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## System Solutions for Social Readaptation of Prisoners in the Czech Republic

**Abstract:** The author discusses the programmes for the treatment of prisoners aimed at facilitating and accelerating prisoners' return to society. These programmes include the following aspects: intellectual education, moral education, education through labor, aesthetic education and physical education. The author highlighted and stressed the importance of comprehensive diagnosis, containing a social, psychological, pedagogical and medical assessment of convicts in the process of programming individual remedial interactions, including the recognition of risk factors of recidivism. An important part of the standard procedure is to organize activities in free time by developing interests, hobbies and preferences of the convict. In addition, the article presents the electronic project SARPO, a post-penitentiary care system, as well as an assessment of the effects of the recent amnesty in the Czech Republic.

**Key words:** post-penitentiary, social readaptation, procedures for dealing with prisoners.

### Introduction

Today's Czech system procedures used in the social readaptation of prisoners result from the act on executing custodial sentence No. 169/1999 of the Journal of Laws, from European prison regulations and from the Standard Minimum Rules, which result in the so-called "programmes for the treatment of prisoners", previously called social rehabilitation programmes. Due to the fact that the "social rehabilitation" concept in the Czech prison system has long been rejected due to

its inconsistency, the term “treatment”, more correct in penitentiary, is used more willingly. It involves a series of activities designed to facilitate and accelerate the return of prisoners into society so that they respect the law, avoid criminal activities, regularly care for themselves and for their families.

## Programmes for the treatment of prisoners

The programme for the treatment of prisoners constitutes the core of penitentiary pedagogy. It lies at the root of applying educational elements to penitentiary practice, used in the process of social rehabilitation and social reintegration. Even in the recent past, rather than the notion of “programme for the treatment of prisoners” the term “social rehabilitation programme” was used. It arises from the combination of the words “re” (again) and “socialization” as the process of integrating the individual into society. It is a permanent process of developing one’s own individuality, as well as social character, thanks to which a person, as a cultural being, can function in the complex system of human society (Doňková 2010). However, in early 2000, penitentiary experts agreed that the notion of “social rehabilitation” in penitentiary practice is not appropriate for the course, and, above all, for the effects of so-called social rehabilitation, so, is not precise enough. Therefore, it was replaced, in accordance with the European Penitentiary Rules, by the term “programme for the treatment” of prisoners. This was based upon the fact that not every prisoner after release is completely or at least partially, socially rehabilitated, as demonstrated by the repeatability of imprisonment (recidivism). Still, the concept of social rehabilitation, commonly used in other countries in penitentiary practice should not be given up. It is true that the result of implementing programmes for the treatment of prisoners can be social rehabilitation of the prisoner, but this is not always the case (due to internal factors – endogenous and external – exogenous). Programmes for the treatment of prisoners are therefore the basis for their planned social rehabilitation. The act on the execution of the sentence of imprisonment demonstrates that in the preparation of the programme for the treatment of prisoners we must use an individual approach to the imprisoned persons, effectively motivate them and exploit their interests, skills and abilities. However, there are some offenders who do not intend (and sometimes are not able to) respect the norms prevailing in society. Many people, as a result of certain pathological social phenomena, look for a solution to their difficult social situation or other problems in criminal activities. In addition, recently, in the professional penitentiary environment, the concept of reintegration is being increasingly spoken about (e.g. Gabriel Slováková, PhD).

## Elements of education/teaching

Due to the fact that penitentiary pedagogy is essentially the science of education in prison conditions, the basic elements of education should be recalled. The complexity of educating a comprehensively developed personality in the modern education system is possible thanks to the five basic elements of education. Despite the diverse views of Czech educators, the following elements of education have been established (Jůzl 2010): mental education, moral education, vocational education, aesthetic education, physical education.

