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## PENITENTIARY MEASURES APPLIED TO CONVICTS AS SEEN BY PRISON SERVICE OFFICERS

**Abstract.** The purpose of a custodial sentence is to change an individual's personality and behaviour so that they do not revert to crime in the future. The article discusses penitentiary measures applied in penitentiary units with the aim of helping convicts reintegrate with the society to play specific social roles. In the research performed, a diagnostic survey method and a questionnaire technique were used. The survey was conducted in 2021 in 15 penitentiary units in Poland. The results obtained indicate that the surveyed officers serving on a daily basis in category II units assess the penitentiary effects better than officers serving in category I units.

**Keywords:** penitentiary measures; Prison Service; rehabilitation; inmates

### INTRODUCTION

In accordance with Article 67 § 1 of the Act of 6 June 1997 – Executive Penal Code (Journal of Laws [Dz.U.] of 2023, item 127) “the execution of a custodial sentence is aimed at arousing in the convicted person the will to cooperate in shaping his or her socially desirable attitudes, in particular his or her sense of responsibility and the need to observe the legal order and thus to refrain from returning to crime.”

According to the legislator's assumptions, people staying in isolation should be exposed to corrective measures which, as a consequence, should lead to a change in their attitudes and behaviour. As Niewiadomska (2016) emphasises, specific

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means and methods are used to achieve certain effects in relation to convicted persons. Their systematic application evident in the segregation of convicts, the application of the principle of free progression, diagnostics, teaching, work or participation in cultural, educational and therapeutic activities serves to develop changes in the convict's behaviour and leads to mitigating the risk of recidivism (Kuć, 2021; Laskowska, 2021).

In relation to persons staying in solitary confinement, as regards the activities concerning them, we speak of penitentiary measures applied by prison staff in relation to convicted persons. In addition to rehabilitation, their aim is to teach discipline, prevent further demoralisation, ensure safety, or maintain appropriate health level (Machel, 2010).

Penitentiary measures represent a tool for assisting convicted persons in the process of preparing for life after leaving the prison. The effectiveness of their application translates into the efficiency of the entire penitentiary system. The individual's stay in prison, in addition to the implementation of the sentence adjudicated, should primarily lead to a situation where the individual, after leaving penitentiary isolation, will comply with the norms and rules in force (Skrobotowicz, 2020).

Penitentiary measures are defined in Article 67 § 3 of the Executive Penal Code. These include work, study, cultural, educational and sports activities, maintaining contact with the family and the external world and therapeutic measures. The use of these measures is intended to trigger the desire to improve a convicted person's previous behaviour and conduct as well as to strengthen self-esteem and thus motivate him or her to change attitudes and socially desirable values (Skrobotowicz, 2020; Kuć, 2021).

Measures undertaken towards individuals deprived of liberty are implemented in accordance with the current legislation. One of the acts regulating the issues in question is the Regulation of the Minister of Justice of 14 August 2003 on the Ways of Applying Penitentiary Measures in Penal Institutions and Detention Centres. Pursuant to § 5.1, the aim of the penitentiary measures is "the formation in the establishment of mutual proper relations between convicts and between convicts and persons applying penitentiary measures in a manner ensuring safety, as well as efficiency of the application of penitentiary measures".

Relationships between prisoners and the prison staff undoubtedly contribute not only to the behaviour of those staying in isolation but also to the overall security of the prison. Penitentiary measures performed in accordance with § 7.1 of the Regulation are mainly intended to counteract mutual demoralisation of convicted persons, manifestations of criminal subculture, aggressive and self-aggressive behaviour, as well as addictions. To this end, the selection of methods and measures

of applied penitentiary interventions is performed while observing the principle of tailoring and adapting to the current needs and psycho-physical possibilities of the convict (Franków, 2011).

