

The Danish Prison and Probation Service – in brief

Mission and tasks

The mission of the Prison and Probation Service is to contribute to reducing criminality. This mission is shared by the police, the prosecution services and the courts.

The work of the Prison and Probation Service is limited by these general requirements:

1. Human worth
2. Inviolability
3. Law enforcement
4. Public sense of justice

The primary task of the Prison and Probation Service is to enforce (implement) sanctions:

- Custodial sentences, that is, prison sentences served in state and local prisons
- Supervision activities in connection with release on parole and suspended sentences, including community service orders and electronic tagging, undertaken by the Probation Service.

Based on the above requirements of how to attain the mission, the dual primary task can be worded as follows:

- Control and security
The Prison and Probation Service must carry out the control necessary to enforce punishments.
- Support and motivation
The Prison and Probation Service must motivate offenders to become law-abiding citizens.

Fundamental value

The value adhered to by the Prison and Probation Service is 'The Art of Balancing a Strict and a Soft Approach'.

This value covers all prison and probationary activities and reflects the two facets of the primary task.

It reflects what we do when we do our work best and serves to guide the individual employee in his or her day-to-day work.

Guidelines for the work

Principles

The Programme of Principles of the Prison and Probation Service describes how to solve the primary task. Six principles apply to the way that the Prison and Probation Service is to plan its activities:

1. Normalisation
2. Openness
3. Responsibility
4. Security
5. Least possible intervention
6. Optimum use of resources

Multi-year agreements

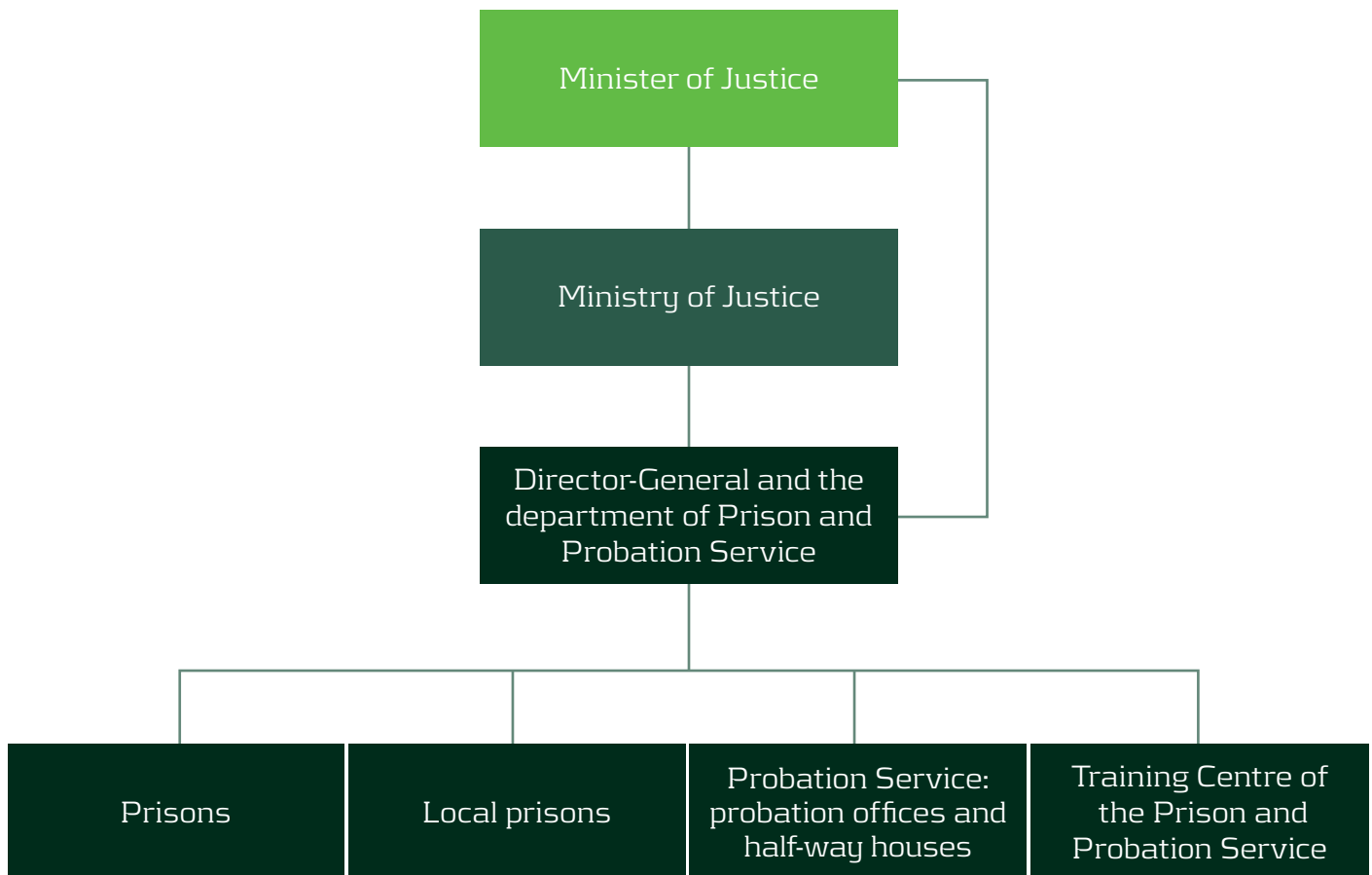
Since 1999, the Prison and Probation Service has been subject to political multi-year agreements running for four or five years. The multi-year agreements describe the financial framework and the operational and development targets to be realised by the Prison and Probation Service during the contractual period.





