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*Newsletter of the Probation Service (Ireland)*

*July 2019*



## Message from Director

The latest recidivism study report published by the Central Statistics Office last month, showed positive results for the Irish Probation Service. The report reflects steady improvements in the rates of desistance from reoffending in respect of those who have been supervised on probation or community service, since the Central Statistics Office started compiling and publishing these outcome studies. Specifically, overall rates of reconviction fell by almost eight percentage points, from 55% of those under our supervision in 2008 reoffending over the following five years, to 47% reoffending in respect of the 2012 cohort. This reduced rate of reconviction is a positive reflection, not only on the diligence and hard work of colleagues across the Probation Service, but also on how we have been implementing positive organisational changes. I commend all Probation Service staff, and our close organisational partners, for this achievement. By being continually focused on helping our service users to reduce their risk of reoffending, and to reintegrate in their communities, we help to create a safer, fairer and more inclusive Ireland.



At the same time, we are aware that there is little room for complacency, and some subgroups in the recidivism research cohorts, notably young people and women, continue to demonstrate persistently high rates of reoffending. We are at an advanced stage of finalising the design of our new Irish Offender Supervision Framework, a professional

practice development project which has been under way for several months. The extensive engagement by staff across the Service, as well as representatives of partner organisations, again demonstrates the positive commitment by colleagues to continuous improvement in our services. I am confident that I reflect the shared optimism and commitment of colleagues across the Probation Service as we look forward to moving our probation practice, through the new Irish Offender Supervision Framework, to new levels of success, measured in positive outcomes such as increased levels of desistance from crime, and other appropriate indicators.

The next edition of *Probation works* will be published in September 2019.

*Vivian Geiran*

Director

Twitter: @VGeiran



## Probation in Numbers



This month (July 2019) there are:

**9,216** *Persons under Probation Service Supervision in the community;*

**1,602** *Prisoners receiving probation assistance in custody;*

**2,399** *People on Community Service*

## Staff Awards



Pictured: Probation staff at award ceremony.

The inaugural Probation Service Staff Awards ceremony took place in the Gresham Hotel on the 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2019. The awards scheme was

**1,337** Persons on various types of post-release probation supervision

**1,429** Women on probation Supervision in the community, and

**227** Persons under eighteen years of age under probation supervision in the community

The monthly Probation Service 'snapshot' statistical table for July 2019 is available at:

[Click Here](#)

Probation Service: Monthly Offender Population Report

Caseload	Community Regions (Point in Time July 1 2019)**				In Custody	Total (Person)
	Eastern	Midlands and South East	South West	West and North West		
<b>Total</b>	3,998	1,967	1,539	1,712	1,602	10,811
<b>Of Whom:</b>						
Female	580	308	278	263	65	1,484
Male	3,418	1,659	1,261	1,449	1,537	9,324
<b>Under 18</b>	122	39	35	31	0	227
<b>18 and over</b>	3,876	1,928	1,504	1,681	1,602	10,589
<b>Totals:</b>						
					<b>Total Caseload, in community:</b>	9,210
					<b>Total Caseload, in custody:</b>	1,602
					<b>Grand Total, national Probation Service caseload:</b>	10,811
					<b>The following are the major community supervision categories.</b>	
					<b>Probation Type Supervision**:</b>	3,524
					<b>Community Service:</b>	2,391
					<b>Supervision in the Community Post Release from Custody***:</b>	1,337
					<b>Community Return****:</b>	69
					<b>Life sentence prisoners on supervision in the community****:</b>	95
					<b>Sex offenders on supervision post release from custody****:</b>	173

**\*Regions**  
**Eastern:** Dublin, Meath, Louth, Wicklow  
**Midlands and South East:** Kildare, Laois, Offaly, Carlow, Kilkenny, Tipperary, Waterford, Wexford  
**South West:** Cork, Clare, Limerick, Kerry  
**West and North West:** Galway, Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim, Longford, Roscommon, Cavan, Monaghan, Donegal, Westmeath

**\*\*Probation Type Supervision** includes Probation Orders, Fully Suspended Sentence Supervision Orders, and Supervision During Deferment of Penalty.

**\*\*\* Supervision in the community post release from custody** includes Part Suspended Sentences, Temporary Release Supervision, Community Return, Life Sentence Prisoners on supervision in the community and Sex offenders on supervision in the community post release from custody.