### Mental education

The purpose of mental education is directing the individual towards life sciences and social sciences, developing its language as a means of communication, forming its outlook on life and improving its cognitive processes. This education provides the individual with a range of knowledge and skills in its native language and in foreign languages in the field of mathematics, life sciences and social sciences. In exploring these areas, the person learns the law of development of nature, society and the human being. On the basis of knowledge of particular rights, its synthetic view of the world is formed, with its epistemological, ontological and axiological plane, which is within the area of the queen of sciences – philosophy and ethics. Together with accustoming facts and skills, the individual develops its cognitive processes and abilities (understanding, perceptions, thoughts, fantasies). The process of mental development begins at the level of consciousness, skills and abilities; but its effect is the formation of the individual's approach to the surrounding world, people and values, its interests and needs, traits of character and social behaviors. Along with intellectual development, emotional intelligence also develops (Jůzl 2010). In penitentiary pedagogy, categories of mental education correspond to educational activities. According to statistics, the uneducated, little educated and incompletely educated population is subject to the penalty of imprisonment, but also people with secondary and even higher education. Nonetheless, in penitentiary practice, it is still the case that the higher the education, the lower the percentage of offenders. Thus, the above category is rightly included in the programme for the treatment of prisoners.

### Moral education

Moral education develop the individual in the area of moral phenomena, standards and ideals. The scope of moral education has been and is determined by the moral convictions of communities, where there is education and a moral

code, which a given community accepts as a binding standard in force in its life. With moral education, the concept of “morality” should also be explained, which together with philosophy, law, science and art is one of the fundamental forms of social consciousness. Therefore, by the term morality we mean a set of standards that change in time, which direct the behavior of individual people towards each other and society as a whole. In contrast to legal standards that also guide human ties, but have the power of forced sanction of the country, moral standards are based on public opinion and the inner convictions of individuals. Morality, by making use of public opinion and inner convictions of individuals, covers a wider scope than law. Morality always anticipates, it is ahead of the law. The purpose of moral education is to form inner moral convictions (legal and political) and appropriate forms of behavior in the spirit of the moral code. By the term “moral conviction” we mean knowledge of the moral standard, which is accompanied by moral experience leading to the identification of the individual with this standard. Moral conviction constitutes incentive for moral behavior of the individual, appropriate behavior and actions. Creating these beliefs is the central task of moral education. The set of beliefs of the individual is created by its consciousness, which in various life situations leads to specific behaviors and enables the assessment of other people’s behavior. The road from elementary moral experiences to moral conviction is difficult and long. In developing moral convictions three main stages should be distinguished:

- in the first stage, the individual comes into contact with all sorts of moral stimuli; this involves personal moral experiences arising from contact with other people, examples, instructions and guidelines, which it receives from educators, but especially from parents (also moral incentives provided by scientific works or works of art);
- by comparing these stimuli, the individual forms its own moral views, i.e. general awareness of moral standards, the belief that society observes them and that it requires the same; this second stage of creating moral convictions, however, does not mean performing moral acts yet;
- in the course of this stage, moral convictions are further enriched by educational experiences and interactions that the individual begins to subject to intellectual criticism and takes an emotional attitude towards them; in this way the individual’s moral consciousness matures to the third stage – the stage of moral convictions – which become a permanent stimulus of the individual’s moral behavior, also in situations where it is not under pressure of public opinion or under control, and its actions are not judged by others; thus its moral consciousness is formed, which becomes a characteristic feature of a given personality (Jůzl 2010).

In penitentiary pedagogy moral education corresponds to special education procedures.

## Education through work

The aim of education through work is to familiarize the individual with the scientific principles of modern technology and production, to develop skills and habits in the use of the most important machines and work tools, and to nurture its work culture, i.e. to teach the person effective organization, rationality and efficiency of working activities and turning on in it economic thinking and acting. The importance of education through work is that it allows the individual orientation in a more and more complex production system of modern society, adaptation to work and involves it in the profession, taking into account the needs of society and its personal skills. The importance of this education grows even more as a result of restructuring production in the Czech Republic, interference in the area of traditional production, unemployment on the one hand, and on the other the possibility of changing qualifications and the transition of people to other departments and other job positions. Education for work is also linked to nurturing and developing the volitional qualities of the individual which are needed at work (perseverance, punctuality, responsibility, diligence, strength, etc.). When thinking about work the cognitive processes of the individual also develop (primarily thinking, judgments and assessments, but also perception, imagination and fantasy) (Jůzl 2010). Education through work is also an integral part of penitentiary pedagogy.