Organisation - Institutions

The Prison and Probation Service falls under the auspices of the Ministry of Justice.



The Prison and Probation Service has activities at almost 80 locations all over Denmark, including at 10 locations in Greenland and on the Faroe Islands.



The employees serve at the following locations:

The Department of Prisons and Probation, which undertakes the following tasks:

- Assistance to the Minister
- General management and strategy
- Financial, resource and contract management
- Planning and development (relating to treatment of inmates, HR and organisation)
- Communication
- Construction of prisons and other construction works
- Drafting of statutes and rules
- General security
- International work
- Research, evaluation and documentation
- Examination of specific cases, such as complaints and petitions for pardon.

The Staff Training Centre of the Danish Prison and Probation Service, which undertakes the following tasks:

- Basic training of prison officers
- Further training and management training.

Prisons, where inmates serve their prison sentences. The intention is that all offenders are to be placed in an open prison, unless they are to serve a long sentence or have previously attempted an escape, or they abuse the freedom offered in an open prison. In those situations, the offenders will be admitted to a closed prison.

Denmark has 13 closed prisons. Together they provide 938 closed places and 1,316 open places.

Local prisons and local prison units, where remand prisoners and offenders serving short prison sentences are placed. They comprise the Copenhagen Prisons, 36 provincial local prisons, and six local prison units in the state prisons. They provide a total of 1,880 local prison places, 545 places of which are in the Copenhagen Prisons.

Additionally, the Ellebæk Institution is used for detained asylum-seekers. Ellebæk can accommodate 100 asylum-seekers. Moreover, Aabenraa Local Prison has a small asylum unit with room for 10 asylum-seekers.



The Probation Service, which has 13 offices all over Denmark and runs eight half-way houses. The probation offices are ordinary offices that are open only in the daytime.

The probation offices have the following tasks:

- Supervision of
 - Parolees
 - Clients subject to a suspended sentence
 - Clients sentenced to community service
 - Clients subject to electronic tagging
 - Clients sentenced to treatment (sections 68 and 69 of the Danish Criminal Code)
- Preparation of pre-sentence reports for use in court
- Casework related to remand prisoners in local prisons
- Crime prevention activities of a more general nature.

The eight half-way houses have a total of 180 places. They are residential institutions for offenders during the last period of their incarceration before going back into society and for clients under supervision.



Financial resources

The total 2011 budget amounted to DKK 3 billion, two thirds of which were for salaries and one third for operations.

Price per day for each place in 2011:

Closed prisons:	DKK 1,900
Open prisons:	DKK 1,100
Local prisons:	DKK 1,050
Halfway houses:	DKK 1,250

Staff

Around 4,700 staff (full-time equivalents) work for the Prison and Probation Service. Just under two thirds of the employees are uniformed staff and a good one third are non-uniformed staff.

In 2011, 327 employees experienced violence, threats, etc., from inmates. Approx. 62 per cent of those incidents relate to threats only, 33 per cent to both violence and threats and 4 per cent to violence only.

Total absence due to illness was 18 days per employee in 2011.

In a survey from 2011, 87 per cent are satisfied or very satisfied with working at the Prison and Probation Service.





Inmates/clients

Key figures (2011)

State and local prisons

State and local prisons

Prisoners per 100,000 inhabitants:	73
Total number of places in state and local prisons:	4,130
Capacity utilisation, management target:	92 % (but 95 % for 2011)
Prisoners per day serving sentences:	2,550
Remand prisoners per day:	1,380
Female prisoners per day:	160
Detained asylum-seekers per day:	80
Young offenders under the age of 18 per day:	10
Inmates with an ethnic background other than Danish:	35%
Admissions per year:	14,000

Probation Service (offices and half-way houses)

Residents of half-way houses per day:	175
Clients per day subject to electronic tagging:	250
Clients per day under supervision:	9,350
Pre-sentence reports per year:	10,200
Community service orders per year:	3,800



During incarceration

Occupation

Sentenced inmates of institutions under the Prison and Probation Service have a duty of occupation; remand prisoners have a right, but no duty, to work. Inmates must be occupied for 37 hours a week and receive wages. If they are ill, they receive sick pay.