**\*\*\*\*** Already included in the total of supervision in community post release from custody.

**Annual Report**

created to recognise and reward the efforts of Probation Service staff across all grades nationwide. Firstly there were nominations for 'a job well done' or for 'going the extra mile' in a number of categories including from *Services to Offenders* and *Teamwork* and secondly in recognition of long service, 30 years plus in the Probation Service and / or the Department of Justice and Equality was also recognised.

Finalists in the individual categories and those with long service were invited to attend with a guest. The event commenced with a welcome and opening remarks from Vivian Geiran, Director, Probation Service and Aidan O'Driscoll, Secretary General, who also presented the awards. The presentation commenced with the long service awards – 3 staff with over 40 years' Service and 39 with over 30 years' Service were recognised.

Special Category awards, were also presented.

The winners, announced that night, were:

**Services to Offenders: Rob Pickles, Probation Officer, Dublin**

**Services to Victims: Helena Morrin, Senior Probation Officer, Mayo.**

**Innovation in delivering Services: Derry Gahan, Community Service Supervisor**

**Customer Service: Breege McGuire Receptionist, Haymarket.**

**Partnership Working: Mairead Victory, Clerical Officer, Community Projects Dublin**

**Team Work: The Dublin North West Team which covers Finglas and Blanchardstown areas.**

Out of the Special Category nominations one overall 'Probation Champion' was selected. This award went to Rob Pickles, Probation Officer, a very popular winner on the night for his work as a Probation Officer .

Staff together with their guests had a wonderful evening. It was a great opportunity to have long service and commitment acknowledged, as well as a great social event for staff to meet with many of their colleagues from around the country. Staff are already putting their thinking caps on and looking forward to a follow up event next year!!!



The Probation Service Annual Report for 2018 was published by the Minister for Justice and Equality, Charlie Flanagan TD, on the 17<sup>th</sup> June 2019.

The Annual Report is now available on [www.pprobation.ie](http://www.pprobation.ie)

#### Key statistics from 2018 are as follows:

- In 2018, the Probation Service dealt with 15,777 offenders in the community and 2,524 offenders in prison.
- The Probation Service completed over 11,500 Probation Assessment Reports and over 3,000 Community Service Assessment Reports.
- The top six offences resulting in referrals to the Probation Service (which represents just over 80% of all referrals) were: (1) theft, (2) drug offences, (3) assault, (4) public order, (5) road traffic and (6) burglary.

## Restorative Justice Conference, Bilbao



Pictured: Ursula Fernee speaking at the symposium.

“From Penal Mediation to Restorative Justice Policies and Practices in Transition” was the theme of a recent symposium in Bilbao hosted by the European Forum for Restorative Justice. Darren Broomfield SPO and Ursula Fernee APPO were key speakers in the plenary on Restorative Justice, Prison and Probation :Risks and Opportunities. The presentation focused on the development of RJ in Probation practice, engagement with victims and victim advocacy groups and future opportunities and challenges in the context of recent legislative change and the publication of Recommendation CM/Rec (2018)8 of the Council of Europe, concerning restorative justice on criminal matters.

The symposium was stimulating and excellent combining plenary sessions with interactive sessions, workshops, fringe meetings and parallel dialogue sessions. A very wide range of subject areas were covered from restorative practices with children of imprisoned parents to Restorative Justice to prevent and respond to violent extremism. Papers will be published on the EFRJ website later in the summer. We were also privileged to attend a theatrical production “La Mirada del Otro” (sub titles on screen) that



- The majority of new referrals in 2018 to the Probation Service were 25–34 years olds (3,314) and 18–24 years olds (2,674).
- 17.5% of new referrals were female in 2018 (16.1% in 2017; 16.6% in 2016; 15.2% in 2015 and 14.8% in 2014).
- The Probation Service supervised 648 young persons in the community in 2018 (572 in 2017 and 595 in 2016).
- 197 prisoners completed the Community Return Scheme in 2018.
- The Probation Service provided 35 Victim Impact Reports 2018 (27 in 2017 and 64 in 2016).