The penitentiary measures performed through work, education, cultural and educational activities or participation in the therapy are intended to help convicts in their return to society and fulfilling specific social roles. According to § 7.2 of the Regulation, they refer to specific activities and consist, in the first instance, in directing convicts to the appropriate system, type and type of penal institution. Subsequently, they are related to the appropriate placement of convicts in residential cells, as well as the possibility of referral to work and further education. These activities also include organising tutorial groups and their proper selection in terms of the activities organised and enabling the formation of convict teams. Referring to the above-mentioned Regulation, it is also necessary to indicate the visits to residential cells, places of work and study and the enforcement by convicts of their obligations, in accordance with the Executive Penal Code. Moreover, the measures taken are intended to maintain regular educational contacts with the convicts and motivating them to fulfil the tasks defined in the individual programme of influence or in the individual therapeutic programme. The tasks of the prison staff are:

- to organise activities that elicit a desirable behaviour from convicts;
- to encourage convicts to develop a sense of responsibility, self-control and self-discipline;
- to promote their contacts with their closest persons;
- to communicate, in justified cases, to other convicts the decisions of the director or the decisions or opinions of the penitentiary commission, in particular when they result from special achievements and socially desirable attitudes or grossly negative behaviour;
- to create conditions conducive to maintaining positive interpersonal relations and conditions conducive to convicts addressing the prison administration with requests, complaints, motions and problems.

Furthermore, the tasks undertaken should not overlook the identification of socially acceptable ways of resolving conflict situations, providing assistance to convicts in conflict situations, mitigating disputes and preventing harassment among convicts.

The tasks cited were the main area of our interest and research, therefore, further part of the article presents the officers' assessments of the implementation of the tasks relating to the conducted penitentiary measures towards persons deprived of liberty.

## 1. METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

Our intention was to identify prison service officers' opinions on the penitentiary measures carried out relative to convicted prisoners in penitentiary institutions. In order to achieve the research objective, the following research problem was formulated: How do officers evaluate the practical implementation of the penitentiary measures applied to inmates, as indicated in the Regulation of the Minister of Justice of 14 August 2003 on the Ways of Applying Penitentiary Measures in Penal Institutions and Detention Centres?

In the research, a diagnostic survey method and a questionnaire technique was used. The tool used was a proprietary survey questionnaire consisting of 18 closed questions and a metric.

In the survey questionnaire, a Likert scale was used,<sup>1</sup> which provided an insight into the respondents' level of acceptance of the questions. It was assumed that a low score indicates a positive attitude (*good, rather good/yes, rather yes*) and a high score indicates a negative attitude (*bad, rather bad/no, rather no*) (Oppenheim, 2004).

The field research was conducted in the second, third and fourth quarters of 2021 in 15 penitentiary units: External Ward in Grudziądz (which was Prison No. 2 at the time), External Ward in Gdańsk-Przeróbka (which was the Prison in Gdańsk-Przeróbka at the time), Prison in Racibórz, Remand Prison in Słupsk and External Ward in Ustka, External Ward in Stargard (which was the Prison in Stargard at the time), External Ward in Białystok (which was the Prison in Białystok at the time), Prison in Trzebinia, Remand Prison in Lublin, Prison in Sieradz, Remand Prison in Olsztyn, Prison No. 1 in Wrocław, Remand Prison in Opole, Remand Prison in Zielona Góra, Prison in Przemyśl, Prison in Płock and External Ward in Płońsk. The penitentiary units selected for the study were diversified in terms of type and category.

As part of the sampling procedure for the survey research using the survey technique, the population under study was first defined, the sampling frame was determined, the potential sample size was established, and the sampling method was selected while taking into account the plan for selecting officers and Prison Service (PS) employees to the sample. Upon commencement of the field research in 2021, the total number of PS officers was 26,861, while the number of employees was 1,736 (1,145 full-time employees). The total number

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<sup>1</sup> A Likert scale is used in survey questionnaires and questionnaire interviews to obtain an answer regarding the degree of acceptance of a phenomenon, view, or idea (Kuc and Ścibiorek, 2018, p. 231).

of officers and staff was 28,597 and that was the total sample.<sup>2</sup> In the survey, a representative selection of respondents was used comprising a sample of 577 PS officers and employees ( $N = 577$ ). The size of the completed sample was determined based on the returns of the completed survey questionnaires.

Socio-demographic variables, i.e. gender, age, education, length of service, were taken into account in the research conducted. The distribution of respondents coincides with the organisational structure in the penitentiary units in terms of numbers.

Less than three quarters (73.8%) of the respondents taking part in the field survey were men and only just over a quarter (26.2%) were women.

