THE CONFEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PROBATION (CEP)

About CEP

The Confederation of European Probation (CEP) is the established European organisation for probation and the voice and leader for probation in Europe. It was established in 1981 as the network of probation organisations in Europe to share knowledge, exchange expertise and support developments in the field of community sanctions in Europe.

CEP aims to promote the social inclusion of offenders through community sanctions and measures such as probation, community service, mediation and conciliation. CEP is committed to enhance the profile of probation and to improve professionalism and practice among its members and across Europe.

CEP champions respect for human rights, compliance with ethical standards in all probation practice and actions and fairness for all in criminal justice. CEP recognises the importance of legitimacy and support in creating public value and confidence in the work of probation organisations and community-based sanctions. CEP believes that a society built on the principles of social inclusion provides communities the best protection from the harm and distress caused by crime.

For CEP and its members

- probation is about "turning lives around" through the rehabilitation and re-integration of those who have offended, by challenging and addressing the underlying causes of their criminal behaviour;
- probation measures and community sanctions are more effective in the reduction of recidivism and create better outcomes for communities, victims of crime as well as those who have offended;
- probation measures and community sanctions are more cost effective than custody;
- CEP and probation services have an important role in reducing re-offending, keeping communities safer and reducing victimisation and related harms.

Since 1981, CEP has worked with the key European institutions, national authorities, members and partner bodies to promote the rehabilitation and social inclusion of offenders through sanctions and measures implemented in the community. For European bodies such as the European Union (EU) and the Council of Europe (CoE), CEP is the spokesperson and contact point for the sector of probation, providing expertise, comparative data and representation for its members. CEP has grown and developed over the last almost forty years and is the now the key network representing probation interests as well as providing support, advice and guidance to national authorities and governments.

CEP members come from the 47 Member States of the Council of Europe, and comprise organisations working in the field of probation, research and education bodies, researchers and interested individuals. Together they represent a unique network of knowledge and expertise about

1 Currently 46 Member States as the Russia is suspended by the Council of Europe due to the war in the Ukraine.
positive ways of working with offenders in the community to promote rehabilitation, reduce re-offending and make communities safer. Most importantly, CEP facilitates its members in working together, sharing expertise, learning with and supporting each other.

**CEP Board and Staff**

The CEP board, President and two Vice-Presidents, elected every three years at the General Assembly, represent the membership across Europe including large and small jurisdictions and manage the business of CEP. The administrative centre of CEP is located in Utrecht in the Netherlands with an experienced secretariat for all your questions (secr@cep-probatlon.org) led by the Secretary-General. In addition, CEP has two full-time policy officers, based in Barcelona and in Prague.

The President of CEP chairs the CEP Board. The CEP President, Vice-Presidents and Secretary General represent CEP at conferences, meetings and events on probation and related themes. They welcome every opportunity to champion the work of probation agencies and workers with national and international authorities and criminal justice bodies.

**CEP Activities**

All over Europe CEP organises and hosts with members, many conferences, seminars, webinars, workshops, expert meetings each year and publishes media content to support and develop practice and use of community sanctions. It advises and informs decision and policy makers and works with criminal justice bodies and other interests to support and promote the increased use of community sanctions and reduced use of custody. For example: the biannual Conference for Directors General of Probation (9th edition 2021, Abbaye de Saint Louis, Royaumont, near Paris), the biannual International Conference on Alternatives to detention in Central and East European Countries, (Prague, 2021) and the 12th edition of the CEP Conference on Electronic Monitoring, (Helsinki, 2022)

The CEP workshops, webinars, expert groups and networks bring to together knowledge and experience to address issues and challenges. Currently, CEP has established expert groups on radicalisation and violent extremism, sex offender supervision, new technology, foreign nationals, domestic violence and mental health. The CEP expert network on research in probation and community measures promotes and supports cross-jurisdiction studies on probation themes. CEP has also initiated an expert network to bring together training and education experts to share knowledge and experience in the training and development of probation staff.

The outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020 had a particularly disruptive effect on the work of probation in Europe. Organisations were forced to create new ways of working and to provide additional guidance and instructions for staff in managing their daily work and responsibilities. The crisis posed new challenges for CEP in hosting events and communicating with our members. CEP organized many webinars, various digital thematic meetings for Directors Generals and many online expert meetings. CEP collected and published national protocols and research on probation issues and on COVID-19. CEP started a special section on its website on probation practice during the crisis, “A Day

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2 The next CEP General Assembly will take place in Dubrovnik, October 2022. A new board will be elected there.
3 Due to retirement a new Secretary General will be appointed during the last quarter of 2022.
in a Life of a Probation Officer”, featuring personal contributions from probation staff across Europe. It has proven to be a very popular and valued feature and is continuing on the CEP website.