## PS/PBNI Meeting



Pictured: The Probation Service and Probation Board Northern Ireland

The annual senior management meeting between The Probation Service and Probation Board Northern Ireland took place in Haymarket on Thursday, 25th Friday, 26th of July. A full agenda that allowed all sharing of practice and policy developments in both jurisdictions was explored

focused on a restorative encounter between an ETA dissident and the daughter of his victim.

The symposium took place in Deusto University and was supported by a number of representatives from the Ministry of Labour and Justice in the Basque Government.

## Recidivism Study



The Minister for Justice and Equality, Charlie Flanagan TD, welcomed the publication, on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2019, of the CSO(Central Statistics Office) Probation Service Recidivism Reports for 2011 and 2012. The report shows re-offending by those sentenced to probation supervision in 2012 was 46.9%, compared to a figure of 54.6% in the 2008 cohort.

The Minister said: **“I am pleased to note the almost 8 percentage point decrease in re-offending rates by those sentenced to probation between 2008 and 2012. That the majority of those in this cohort did not reoffend within three years highlights the very valuable contribution which the work of the Probation Service makes to the criminal justice system.”**

The report shows variations depending on whether the individual was sentenced to a Community Service Order or a Probation Order. Overall, those sentenced to a Community Service

under the alternating chairs of Vivian Geiran and Cheryl Lamont. The meeting has further strengthened the ongoing collaborative partnership between the two services.

## New National Social Enterprise Policy



Pictured: Siobhan Cafferty speaking at the launch event.

Mr Michael Ring, TD, Minister for Rural and Community Development, published a new National Social Enterprise Policy for Ireland on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> July.

Order were less likely to reoffend than those sentenced to a Probation Order (42.3% compared to 52.3%).

The Minister added: **“I particularly welcome the finding that Community Service continues to show very good outcomes. 355,404 hours of community service work were carried out around the country by those serving Community Service Orders in 2018. This not only benefits communities nationwide and allows offenders a chance to make amends for their criminal actions in a tangible way, but the findings of the CSO’s work shows that such orders can also help reduce re-offending rates by the individuals involved.”**

The report highlights variations between different demographic groups. Males are more likely to reoffend than females (47.5% compared to 42.8%), but the gap between them is decreasing. The recidivism rate also reduces compared to the age of offenders: 70.8% of offenders under 18 reoffended compared to 33.6% of those aged 45 – 64 in 2012.

The Director of the Probation Service, Vivian Geiran, also welcomed the publication, saying: **“The recidivism rates indicate a steady reduction in re-offending rates, with improvements made in both the areas of probation supervision and community service, indicating that we are continuing to perform well. Areas for improvement, such as young persons, are also noted and we are currently working to develop better systems in this regard.”**

The CSO Probation Service Recidivism Reports are based on offender and offence information on the cohort of offenders from the Probation Service supervision database in 2011 and 2012 who have been placed by a Court on Probation Orders or Community Service Orders.

The Reports measure recidivism in respect of any offence within three years, among each cohort with an additional two years follow up of recorded conviction data held by the CSO. The studies also examine variations in recidivism relating to type of original order, gender and age of the offender, category of original offence and of the subsequent offence.

The National Social Enterprise Policy for Ireland is focused on three key Objectives:

- (1) Building Awareness of Social Enterprise;
- (2) Growing and Strengthening Social Enterprise; and
- (3) Achieving Better Policy Alignment.

Siobhán Cafferty, Social Enterprise Project Manager with the Irish Prison Service and Probation Service, spoke at the launch event and shared her experience and lessons from implementing the Department of Justice & Equality Social Enterprise Strategy, 'A New Way Forward'. Now in its third and final year, this strategy has focused on creating the right environment and conditions to support Work Integration Social Enterprises as a mechanism to employment opportunities for people with criminal records. Speaking at the launch, Ms. Cafferty said, 'The launch of the National Social Enterprise Policy here today, I believe, will not only build upon what is already there but will create exciting and new opportunities for further growth. It's not going to be easy, it's not to be cheap or a foregone conclusion. We now need to turn this policy into action.'

The event was catered by Mugshot, a social enterprise established (by PACE a community based organisation funded by the Probation Service) to provide barista training and employment opportunities for ex-offenders.

**New Deputy Director**

The publication of the CSO Probation Recidivism studies has been an important milestone for the Probation Service in the production of research based management information. Because there had previously been limited research on outcomes for offenders under the supervision of the Probation Service, the Central Statistics Office and the Probation Service explored synergies between their extensive datasets and developing their own recidivism data.