## Aesthetic education

Aesthetic education develops the individual in the area of art and beauty. It aims to develop appropriate perceiving, understanding, experiencing and evaluating art and beauty, to familiarize the individual with significant works of art and the development of art as an important cultural phenomenon, and arouse a refined aesthetic taste. In relation to methods of aesthetic and educational actions we can distinguish: aesthetic education by means of art or artistic education (this includes education through literature, visual art, music, theatre, film, dance, etc.) and artistic education by non-artistic means (aesthetics of the environment, nature, work, games and physical activity). In aesthetic education we distinguish two of its categories: active, when individuals produce cultural objects or activities themselves (playing musical instruments, art classes, photography, etc.), and receptive, when individuals do not in fact create or take up cultural activities, but they can intensively perceive them through their receptors (analyzers), and experience them in a committed way (that is why we do not call it passive aesthetic education). Like previous elements, aesthetic education takes place both in school and in conditions outside of school (with the participation of various cultural institutions, mass media and by developing their own artistic

interests), but also in the family. Without a doubt, however, this includes the prison environment with its specificity (Jůzl 2010).

## Physical education

The purpose of physical education is to develop and strengthen the health of individuals (ensuring sufficient exercise, proper diet, creating a habit of personal and social hygiene), to develop and strengthen physical fitness, i.e. Nurturing the liquidity and flexibility of movements, strengthening and immunizing the body, as well as developing moral values, such as: courage, determination, self-control, discipline and perseverance, the ability to accept failure, etc., which, as stated in vocational education, is of paramount importance. Physical education is not limited to a particular subject or hobby activities, physical, sports or defensive, but permeates all educational work. The principles of hygiene and health must be observed by every educator, and thus also an educator in penitentiary practice. On the one hand, it is about hygiene of the educational environment (penitentiary), which means appropriate air temperature, access to fresh air, lighting, etc., on the other hand – about hygiene of personal (penitentiary) educational work. This requires frequent diversification of activities, preventing excessive fatigue, occupational health and safety, hygiene assessment, etc. (Jůzl 2010).

Single components of education exist separately only in scientific abstraction. In practice, they constantly intertwine, complement and integrate one another. It is not easy to tell which ones are most important because they act in a dialectical unity. However, mental education dominates, which is reflected in all other components, which in turn penetrate mental education. It functions well in penitentiary practice; like in traditional pedagogy, we can talk about subsequent components of education, such as legal education, political, economic, environmental (ecological), etc. The effect of a comprehensive process of education is character which manifests itself through appropriate social behavior and emotional intelligence. Aesthetic and physical education form the basis of the so-called lot of leisure activities.

## Comprehensive characterization of the convict

To be able to create a qualitative programme that corresponds to the personality of the convict, one must get to know him/her as best as possible. This is achieved by the so-called comprehensive characterization of the convict, which includes an opinion, information and complete diagnosis of the convicted individual, which we obtained on the basis of its observation in the preliminary ward, and based on the documentation that accompanied it from the beginning its criminal career. The prisoner is taken care of an entire team of prison specialists, ranging from

educators from the preliminary ward to the prison physician. Talks with convicts play an irreplaceable role.

The content of the comprehensive characterization is a specifically stated objective of effect on the convict, or what we want to achieve in a particular individual by using the programme before release from prison. Appropriate methods of procedures are selected here and regular assessment of the programme for treatment is conducted; any adjustments and improvements are introduced in the implementation of the programme, because not every convict is able or wants to carry out the programme. Due to the fact that the human personality is determined by physical and psychological predispositions – dynamic personality, intelligence, character, etc. (Doňková 2010), a comprehensive characterization is drawn up by prison experts and specialists, taking into account all the characteristic features of the convict: age, addiction, disease, criminal past and its causes, family ties, interests and abilities, education, presented behavior, etc. Then they confront this with the documentation and materials they have on the convict. Everyone cares for the risk assessment and needs of the individual, they motivate it to solve problems, pay attention to its addictions, if any. Here, too, there is a distinction (according to Čepelák) of the convicts personality by type: pro-social, asocial, anti-social, pseudosocial.