Taking into account the age criterion, the largest group among the respondents were persons aged 36 to 40 (28%), the following age brackets: 41–50 (26%), 31–35 (25%), 26–30 (16%), under 25 (3%), and 51 and older (2%).

The educational structure is another element of the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents included in the survey. One in three had a secondary education (29%), 14% a higher vocational education. On the other hand, the majority of PS officers and employees surveyed declared that they had a university master's degree (57%).

The length of service of PS officers and employees is characterised by six categories: up to 2 years (preparatory service), 3 to 5 years, 6 to 10 years, 11 to 15 years, 16 to 20 years, and over 21 years. The largest group was represented by PS officers and employees with a length of service between 11 and 15 years (30%). A comparable number of prisoners had from 6 to 10 years of service (24%). Prison staff with a seniority range of 3 to 5 years and 16 to 20 years each accounted for 14%. There were slightly fewer PS officers and employees with up to 2 years' service (13%), i.e. in preparatory service). Only 4% of respondents had more than 21 years of service.

## 2. RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

### 2.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PENITENTIARY UNITS INCLUDED IN THE STUDY

The variable that differentiates the penitentiary units where the field research was carried out is their type.

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<sup>2</sup> Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości, *Roczna informacja statystyczna za rok 2020*, <https://www.sw.gov.pl/assets/75/75/32/23899642353949621fad5eb978ce3f2713c4aeba.pdf>

The largest part of the penitentiary staff included in the empirical study performed (60%) serve in prisons for first-time prisoners. Less than half of the respondents (47%) serve in recidivist prisons, and the lowest number (17%) work in juvenile prisons.

Another structural/organisational variable included in the study is the penitentiary unit category. Two-thirds (67%) of the PS officers and staff who participated in the survey serve in penitentiary units with a capacity of up to 600 inmates (category II penitentiary units), and one third (33%) of them serve in remand prisons and prisons with a capacity of more than 600 inmates (category I penitentiary units).

## 2.2 APPLYING PENITENTIARY MEASURES TO CONVICTED PRISONERS DEPENDING ON THE CAPACITY OF THE PENITENTIARY UNIT

The results of the surveys conducted are presented below. In the first instance, the officers surveyed assessed the referral of convicted prisoners to the appropriate enforcement regime depending on the category of the penitentiary unit (Table 1).

Table 1. Assignment of convicted prisoners to the appropriate enforcement regime versus penitentiary unit category

Response categories	Category I		Category II	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
1. Good	337	87.3	182	96.8
2. Bad	30	7.8	2	1.1
3. Difficult to say	19	4.9	4	2.1
Total	386	100	188	100

Note. Chi-square = 0.001, Cramer V = 0.156.

The data above show that there were statistically significant differences between the officers surveyed ( $p = 0.001$ ). An overwhelming percentage of all them rated the implementation of this task well (87.3% of Category I units and 96.8% of Category II units). A negative assessment in this aspect was expressed by 7.8% of respondents of Category I units compared to the officers surveyed from Category II units, who accounted for only 1.1%.

They further assessed the appropriate placement of convicts in accommodation and work and study facilities (Table 2).

Table 2. Opinions on the appropriate distribution of prisoners in accommodation, work and study facilities versus penitentiary unit category

Response categories	Category I		Category II	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
1. Good	323	83.7	179	95.2
2. Bad	46	11.9	4	2.1
3. Difficult to say	17	4.4	5	2.7
Total	386	100	188	100

Note. Chi-square = 0.001, Cramer V = 0.171.

The analyses carried out indicated the existence of statistically significant differences in the ratings of the officers surveyed ( $p = 0.001$ ). The vast majority of them (95.2% of respondents from Category II units) and 83.7% of officers from Category I units were positive about the proper placement of convicts in accommodation, work and study facilities. A different opinion in this respect was presented by 11.9% of respondents from Category I units and 2.1% from Category II units.

The next data analysed referred to the organisation of educational groups depending on the category of the penitentiary unit (see Table 3).

