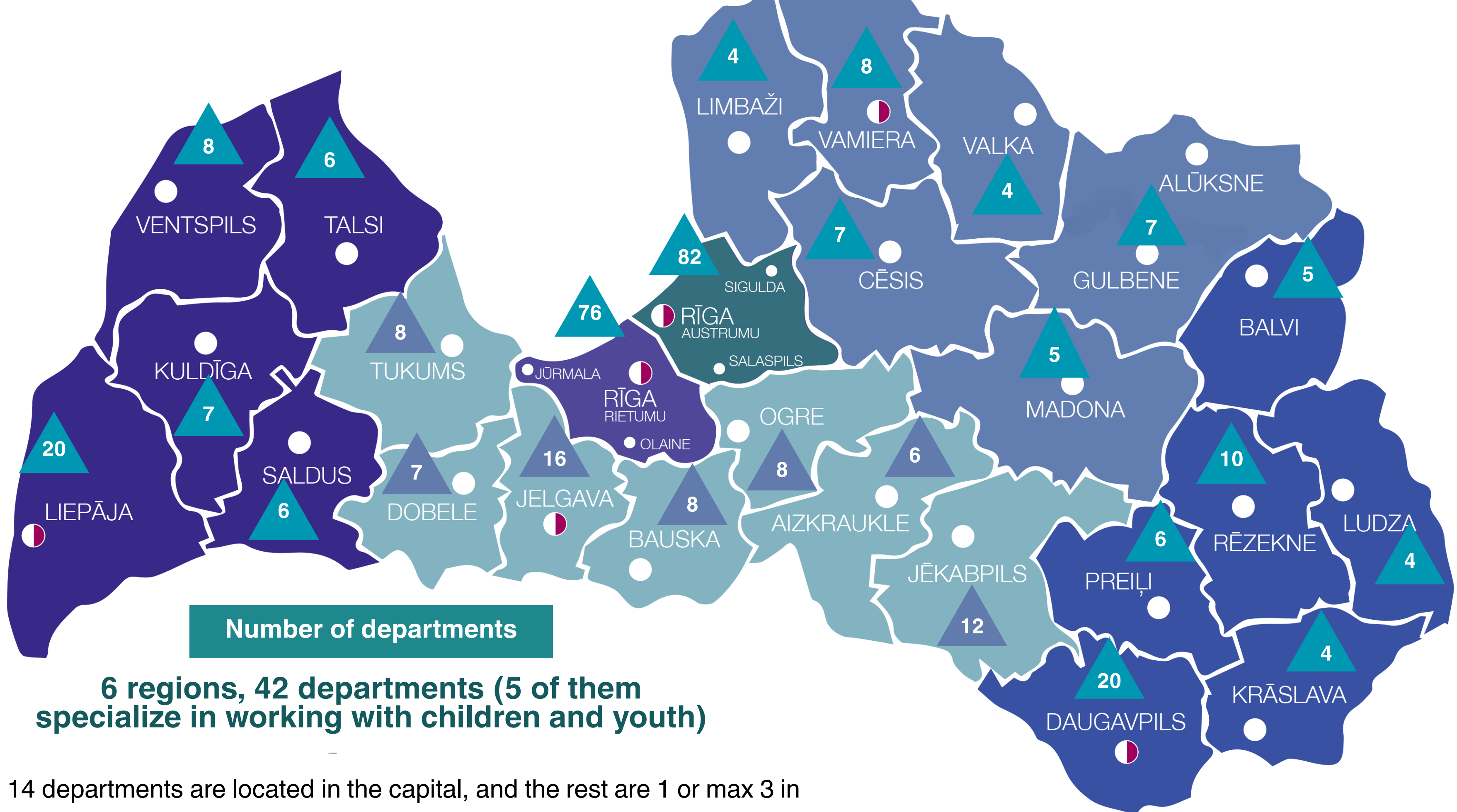
<i>Darbinieks</i>	<i>Vidējā slodze periodā</i>
Ēriks Beitelis	0.75
Līga Spale	0.81
Edīte Mārtinsone	0.85
Eva Mustermane	0.95
Līga Zīvere	0.98
Līga Muceniece	1.00
Ilze Žabova	1.22
<i>0.94</i>	