The educator in the preliminary ward is the key arbiter of the convict, because they are in constant, daily contact, thus having the greatest opportunity to get to know him/her. It is a person, who, together with the convict, cares about respecting the indications of other prison experts. The educator is also interested in matters like whether the convict smokes or what religion he/she professes.

A social worker focuses only on the social situation (family, children, alimony obligations, financial security, etc.) of the convict, his/her legal capacity, assistance in caring for the life situation after being released from prison and so on.

The psychologist draws up a psychological diagnosis, records the results of the anamnesis and their relationship with the committed criminal offense, examines the person in terms of intellectual capacity, emotional stability, system of values, motivation, etc. It is important to recognize the individual's approach to its act and identification with punishment. The psychologist also conducts special educational practices with the convict.

The special educator takes care of the convict from the educational (penitentiary) point of view, i.e. he analyzes the prisoner's criminal past and its initial mechanisms, motivation for serving the sentence, etc. He assesses the convict's social ties in terms of relationships with convicted people, violent behavior, tendency to extremism. The special educator bases on the convict's current lifestyle, his/her approach to work, education, interests, abilities, moral values, etc. On this basis the special educator influences the inclusion of the prisoner to work and to the penitentiary education system. The special educator

is, after the educator, another person who decides on the interaction of the convicted person in the course of penitentiary practice.

The physician (usually one employed in the prison) provides important information about the patient's health. These include: medical history, classification of health, diet, labor limitations, obligation of treatment, etc. It is important to examine the current health condition of the patient, his attitude to addictive substances, any experiences with them (Černá 2012).

Other prison employees, who can have important insights on the convicts, can participate in creating particular elements of a comprehensive characterization of the convict (social evaluation, psychological evaluation, pedagogical evaluation and health characterization). Their diagnostic advantage consists in the fact that the convict does not pretend anything in front of them and behaves naturally, presents him(her)self as he really is. These mainly include janitors, nurses, masters, to whom prisoners are assigned to work, but also guards and other prison employees.

## **Individual programme for the treatment of prisoners – standard version**

The objectives of programmes for the treatment of prisoners, oriented at the personalities of convicted individuals, are best achieved by focusing on specific problems related to their behavior. This may involve problems that emerged at the moment of committing the offense or problems being a result of lived through experiences while in prison. Thus, programmes for the treatment of prisoners have two functions: they give the offender the opportunity to verify if they are able to confront their previous and current problems; they give prison staff more space to understand the example elements of behavior of prisoners.

Programmes for the treatment of perpetrators of criminal offenses sentenced to life imprisonment can be effective only when they are in some way motivated and willing to accept them. Just like an emotional crisis can reach its peak at the beginning of the sentence, there may also come a time when there are favorable conditions and the convicts will be willing to accept the programme. However, the treatment of prisoners should be standardized, because convicts have their own specific needs, depending on age, length of the sentence, the intensity and quality of contact and personality traits. Therefore, a uniform approach to the problems occurring in this group of prisoners may be retained, but the programmes themselves must be created for each individual separately. Programmes for the treatment of prisoners based on overall behavior of the individual may become the desired psychological and sociological motivation, which has a positive effect on the possibilities of applying them in the prison environment. These programmes would not only affect the change in behavior of the convict (in most cases it is



difficult to guess and define it well), but they could be the beginning of better communication between inmates and prison staff. Rules that take into account the specificity of convicts apply also in creating programmes for the treatment of prisoners for other specific categories of convicts, such as: juveniles, young adults, foreigners, the elderly, sexual deviants, psychopaths, addicts (Jůzl 2004). As mentioned earlier, the programme for the treatment of prisoners covers the following activities, which correspond with the aforementioned elements of education and depend on internal and external conditions (possibilities) of the prison.