Table 3. Opinions on the organisation of educational groups versus penitentiary unit category

Response categories	Category I		Category II	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
1. Good	310	81.4	174	92.6
2. Bad	44	11.5	9	4.8
3. Difficult to say	27	7.1	5	2.7
Total	381	100	188	100

Note. Chi-square = 0.002, Cramer V = 0.148.

The data above show that there were statistically significant differences between the officers surveyed ( $p = 0.002$ ). The vast majority of officers (92.6%) who are on daily duty in Category II units and 81.4% of respondents from Category I units assessed the issue regarding the organisation of educational groups well. A negative assessment of this aspect was expressed by 11.5% of respondents from Category I units and 4.8% of officers from Category II units.

Further on, respondents were asked to assess the choice of educational groups for the activities organised (Table 4).

Table 4. Assessment of the choice of educational groups for the activities offered versus penitentiary unit category

Response categories	Category I		Category II	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
1. Good	304	79	178	94.7
2. Bad	52	13.5	4	2.1
3. Difficult to say	29	7.5	6	3.2
Total	385	100	188	100

Note. Chi-square = 0.001, Cramer V = 0.206.

The data obtained show that the assessment of the organised activities, depending on the category of the penitentiary unit, differentiates the respondents at the statistically significant level ( $p = 0.001$ ). The vast majority of officers working in Category II units (94.7%) and 79% of those in Category I units positively assessed the selection of educational groups for the organised activities. The discrepancy in the opinions occurred in the case of a negative evaluation, expressed by 13.5% of the officers of the Category I units compared to the respondents of the second group, i.e. 2.1%.

Subsequent bivariate analyses showed statistically significant differences ( $p = 0.001$ ) between the category of the remand prison or prison in which the respondents serve/work and their assessment of enabling convict teams to be created in prison units (Table 5).

Table 5. Assessment of the possibility of creating teams of convicts versus penitentiary unit category

Response categories	Category I		Category II	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
1. Good	259	67.6	160	85.6
2. Bad	65	17	10	5.3
3. Difficult to say	59	15.4	17	9.1
Total	383	100	187	100

Note. Chi-square = 0.001, Cramer V = 0.197.



The data show that 85.6% of officers and staff serving and working in Category II penitentiary units and 67.6% of respondents from Category I units positively assessed the implementation of this task in their place of service/work. A negative opinion in this respect was presented by 17% of respondents from Category I units and 5.3% from Category II units.

Further analyses focused on the assessments related to the visits to residential cells, work and study facilities (Table 6).

Table 6. Assessment of visits to prisoners' residential cells, work and study facilities versus penitentiary unit category

Response categories	Category I		Category II	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
1. Good	320	83.6	180	95.7
2. Bad	48	12.5	6	3.2
3. Difficult to say	15	3.9	2	1.1
Total	383	100	188	100

Note. Chi-square = 0.001, Cramer V = 0.174.

The results obtained show that there are statistically significant differences ( $p = 0.001$ ) between the PS officers' assessments of the visits of residential cells, work and study facilities of convicts. The vast majority, i.e. 95.7%, of the respondents from Category II prisons compared to 83.6% of officers from Category I penitentiary units assessed the quality of the implementation of this penitentiary measure at their place of service well. A different opinion in this respect was presented by 12.5% of respondents from Category I units and 3.2% from Category II units.

The category of the penitentiary unit also differentiated the respondents' answers in terms of enforcing the convicts' fulfilment of their obligations under the Executive Penal Code ( $p = 0.000$ ) (Table 7).

Table 7. Assessment of enforcing convicts' fulfilment of their obligations under the Executive Penal Code versus penitentiary unit category

Response categories	Category I		Category II	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
1. Good	300	77.9	179	95.2
2. Bad	70	18.2	7	3.7
3. Difficult to say	15	3.9	2	1.1
Total	385	100	188	100

Note. Chi-square = 0.001, Cramer V = 0.219.

The data in the table above show that 95.5% of the respondents from Category II prisons and 77.9% of the officers from Category I prisons assessed positively the enforcement of the convicts' fulfilment of their obligations under the Executive Penal Code in the penitentiary units. More discrepancies can be seen in the negative assessment of the aspect indicated. 18.2% of the respondents in the Category I units had a different opinion, compared to 3.7% of the respondents in the second group.