Inmates may be occupied under treatment programmes or with production activities (workshops, agriculture, production schools, etc.) or education.

Leisure time

Inmates may pursue sports activities, watch television, play games, read, etc., in their leisure time.

Self-catering

Inmates of state prisons have to do their own shopping at the prison grocery store, cook food, and do their own dishes, cleaning, and laundry. Inmates of local prisons receive deep-frozen meals for self-heating.

Leaves

Inmates may be granted leave from the prison for various purposes.

- Every third weekend for visits to family or friends, provided that certain time conditions have been met
- For special purposes (seriously ill close relatives, funerals, court hearings, medical examinations, etc.)
- Day release (leave every day) for education or employment purposes.

It is a condition for leave that the risk of abuse of the leave is deemed non-existent. Moreover, leave may be subject to various additional conditions.

About 56,000 leaves are granted every year. Abuse in the form of re-offending occurs in 0.1 per cent of the cases. Altogether, abuse in the form of failure to return, late return or return while under the influence of alcohol or drugs occurs in about 2.8 per cent of the cases.

Escapes

There were no escapes from closed prisons in 2011. There were two escapes in 2009 and 2010. The local prisons saw 3 escapes 'over the wall' in 2011, while the figure for open prisons in 2011 was 77 escapes.

Release on parole

Offenders serving a prison sentence of at least three months may be eligible for release on parole when they have served two thirds of their sentence. Inmates who have stable personal circumstances or have made a special effort ('give and take') may be released on parole when they have served half the sentence.

Just over 3,300 inmates are released on parole every year, and about 1,000 inmates are refused release on parole.

About 8,500 inmates are released every year. Many offenders serve less than three months and are therefore not eligible for release on parole.

Alternatives to custodial punishment

The number of prison places has been largely constant for the past 30 years, except for 500 places added in recent years. The major reason why it has been possible to keep the number of places so constant is that Denmark has focused on alternative forms of punishment so that the smallest possible number of offenders is imprisoned.

The Probation Service takes care of the large group of offenders who are found suitable for non-custodial sentences. The offenders always have to comply with a number of conditions; failure to comply with those conditions results in imprisonment.

There are several alternatives to imprisonment:

Community service

Community service may be an element of a suspended sentence or a condition for release on parole. The offender has to perform unpaid work for a public institution or an institution promoting public welfare. Such institutions may be sports clubs, churches, drop-in centres, residential schools for 14-18-year-olds, museums, theatres, second-hand shops, and youth associations.

The work must be of a kind that would otherwise not be carried out. The hours of work required are between 30 and 200, and the work must be carried out during the offender's leisure time within four to twelve months.

The Probation Service checks that the offender appears at the community service workplace and carries out the work.

Electronic tagging

Offenders sentenced to up to six months' imprisonment may apply for permission to serve under the home curfew detention scheme. The offender is then provided with an electronic tag, an electronic transmitter, around his or her ankle.

Various conditions must be met in terms of job, home and participation in crime-prevention programmes, and the offender has to stay clear of alcohol and drugs. The offender may only leave his or her home according to an agreed activity plan.

The Probation Service checks that the activity plan and the conditions are observed. If the offender fails to observe the activity plan or the conditions, he or she will promptly be imprisoned in a state or local prison for the remaining sentence period.

Serving a sentence at a treatment institution

Pursuant to section 78 of the Danish Sentence Enforcement Act, offenders with a special need for treatment may serve their sentence in a hospital, in family care or at a suitable home or institution, including the half-way houses of the Prison and Probation Service. Young offenders under the age of 18 are normally placed in a treatment institution rather than in a prison unless this is inappropriate for essential law enforcement reasons.

Efforts and results

Treatment and programmes

The Prison and Probation Service drafts individual action plans for all inmates serving a prison sentence of at least four months. Action plans are an important pre-lease tool.

The Prison and Probation Service offers more than 50 different programmes for the treatment of drug abuse, or alcoholism, prevention of violence, sexological treatment, improvement of cognitive skills, etc.

Recidivism

Recidivism is a measure of the number of offenders who re-offend and receive a new sentence, whether suspended or not, within two years of their release or completion of a suspended sentence.

Recidivism, measured in 2011, differs for various groups of inmates and clients:

The total recidivism rate is 28%

The recidivism rate for offenders having served a prison sentence is 37%

The recidivism rate for offenders having served a community service order is 20%

The recidivism rate for offenders having served under the home curfew detention scheme is 19%

Applicable rules/agreements

- The Sentence Enforcement Act
- The Criminal Code and the Administration of Justice Act
- Multi-year agreement and implementation plan (2008-2011)

Updated November 2012





Danish Prison and Probation Service

Strandgade 100

DK-1401 Copenhagen K

Tel. +45 72 55 55 55

dfk@kriminalforsorgen.dk