External conditions are:

- prisons located in the city, village or outside a developed area (in nature);
- old or newer prison;
- building structures and securities;
- total area of the prison;
- other conditions.

Internal conditions depend on:

- the type of prison;
- personal security;
- aesthetics of the prison;
- specialist wards;
- other conditions.

Pedagogical penitentiary rules or also rules of penitentiary pedagogy are principles or regulations, whose application and observance determines the efficiency of the educational process. The rules of penitentiary pedagogy derive from the rules of traditional pedagogy, according to which J.A. Komenský already worked, and which are generally applicable in the whole area of upbringing and educational interactions on youth and adults. The rules of penitentiary pedagogy are close to the rules of special pedagogy. From merging them, taking into account the specificity of the prison environment, the rules that Jůzl (2012) compiled for penitentiary pedagogy should be mentioned: awareness of the objective combined with the rule of educational perspectives, scientificity, the unity of theory and practice, activeness, demonstrativeness, consciousness, emotionality, comprehensive educational orientation, group education, uniformity of educational interactions, motivation, consistency, feedback, stern justice, humanism, pedagogical optimism.

## Education – mental education

The main objective of educational activity is to support the individual's smooth entry into society after completing the sentence of imprisonment. This activity is focused on the completion of primary education, training or mastering a profession. This possibility is provided by the basic vocational school of the Prison Service of the Czech Republic, which is part of the network of schools of

the Czech Republic. As we have said, learning takes place in school education centers in selected prisons, so not all convicts have such a possibility. It is carried out according to a curriculum, according to the offer and the capabilities of the prisoner. Education can take the form of courses, lectures, lessons, etc. It consists in legal education, language learning (English, German, Spanish, etc.), learning computer skills, the native language (spelling, style, basic knowledge of Czech and world literature), math, social studies, history, etc. They are conducted by educated prison staff, outside specialists, but also prisoners; it could also take the form of self-education (e.g. English for the self-taught). There can be many offers of educational activities, depending on the interests and needs of the convicts, opportunities and initiatives of the prison. The highest form of educational activity is tertiary education, organized according to strict criteria, executed in the prison in Brno (Černá 2012).

### **Special educational activities – moral education**

The term special educational activities means individual and group pedagogical and psychological care. This includes various types of therapy, mainly art therapy, occupational therapy, and others, but also trainings for dealing with one's own aggression, social legal counseling, group counseling, sessions with a psychologist or special educator. An important element are so-called abreactive/releasing talks (mitigating tension), or possibly logotherapy. Special educational activities to some degree include non-directive methods of education based on the voluntary creation of elements of motivation systems. There may be much more of them in line with orientation and training of prison specialists. Special educational procedures include the classic methods of special education, i.e. compensation and rehabilitation, then elements of family education, pastoral and spiritual activities are used. In particular, the role of a spiritual guide, an independent person, often combining the role of a priest, psychologist, educator, teacher and social worker, or even a parent, is irreplaceable in penitentiary practice. The gradual, systematic effect of these forms of activities can cause changes in the system of values of the convict, lead to the inhibition (suppression) of undesirable behavior and to changing the whole moral profile.

### **Professional activity – education through work**

Well-known are the words of the English pioneer of modern penitentiary science, John Howard (1726–1790): “Give the prisoners work, and they will be honest.” This somewhat exaggerated sentence, however, constitutes instructions for one of the main activities of the programme for the treatment of prisoners, which is work. Developing a habit of work in oneself is one of the most important bases of efficient social adaptation, but also the anticipation of prisoners. Therefore, labor