Another variable analysed referred to maintaining regular educational contacts with the convicts and motivating them to fulfil the tasks defined in the individual programme of influence or in the individual therapeutic programme (Table 8).

Table 8. Assessment of regular educational contacts with convicts and motivating them to do tasks as per individual programme of influence or individual therapeutic programme versus penitentiary unit category

Response categories	Category I		Category II	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
1. Good	311	80.6	176	93.6
2. Bad	51	13.2	5	2.7
3. Difficult to say	24	6.2	7	3.7
Total	386	100	188	100

Note. Chi-square = 0.001, Cramer V = 0.179.

The analyses carried out indicated the existence of statistically significant differences in the ratings of the officers surveyed ( $p = 0.001$ ). The vast majority of them (93.6% of the respondents from Category II units) and 80.6% of officers from Category I units referred positively to the assessment of maintaining regular educational contacts with convicts and motivating them to fulfil the tasks set out in the individual programme of influence or in the individual therapeutic programme. A different opinion in this respect was presented by 13.2% of respondents from Category I units and 3.7% from Category II units.

Further data analysed referred to the organisation of activities inducing the desired activity of convicts as expressed by the respondent depending on the category of the penitentiary unit in which he serves/works (Table 9).

Table 9. Assessment of organisation of activities eliciting desirable behaviours from convicts versus penitentiary unit category

Response categories	Category I		Category II	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
1. Good	298	77.2	176	93.6
2. Bad	55	14.2	7	3.7
3. Difficult to say	33	8.5	5	2.7
Total	386	100	188	100

Note. Chi-square = 0.001, Cramer V = 0.203.

The data above show that there were statistically significant differences between the officers surveyed ( $p = 0.001$ ). The vast majority of officers (93.6%) who are on daily duty in Category II units and 77.2% of respondents from Category I units assessed the issue regarding the organisation of activities inducing the desired activity of convicts well. A negative assessment of this aspect was expressed by 14.2% of respondents from Category I units and 3.7% of officers from Category II units.

Subsequently, the participants were asked to assess the cultivation in the convicts a sense of responsibility, self-control and self-discipline (Table 10).

Table 10. Assessment of the cultivation of a sense of responsibility, self-control and self-discipline in convicts versus penitentiary unit category

Response categories	Category I		Category II	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
1. Good	279	72.5	173	92
2. Bad	75	19.5	9	4.8
3. Difficult to say	31	8.1	6	3.2
Total	385	100	188	100

Note. Chi-square = 0.001, Cramer V = 0.226.

The category of the penitentiary unit statistically significantly ( $p = 0.001$ ) differentiated the assessment of the PS officers and staff regarding the implementation of the convicts in developing a sense of responsibility, self-control and self-discipline. The vast majority of them (92% of respondents from Category II units) and 72.5% of officers from Category I units positively assessed the implementation of the convicts in developing a sense of responsibility, self-control and self-discipline. A different opinion in this respect was presented by 19.5% of respondents from Category I units and 4.8% from Category II units.

Subsequent analyses referred to the assessment of inspiring contacts between convicted persons and their relatives (Table 11).

Table 11. Assessment of inspiring contacts between convicts and their relatives versus penitentiary unit category

Response categories	Category I		Category II	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
1. Good	302	80.3	175	94.1
2. Bad	46	12.2	3	1.6
3. Difficult to say	28	7.4	8	4.3
Total	376	100	186	100

Note. Chi-square = 0.001, Cramer V = 0.192.

The data obtained indicate the existence of statistically significant differences in the assessment of inspiring the convicts' contacts with their relatives and the category of the penitentiary unit with  $p = 0.001$ . The vast majority of them (94.1% in Category II units and 80.6% in Category I units) positively assessed the aspect of inspiring the convicts' contacts with their relatives. A different opinion in this respect was presented by 12.2% of respondents from Category I units and 4.3% in Category II units.

Subsequent analyses referred to the communication, in justified cases, to other convicts, of the director's decision or the decision or opinion of the penitentiary commission, in particular when they are the result of special achievements and socially desirable attitudes or grossly negative behaviour versus the category of the penitentiary unit in which they serve (Table 12).