The Director added: **"Timely, accurate data is very important in terms of outcome measures to enable evidence informed policy and service delivery. The CSO operates to the highest standards and the Probation Service is pleased to continue to partner with them on such significant work going forward."**

The CSO Probation Service Recidivism Reports for 2011 and 2012 can be accessed and downloaded [here](#).

## World Mental Health Awareness Day



### A Date For Your Diary

World Mental Health Awareness Day will take place this year on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> October. Following on from last year's inaugural event,



Introducing Ailish Glennon as the newly appointed Deputy Director, Business Support and Development, in the Probation Service .

Ailish is taking on a broad range of responsibilities in her new role. This will incorporate organisational learning and development, implementation of the new probation practice / offender supervision framework, business development, information management, research and ICT development. In taking on her new position she is “looking forward to the challenges of the role and engaging with colleagues across the organisation and in the wider sector.”

## LGBT Week Update

the Probation Service will mark the event by holding a Mental Health Awareness week, commencing on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> October.

Similar to last year’s World Mental Health Awareness Day, there will be a variety of presentations given by four mental health organisations in Haymarket on 10<sup>th</sup> October. These will include two presentations in the morning and two in the afternoon. Each presentation will 45 minutes long, followed by an opportunity for Questions & Answers. Events and presentations by relevant services will also take place on a regional and local level. More information will be available as preparations for the event get underway. In the meantime, please set time aside in your diaries for these events, and to take the opportunity to promote mental health in our work and in our workplace.

## 22nd ACJRD Annual Conference



The 22<sup>nd</sup> ACJRD Annual Conference, “*Behind Closed Doors: Crimes of Violence, Coercive Control and Abuse in Family and Intimate Relationships*” will take place on **Friday, 11<sup>th</sup> October, 2019**, in **The Richmond Education and Event Centre, Smithfield, Dublin 7**.

This conference will feature local and international experts and will appeal to policy makers, those working in government agencies, professionals, practitioners, academics and those involved in community and civil society





Pictured: Members of An Garda Síochána taking part in the Dublin Pride Parade.

The Minister for Justice and Equality, Charlie Flanagan TD, and the Minister of State for Equality, Immigration and Integration, David Stanton TD, last month celebrated the first formal participation of the civil and public service in the Dublin Pride parade. Over 600 public servants participated under the theme 'Proud to Work for Ireland'.

The public sector organisations who participated under the theme include all Government Departments, An Garda Síochána, the Irish Prison Service, the Central Bank of Ireland, the Defence Forces, Revenue, Enterprise Ireland, the Courts Service, the National Museum of Ireland, the Property Registration Authority and the National Gallery of Ireland.

They were joined by representatives of the Police Service of Northern Ireland, as well as both the Garda Band and the Army Band. Secretaries General, the Governor of Mountjoy Prison, senior members of An Garda Síochána, the Police Service of Northern Ireland and the Defence Forces, and the heads of state agencies and LGBT+ staff networks from across the civil and public service will also be participating.

Speaking ahead of the parade, Minister Flanagan said: **"Today, I am delighted to be walking alongside my Department of Justice and Equality colleagues, the broader public service, and the Gardaí – who are participating in uniform for the first time – in the Dublin LGBTQ Pride March. All of those marching are Proud to Work for Ireland every day and I am proud to walk with them this afternoon. I am particularly pleased to see the**

groups from a wide range of disciplines within the Criminal Justice System. Non-members of ACJRD are welcome to attend this event.

A programme of plenary speakers and workshop presenters will include national and international representatives from the criminal justice sector. Full details of this important Conference can be accessed [here](#). Booking will open shortly.

## North South Criminology Conference



Criminology and Sociology at University College Cork will host the **12th North South Criminology Conference** on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2019 at the Western Gateway Building on the UCC Campus.

The Conference will explore the importance of diversity and inclusivity in criminological discourses and, consider how researchers might bridge the gap between theory and the lived experience of relevant stakeholders.

*'Nothing about us without us'* refers to the importance of a criminology which includes those voices which have historically been hushed, marginalised, silenced or ignored. It also highlights the need for researchers to work with both state and grassroots practitioners.