in the system for the treatment of prisoners for the entire period of imprisonment, both in the past and currently, is understood as an important part of social rehabilitation. Labor develops psychomotor and manual abilities of the individual and leads to the formation of volitional qualities (self-discipline, endurance, precision). Work gives the convict the opportunity to deal with the steady, and sometimes boring, course of the punishment. It also seems a good means of meeting the needs and interests of many individuals. During work, the convict is outside of the prison cell (and sometimes outside the prison), which is one of the possibilities of avoiding stress or any conflicts arising from the overcrowding of cells. Labor activity also tends to lower mental tension. The economic importance also cannot be ignored. If the prisoner is able and willing to work, he/she can pay off debts and pay bills. The right of a custodial sentence imposes directly on the convict the obligation to work if a job is assigned. European Prison Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners recognize the work of prisoners as the most important social and integration factor. On the other hand, unemployment of prisoners is one of the biggest risk factors for failure of reintegration. Labor activity should be divided in the following way: the work needed to ensure the good internal functioning of the prison (maintenance, tidiness, library, laundry, kitchen, hospital unit, etc.); work and employment in production plants of companies; work in the center of household activity conducted in an appropriate prison; work as therapeutic activity professionally carried out by prison staff – within its scope auxiliary works are performed, e.g. in the kitchen, in the garden, cleaning, etc. (Černá 2012).

### **Forms of activity outside of work (hobbies)**

Activities outside of work is an important element of the programme for the treatment of prisoners. Often, if labor activity cannot be introduced, it is an essential part of the programme. This activity comprises aesthetic education and physical education – as inherent elements in the education system. Their significance, however, consists in learning how to spend free time in a proper way, and after returning to freedom – making positive changes in lifestyle. These activities also help to maintain mental and physical condition of the convict and reduce tension. It is about developing interests, hobbies and preferences of the convict, who has the right to them, and what is welcome in penitentiary practice.

Classes of an aesthetic-educational character meet all the objectives of aesthetic education and bring the convict spiritual and physical satisfaction, because they chose them themselves. According to the theory of aesthetic education it is about the active and receptive side.

The active side includes the participation of the individual in the creation of cultural goods and aesthetic and educational activities in various groups: sculpting, building models, music, vocal, reading, visual arts; then a sewing group, embroidery, crocheting, knitting, working with wood, stone, metal; breeding

groups (aquarium fish), gardening (indoor and garden plants), ceramics, theatre, etc. The type depends on what skills and interests educators and other employees have, so they can steer participants of classes and advise or include the prisoners themselves in conducting the groups. There are many activities like this, one should only use one's imagination and skills, and sometimes the artistic talents of prisoners. From the motivational point of view, it is good to then organize exhibitions of their work or contests, or decorate some of the rooms, corridors, etc. with their works. Greater activation occurs during the holidays, especially church holidays (Easter, Christmas). In addition to activities within interest groups, favorite board games, card games, crosswords, etc. should also be mentioned.

The receptive side includes watching TV shows and movies, listening to the radio and music, but also live performances of musical groups, performances of actors or watching theatrical performances prepared by prisoner-actors. The point is that even if an individual does not take active part in the creation of art and beauty, it may still be strongly involved emotionally in its experience, and therefore, it should not be spoken of as the "passive side".

Activities during free time of a sports and physical nature is always desirable in prison systems around the world, as seen in many foreign, especially American films. It is conducive to inhibiting unwanted aggression, prevents boredom or dishonest intentions of some prisoners. In the prison offer exercising at the gym, ping-pong, table football, etc. are very popular. Outdoors, and where it is possible, also on the pitch, the favorite games are football, volleyball, basketball, etc. The conviction that prisoners at the gym are "training their muscles" against officers cannot be defended; one must always remember about channeling their excess energy. The prison service also seeks to fulfill the purpose of physical education, which results in the cultivation of motor and physical development of individuals, who begin to perceive physical activity as an integral part of their lifestyle. Therefore, the Prison Service supports sport and physical activities by organizing tournaments of different coverage (it is good to combine them again with "opportunities") which have winners. One of them is a favorite game of chess, ping-pong and a number of others according to convicts' and educators' likes. Like in aesthetic and educational activities, in sports we also distinguish the active side (the individual takes up sports activities) and the receptive side: mainly watching TV programs. In juvenile convicts, special emphasis is placed on supporting the interests and activities during their free time (Jůzl 2012).