Table 12. Communication to other convicts of the director's (penitentiary commission's) decision on account of special achievements and socially desirable attitudes or grossly negative behaviour versus penitentiary unit category

Response categories	Category I		Category II	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
1. Good	278	72	164	87.2
2. Bad	58	15	10	5.3
3. Difficult to say	50	13	14	7.4
Total	386	100	188	100

Note. Chi-square = 0.001, Cramer V = 0.174.

These data indicate that 87.2% of the respondents from Category II prisons and 72% of those from Category I prisons assessed well the issue of communicating in justified cases, for other convicts' information, the decision of the director or the decision or opinion of the penitentiary commission, in particular when they are the result of special achievements and socially desirable attitudes or grossly negative behaviour. More discrepancies were visible in the negative assessment of the aspect indicated. 15% of the respondents in the Category I units had a different opinion, compared to 5.3% of the respondents in the other group.

The category of the penitentiary unit also translates into respondents' opinions on the creation of conditions conducive to the maintenance of positive interpersonal relationships (Table 13).

Table 13. Opinions on the conditions conducive to positive interpersonal relationships versus penitentiary unit category

Response categories	Category I		Category II	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
1. Good	310	80.9	180	95.7
2. Bad	43	11.2	4	2.1
3. Difficult to say	30	7.8	4	2.1
Total	383	100	188	100

Note. Chi-square = 0.001, Cramer V = 0.200.

The table shows that there were statistically significant differences between the officers surveyed ( $p = 0.001$ ). The vast majority of officers (95.7%) who are on daily duty in Category II units and 80.9% of respondents from Category I units assessed positively the issue regarding the creation of conditions conducive to the maintenance of positive interpersonal relationships. A negative assessment of this aspect was expressed by 11.2% of respondents from Category I units and 2.1% from Category II units.

Subsequently, data related to the opinions of the surveyed officers were presented in terms of creating conditions conducive for convicts to turn to representatives of the prison administration with personal requests, complaints, applications and problems (Table 14).

Table 14. Opinions on conditions for convicts to apply to representatives of the prison administration with personal matters versus penitentiary unit category

Response categories	Category I		Category II	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
1. Good	320	83.1	181	96.3
2. Bad	47	12.2	4	2.1
3. Difficult to say	18	4.7	3	1.6
Total	385	100	188	100

Note. Chi-square = 0.001, Cramer V = 0.188.

Bivariate analyses showed a statistically significant relationship ( $p = 0.001$ ) between the category of the remand prison or prison in which the respondents serve/work and their assessment of the creation of conditions conducive to prisoners addressing personal requests, complaints, applications and problems to the representatives of the prison administration at a level of  $p < 0.001$ . It emerged that the vast majority of respondents from Category II units (96.3%) and 83.1% of those from Category I units assessed the implementation of this task well. A different opinion in this respect was presented by 12.2% of PS officers in Category I units and 2.1% those in Category II units.

Further analyses refer to the assessment of the officers surveyed in terms of identifying socially acceptable ways of resolving conflict situations (Table 15).

Table 15. Assessment of identifying socially acceptable ways of resolving conflict situations versus penitentiary unit category

Response categories	Category I		Category II	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
1. Good	315	82	180	95.7
2. Bad	46	12	4	2.1
3. Difficult to say	23	6	4	2.1
Total	384	100	188	100

Note. Chi-square = 0.001, Cramer V = 0.190.

The table shows that there were statistically significant differences between the officers surveyed ( $p = 0.001$ ). The vast majority of officers (95.7%) who are on daily duty in Category II units and 82% of respondents from Category I units assessed the issue regarding identifying socially acceptable ways of resolving conflict situations well. A negative assessment of this aspect was

expressed by 12% of respondents from Category I units and 2.1% of those from Category II facilities.

Further analyses indicated that there were statistically significant differences ( $p < 0.001$ ) between the officers surveyed in terms of their assessment of the provision of assistance to convicted prisoners in conflict situations (see Table 16).

Table 16. Assessment of assistance to convicted prisoners in conflict situations versus penitentiary unit category

Response categories	Category I		Category II	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
1. Good	321	83.4	182	96.8
2. Bad	41	10.6	3	1.6
3. Difficult to say	23	6	3	1.6
Total	385	100	188	100

Note. Chi-square = 0.001, Cramer V = 0.193.