It is clear that online meetings and seminars will also be offered in the coming years in addition to the traditional in-person events. The online events provide an opportunity for wider participation and offers probation professionals from all over the world the opportunity to contribute and to enrich their knowledge in the field of probation and alternatives to detention.

The Confederation of European Probation (CEP) has a busy and demanding programme of work ahead in the coming years. In addition to strengthening and professionalising probation in Europe, CEP has a role in developing responses to the threats of radicalisation and violent extremism (especially those at risk or involved and subject to supervision in the community). CEP is also leading initiatives to address young adult (18-24 years) offending, mental health problems among offenders and best use of new technology in community sanctions among other important themes and topics.

**The voice for probation in Europe**

CEP places great value on co-operation and collaboration with criminal justice partner bodies across Europe and in member jurisdictions, as well as with the European institutions such as the European Commission and the Council of Europe. CEP has, for example, worked with and supported the Council of Europe Council for Penological Co-operation (PC-CP) in its development of the European Probation Rules (2010), its recommendation on the European Rules on community sanctions and measures (2017), its recommendation on Restorative Justice (2018) Guidelines on the Training, Selection, Education and Recruitment of Probation and Prison Staff (2019) and the recommendation regarding the assessment, management and reintegration of persons accused or convicted of a sexual offence (2021). CEP is in receipt of EC Justice and Consumers Directorate-General funding support.

In addition, CEP works with EC Justice and Consumers Directorate-General in Brussels to enhance and promote legal and legislative co-operation. CEP has taken a lead role in the promotion, information dissemination and skills development regarding EC Framework Decision 2008/947/JHA, the application of the principle of mutual recognition to judgments and probation decisions with a view to the mutual recognition and supervision of probation measures and alternative sanctions across Europe. The Framework Decision enables, for example, a Community Service Order made in one European Member State, to be transferred and completed in another Member State, in the interests of rehabilitation and resettlement of sentenced persons.

**The network organisation**

The work of CEP engages a wide audience of shared interests in the criminal justice sector in Europe and more widely through collaboration with other network organisations, including EuroPris and the European Forum for Restorative Justice (partners in the Criminal Justice Platform Europe with CEP), the European Forum for Urban Security (EFUS), the Academy of European Law (ERA), The International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT), The Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN), Penal Reform International (PRI), Work with Perpetrators European Network (WWP EN), Victim Support Europe (VSE) and other partners.
Globally CEP liaises with other network organisations with a shared interest in the criminal justice sector and alternatives to detention, including the International Corrections and Prisons Association (ICPA), the American Probation and Parole Association (APPA), CCJA, the Canadian Criminal Justice Association (CCJA), the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFEI) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

CEP, with European and international colleagues and partners, hosted the highly successful first World Congress on Probation in London in 2013. Biennial World Congresses have since followed in Los Angeles, Tokyo and Sydney. The next World Congress, postponed in 2021 due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, will be held later this year in Ottawa, Canada. CEP has had a central role in the development of the World Congress on Probation since its inception as a world-wide forum opportunity to meet, share knowledge and exchange experiences and is committed in its support for future Congresses. Information and registration details for the Ottawa World Congress can be accessed here or at the website of the World Congress 2022.

Communication

Perhaps the best-known and most visited CEP resource is the CEP website with its knowledgebase, media presentations, newsletters, reports, features and resources on probation and community sanctions. The CEP website is the largest single online resource for probation-related matters. The website is constantly updated, with conference reports and presentations, and information on upcoming events, publications and developments. Probation in Europe, on the CEP website, is a comprehensive database of information on probation in each member jurisdiction written by local experts.

Do visit the CEP website and subscribe be to CEP newsletters there, join the CEP social media groups on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. Visit the CEP You-Tube channel and please participate in CEP events. You can also keep up to date with new developments on probation and community measures in Europe and, above all, keep in contact with the wider family of probation in Europe and across the world through the CEP website and its links.

Gerry McNally, CEP President
Willem van der Brugge, Secretary General

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