## **The area of creating external contacts**

This part of the programme for the treatment of prisoners is sometimes referred to as extramural. It involves the area of maintaining ties and contacts, and establishing them with the world "through walls". The aim is to strengthen and maintain relationships with family and loved ones, which contributes to meeting

the basic psychological needs of offenders. If a convict comes from a functional family, relationships with this environment should be maintained, mainly for the smooth return to society. In contrast, if the family directly contributed to committing the crime, the educator should assess the strength of its negative impact on the process of social rehabilitation. However, prisons also have such convicts who are lonely, without any relationships with the outside world. Volunteers play a significant role in this situation. Prisons are visited by clergy of all registered churches regularly as part of pastoral visits. Indirect contact also includes watching TV and reading newspapers. Convicts also have a prison library they can use (Černá 2012).

## **The minimum programme for the treatment of prisoners**

The minimum programme for the treatment of prisoners is applied to those prisoners who did not choose any of the programmes offered by the prison. It consists of activities that are educationally and organizationally managed and run by employees prison employees full-time of twenty hours per week; the guardian is sometimes the special educator. The minimum programme for the treatment of prisoners (like the standard one) includes mainly the following activities: work for the prison, self-maintenance activities (the theory and practice of doing laundry, ironing, maintenance of clothing, housework, etc.), social skills associated with a conflict-free life, mastering minimum knowledge in the scope of law, basic knowledge about health and hygiene, physical exercise, the possibility of pursuing one's interests (Černá 2012).

### **Electronic program SARPO**

Although relevant effects are expected of the programmes in the form of reducing or completely eliminating recidivism, in practice, their effects are small. This is evidenced by the results of quantitative studies on a sample of prisoners in qualification jobs and qualitative studies with prison specialists. While the prison population professes purposeful implementation of the programmes for the treatment of prisoners, specialists of prison practice feel helpless in their actions, which should be called a loss of pedagogical optimism. However, in the last three years the Czech Prison Service, as part of the elimination of violent behavior and decreasing recidivism, systematically and in a planned way focuses on the realization of the program SARPO. This project is a predictive tool used in the Czech prison system used for evaluating risks and criminogenic needs of prisoners, based on an electronic program. This tool monitors the probability of repeated failure of the convict. This probability is determined by calculating the statistical risk from sources on previous criminal behavior of the individual; from

an evaluation of 48 risk factors divided into 7 categories based on estimating damage and specification of potential victims on the basis of an analysis of the committed offense. An element of SARPO is also the study of motivation and self-esteem of the perpetrator. The project SARPO was introduced into prison practice on 1.11.2012. All new prisoners are subject to it, because at the beginning they are all developed a programme for the treatment of prisoners (outside the penalty or the remaining penalty up to 3 months) on the basis of a comprehensive report. This task is divided, like in the previous practice, between the educator, psychologist, special educator and social worker. This report is drawn using SARPO. Until February 2014, more than 10,000 comprehensive characteristics of convicts were developed, including approx. 8.5 thousand updates. The tool SARPO does not recognize the importance of pedagogical and psychological diagnosis, but it significantly assists it. It is based on precisely defined source of data on proven examples of analyzed data taking into account the daily needs of penitentiary practice. SARPO is clearly conducive to the internal differentiation of prisoners, and so that it does not become technically and morally obsolete it is constantly updated, and the specialists that use it are trained at the Prison Service Academy of the Czech Republic. To conclude, SARPO is an objective, deliberately structured tool for evaluating convicts with a validated assessment of statistical and dynamic risk, focused on recognizing a specific criminal act containing the violent, sexual or drug context. The electronic program SARPO was created on the VBA platform (Visual Basic for Applications) using an Excel spreadsheet. The central administration module of databases MDB and databases of issues centrally controlling the programme are on a secure server. The program is basically designed to act as a browser and data processor. Directional data and databases are placed in a network outside the prison. The program is able to carry out automatic updates of individual users. Any adjustment of the importance of certain factors, method of estimating risk, the environment of users, etc. will be performed from the administration module from the center, without having to reach to every single prison (Petras 2012, p. 17).