These data indicate that the vast majority of officers (96.8%) from Category II units and 83.4% of those from Category I units assessed the issue regarding the provision of assistance to convicted prisoners in conflict situations well. A negative assessment of this aspect was expressed by 10.6% of respondents from Category I units and 1.6% those from Category II units.

The last analyses presented referred to the assessment of the mitigation of antagonism and prevention of the occurrence of mutual harassment in the environment of convicts (Table 17).

Table 17. Assessment of the mitigation of antagonism and prevention of mutual harassment among convicts versus penitentiary unit category

Response categories	Category I		Category II	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
1. Good	317	82.6	181	96.3
2. Bad	39	10.2	3	1.6
3. Difficult to say	28	7.3	4	2.1
Total	384	100	188	100

Note. Chi-square = 0.001, Cramer V = 0.193.

These data indicate the existence of statistically significant differences in terms of the evaluation of the mitigation of antagonism and prevention of the

occurrence of mutual harassment in the environment of convicts at  $p = 0.001$ . The vast majority of officers from the Category II units (96.3%) and 82.6% of the officers from the Category I units positively assessed the aspect indicated. A different opinion in this respect was presented by 10.2% of respondents from Category I units and 1.6% from Category II units.

### CONCLUSION

Many factors impact the operation of penitentiary units in Poland, and this no doubt influences the choice of penitentiary measures. They combine isolation and corrective, rehabilitation functions. This is expected to contribute to minimising the deficits and reducing socially undesirable behaviour on the one hand, and to foster a sense of control over one's behaviour on the other (Kuć, 2021).

The results of our research indicate that the surveyed officers who serve on a daily basis in Category II units (holding up to 600 inmates) assess the penitentiary measures better than the officers serving in Category I units. It can be presumed that this is related to the lower number of inmates subject to the measures in question. Working with a lower number of people also translates into the effectiveness of such measures. Franków (2011) indicates that applying penitentiary measures to individuals deprived of liberty refers to the use of specific measures, which serve as tools for action. They include any actions taken by the penitentiary staff for the benefit of convicted persons, including appropriate selection of educational groups, motivation to fulfil tasks in accordance with the individual programme of influence, stimulation of convicts' activity, building a sense of responsibility, self-discipline or maintaining contacts with the family. The rehabilitation work carried out during imprisonment and the selection of appropriate methods is determined by the individual possibilities and needs of a given penitentiary unit, which consequently seek to achieve the goal of serving an isolation penalty (Franków, 2011). The measures taken to improve the inmates as human beings largely oriented towards maintaining and improving contact with the external world. Świergała (2019) argues that such contact mitigates the adverse effects of imprisonment, helps to build positive relationships with the family, and facilitates the process of readaptation and subsequent social reintegration. As Niewiadomska (2016) emphasises, consistency and regularity are important in the conducted penitentiary measures, which not only contributes to the effectiveness of the measures applied but also stimulates and consolidates changes in the convicts' attitudes and behaviour.



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ODDZIAŁYWANIA PENITENCJARNE WOBEC SKAZANYCH  
W OPINII FUNKCJONARIUSZY SŁUŻBY WIĘZIENNEJ

## Streszczenie

Celem wykonania kary pozbawienia wolności jest zmiana osobowości i zachowania danej osoby, tak aby w przyszłości nie wróciła do przestępstwa. Artykuł opisuje oddziaływania penitencjarne prowadzone w jednostkach penitencjarnych w celu pomocy skazanym w powrocie do społeczeństwa i pełnieniu określonych ról społecznych. W przeprowadzonych badaniach wykorzystano metodę sondażu diagnostycznego oraz technikę ankiety. Badanie przeprowadzono w 2021 roku w piętnastu jednostkach penitencjarnych w Polsce. Uzyskane wyniki wskazują, że badani funkcjonariusze pełniący na co dzień służbę w jednostkach kategorii II lepiej oceniają prowadzone efekty penitencjarne w porównaniu z funkcjonariuszami pełniącymi służbę w jednostkach kategorii I.

**Słowa kluczowe:** oddziaływania penitencjarne; Służba Więzienna; resocjalizacja; osadzeni