Key speakers will include representatives from Criminal Justice agencies and NGOs, senior academics, researchers, community group representatives, senior Gardai and minority group representatives.

Full information, registration and programme details for the **12th North South Criminology**

participation of Gardaí in uniform. This is a significant step that demonstrates An Garda Síochána's commitment to building the inclusive Ireland that we all want to see, where everyone – regardless of their background – feels welcome in our society.”

## Oral History of the Probation Service in Ireland



Dr. Deirdre Healy (UCD) and Dr. Louise Kennefick (Maynooth University) are presently conducting research and interviews as part of their project to develop an oral history of probation in Ireland. The project, the first of its kind in the Probation Service, seeks to comprehensively examine the history and development of the Probation Service from the unique perspective of its core participants, namely staff, clients, administrators and external interests.

The oral history will make a significant contribution to knowledge about the evolution of probation policy, culture and practice from the 1960s to the present day. During this period, the Probation Service evolved from a small and Dublin-based service into a large professional organisation with a distinct penal welfare ethos.

Deirdre Healy and Louise Kennefick have already interviewed many serving and retired Probation Service personnel and are now seeking to meet

Conference can be accessed at <https://www.ucc.ie/en/criminology/northsouth/>

## Legislation for the transfer of Probation and Supervised Community Measures in Europe passed in Seanad Éireann



### An Bille um Cheartas Coiriúil (Aitheantas Frithpháirteach do Bhreith agus Cinntí Promhaidh), 2018 Criminal Justice (Mutual Recognition of Probation Judgments and Decisions) Bill 2018

*Mar a leasaiodh sa Roghchoiste um Dhli agus Ceart agus Comhionannas  
As amended in the Select Committee on Justice and Equality*

The [Criminal Justice \(Mutual Recognition of Probation Judgments and Decisions\) Bill 2018](#) completed all remaining Stages, in Seanad Éireann on Wednesday, 26<sup>th</sup> June 2019. The Bill transposes European Council Framework Decision 2008/947/JHA on the application of the principle of mutual recognition to judgments and probation decisions with a view to the supervision of probation measures and alternative sanctions in EU jurisdictions into Irish law.

The Bill has now been signed into law by the President as the **Criminal Justice (Mutual Recognition of Probation Judgments and Decisions) Act 2019** (No. 20 of 2019). The Act can be accessed [here](#).

and interview former probationers and persons who have been supervised by the Service anywhere in Ireland to hear about their experiences and views.

Do you know someone, young or older, who could contribute to this important project? This is a real opportunity to express their views and share their perspective on the context and issues and to make an important contribution to this research project and the development of an oral history of probation in Ireland.

If you know someone who could contribute, they can get further information about the project by contacting Deirdre Healy and Louise Kennefick directly at [deirdre.healy@ucd.ie](mailto:deirdre.healy@ucd.ie) or [Louise.Kennefick@mu.ie](mailto:Louise.Kennefick@mu.ie).

## Parole Bill 2016 (29 of 2016)



The Parole Bill, a private member's bill, was introduced in 2016 by Jim O'Callaghan T.D., to provide for the establishment of an independent parole board and the release on parole of certain persons found guilty of criminal offences and serving sentences of imprisonment or committed or remanded in custody.

The Parole Bill completed its final stages in Seanad Éireann on 11th July 2019. The Bill will be sent to the President for signing into law and enactment.

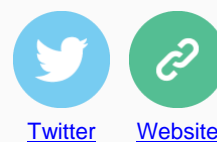
The current parole board is established on a non-statutory basis to advise the Minister as to the

The Act has a straightforward purpose, to allow a person under the supervision of the probation service in one EU Member State but who lives in another to return home and undergo his or her further supervision there provided the person's consent is forthcoming.

The Minister for Justice and Equality, Charlie Flanagan TD, told Seanad Éireann during the debate that, the proposals in the Bill increase the chances of the social reintegration of offenders by ensuring that the probation measures imposed on a person can be followed up on, and he or she can be supervised in the country in which he or she resides.

He went on to say that, this will allow the offender to maintain ties with family and community, continue in employment or education and engage with the support services in his or her home country, all of which are important in the context of rehabilitation and reintegration. Successful reintegration reduces the risk of reoffending, which improves the protections for both victims and society.

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suitability for temporary release/parole of such persons as the Minister refers to the board.

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