## Post-penitentiary care system

Post-penitentiary care or follow-up care is a combination of care for the individual leaving prison after serving the sentence of imprisonment with subsequent care in an open environment. It consists in another set of system procedures, in which probation and mediation services participate under the authority of the court – and also social curators, especially if the person in freedom becomes homeless. The Czech Republic has an extensive system of caring for these people. Černíková (in: Sochurek 2007) identifies the following reasons for the necessity of post-penitentiary care: the objectives of the penitentiary process were not at all achieved or

consolidated, and the released individual needs professional help in adapting to the conditions of life in a civil community; for the first few days in freedom the person is like a convalescent and can easily be subject to negative influences, especially recidivism, which usually occurs up to one year after release; the crisis experience in first days of freedom, helplessness in dealing with everyday situations, fear, anxiety, inappropriate social behavior; label of a criminal (also visible tattoos); the consequences of incarceration; the sense of social eradication; problems with the lack of or restoration of partnerships; restoring the parental role or rebuilding or finding relationships with children; “temptation” from former colleagues, often from the underworld or from among former inmates; the risk of recurrence of alcohol abuse, drugs or pathological gambling; inclusion in the labor process conditioned by finding a job and the restoration of habits and work skills related to this, especially if the convict during imprisonment was not employed; other reasons.

Post-penitentiary care, therefore, means an offer of social services addressed to the released prisoner, but we can also conceive it as a specific type of second- and third-degree prevention, and in a wide range of applications (repeating criminal behavior, relapse of alcoholism or drug addiction, inappropriate behavior). Thanks to post-penitentiary care, recidivism can be gradually reduced.

## Conclusions

The amnesty announced by the president of the Czech Republic in early 2013, after some time, is clearly showing more positive than negative aspects. Arguments of skeptics about a rapid return, especially of repeat offenders, “behind bars” have been refuted. The amnesty primarily helped in many ways the Prison Service of the Czech Republic, has contributed to increasing the slow pace of functioning of justice authorities, saved money, significantly decreased the risk of riots and motivated representatives of the probation and mediation service to increase activity in the scope of post-penitentiary care and their responsibilities. On the other hand it angered the public, especially the victims of crime. The number of persons covered by the amnesty (and nature of their crimes), however, is much more favorable than twenty-five years ago, during a nationwide amnesty, which was declared by Vaclav Havel – it gave the Police of the Czech Republic additional work. However, it is believed that those who claim amnesty, particularly repeat offenders, will return “behind bars”, and those who resist the temptation of freedom, will remain “outside” (Jůzl 2014).

Statistical data on the amnesty from the beginning of 2013 (from internal data of DG Prison Service of the Czech Republic) are as follows:

Number of prisoners until 31.12.2012:	22,641
Number of prisoners until 4.1.2013:	17,602
Number of prisoners until 8.7.2013:	16,299

Until 15.5.2013, 6,457 prisoners were released.

Number of prisoners until 20.10.2014: 18,324

According to the information from the press office of the Prison Service of the Czech Republic, of those prisoners released 1,450 returned to prison until 1.10.2014, which after eighteen months represents 22.5%. According to the statement of the Prison Service of the Czech Republic this is a great success. Prior to 1989, so twenty-five years ago, it was assumed that approx. 80–90% of repeat will return to prison. The figures quoted, closely monitored by the Prison Service of the Czech Republic, speak for themselves to any comments on the current amnesty.

Recidivism as a relapse, repeat, regression existed, exists and will continue to exist. Doctors, judges, police or the prison service are not able to deal with it. However, it should be faced through programmes and take systematic action in order to reduce it. It has been shown that most offenders of criminal acts range in the age from thirty to fifty years old (Jůzl 2012), and with age, its level decreases. As it has been shown in this paper, it is the effect, among others, of the programmes for the treatment of prisoners conducted in the Czech Republic, the project SARPO, post-penitentiary care and amnesty (it is not, however, announced every year). As a recommendation, keeping a precise and universal registration of the number of repeat offenders and crimes committed by them should be adopted, as well as the reasons for committing them and subjecting this to regular evaluation.

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