It also generates charts that help analyze and compare the results

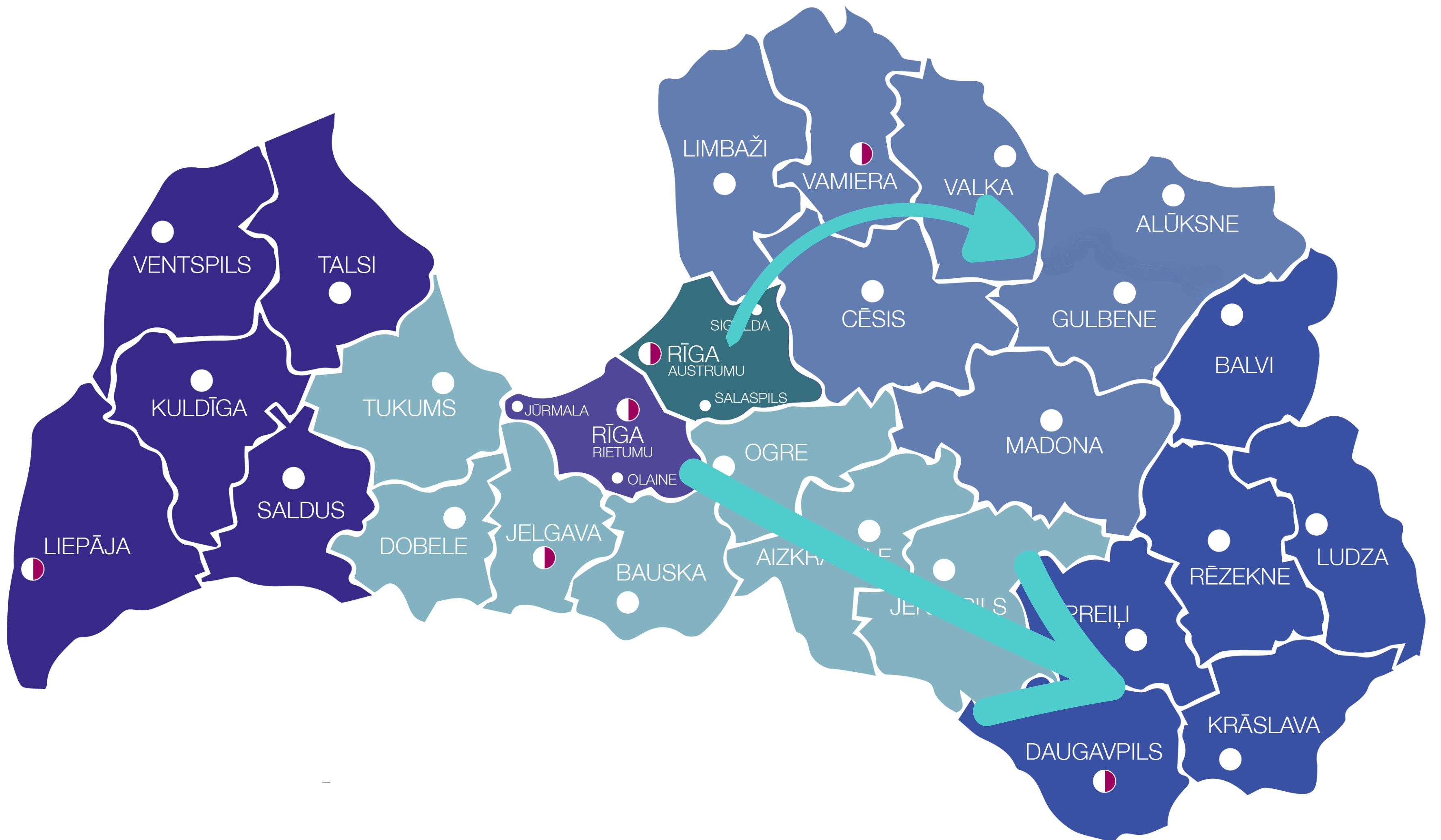
<i>Reģions</i>	<i>Vidējā slodze periodā</i>
Latgales reģiona teritoriālā struktūrvienība	0.75
Vidzemes reģiona teritoriālā struktūrvienība	0.77
Kurzemes reģiona teritoriālā struktūrvienība	0.82
Zemgales reģiona teritoriālā struktūrvienība	0.86
Rīgas Austrumu reģiona teritoriālā struktūrvienība	0.89
Rīgas Rietumu reģiona teritoriālā struktūrvienība	1.07
<i>0.86</i>	





6 regions, 42 departments (5 of them specialize in working with children and youth)

14 departments are located in the capital, and the rest are 1 or max 3 in the largest cities in Latvia. The largest department has max.10 employees, while the smallest has min. 4 employees



Requirements necessary for the development of a system

Laws, regulatory acts, instructions

Detailed description of client case management activities

The minimum required amount and intensity of activities that must be performed by a probation officer are determined for each probation function

Time tracking

For each activity in case management

Knowing the necessary activities in case management, we organize time tracking for each activity. Many employees record the time they spend on each task, which is then used to calculate the average time for every type of client

Probation Client Case Database

Detailed recording of activities

Case managers record the performed activities in the database and add all documents. The database performs calculations based on a programmed formula – for each type of probation client, an average time consumption is programmed



Continuous attention and amount of work

Monitoring workload levels requires continuous attention. Division and regional managers constantly monitor workload levels and take actions to balance them.

Time tracking requires a significant amount of time from the person responsible for the system

Emotional aspect

Probation specialists are informed about workload levels and, in cases of overload, sometimes react negatively and use it as an excuse for making mistakes



Equal working conditions for probation officers

The workload system helps balance the workload among employees within a department, region, and across the entire country

Resource Planning

Regular monitoring of the situation helps coordinate resources and determine the required number of employees in each department

Employee Well-being

By preventing overload, we ensure good working conditions for employees and help avoid the risk of burnout

Well-founded Arguments for the Government

We present our proposals to the government, which are based on workload levels

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Thank You for your attention!



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