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*Cooperation of Probation Officers and Prison Officers in Social Readaptation of Offenders Conditionally Released From Prison*

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Współpraca kuratorów sądowych z funkcjonariuszami Służby Więziennej w readaptacji społecznej skazanych warunkowo zwolnionych z zakładu karnego

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ABSTRACT

One of the most evocative social problems, very rarely examined by researchers, is the readaptation of people released from correctional facilities. Ex-prisoners are still perceived by society as worse individuals who threaten public security. Recidivism mainly results from the lack of proper support from services and institutions created to reduce the risk of reoffending. The time after leaving prison is very important and difficult because it influences the ex-convict's future life. Preparation for the social reintegration of prisoners begins already in the correctional institution and should be continued after their release. Cooperation of probation officers and correctional officers is an inseparable and integral aspect of educational and resocialization work carried out in the open environment.

**Key words:** social readaptation of prisoners; cooperation of probation officers and correctional officers

INTRODUCTION

From a pedagogical point of view, the basic purpose of serving a prison sentence is to prepare convicts for proper prosocial functioning in the open environment after being released from the correctional institution (Ciosek, 2008, p. 323; Postulski, 2014, p. 813). This readaptive function is embedded in the purpose of imprisonment (Machel, 2003, p. 34).

The need for close cooperation between the staff of the correctional institution and the persons who will supervise the convicted person after their release from prison is indicated in recommendations on conditional releases of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. Recommendations state that guaranteeing proper cooperation during the period of conditional release ensures continuity of punishment and support in conditions of supervised freedom (Recommendation, 2003).

Due to the totalitarian, isolating, and depriving nature of correctional institutions, the convict's transition from prison isolation to the open social environment is particularly difficult. People released from prison should not be "sentenced" to rely only on themselves in the process of readaptation and social reintegration. Social readaptation entails practical preparation of convicts to perform universally accepted life and social roles, and reintegration involves rebuilding and strengthening the convict's ability to participate in social life in their place of residence and at work (2015 NIK<sup>1</sup> Report, p. 5). Therefore, in the first period of conditional release, a probation officer should determine to what extent serving a sentence in prison and the associated negative burdens affect the disorganisation of the functioning of convicts in their closest environment (family, peer group, neighbourhood, and local community) (Bałandynowicz, 2009, p. 161).

Methods of preparing convicts for release are specified in the Executive Penal Code of 1997 and in the ordinance on the organisational regulations of the execution of imprisonment. Up to 6 months before the planned conditional release, with the consent of the convict, prison officers in cooperation with probation officers prepare a release program. This program includes support in solving convict's personal problems and pedagogical counselling in family, social, and economic issues. It determines the needs of post-penitentiary support analysing potential adaptation difficulties of convicts after their release and developing ways of overcoming them and providing appropriate support, including establishing contacts with institutions and organisations providing social support and healthcare. According to Stefan Lelental, probation officers play a decisive role in the process of preparing convicts to function in a natural, non-institutional social environment (1999, p. 34).

In some countries, probation officers are part of the prison system, which has a positive effect on the effectiveness of social readaptation of convicts released from prisons. In England and Wales, the links between the probation system and the prison system are bilateral. Probation officers work in correctional institutions, but also perform their activities outside the institution in an open environment, maintaining direct contact with offenders released from the institution. Offenders report to the probation officer (Welfare Officer), based in a prison, and

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<sup>1</sup> Najwyższa Izba Kontroli – Supreme Audit Office in Poland

indicate significant problems they face after leaving the prison. Probation officers organise courses where they teach prisoners how to solve major problems. During workshops, prisoners learn how to use public employment agencies, how to present themselves to the employer and clarify matters related to detention. Because work in a correctional institution is more stressful than in an open environment, the English model uses a rotation every few years so that probation officers do not identify themselves with prison service officers, do not lose sensitivity but still respect the rights of prisoners and feel the need to help. Such a system of periodic changes in the working environment delays the occurrence of occupational burn-out (Szczygieł, 2002, p. 95, p. 266).

In Poland, the idea of appointing parole officers appeared in the early 1970s in the Białystok Remand Centre. Based on the experience gained during on-call times in prison and during their stays in England, France, Germany, and Denmark, probation officers developed a model of parole supervision (Keller 1996, p. 524; Korzecka-Piber, 1999, p. 213; Korzecka-Piber, 2000, p. 142; Scope of the probation officer's duties..., 2000, p. 41). In this model parole officers were appointed to carry out tasks and activities in correctional institutions and related to helping convicts' readaptation. They cooperated closely with the administration of the correctional institution and had systematic on-call times in prisons (Szczygieł, 2002, p. 200).

The main task of a parole officer was to work with a candidate for conditional release and the prison administration to create a freedom program. Based on the collected information on the family and environmental situation and analysis of the criminal case files and prison documentation, parole officers prepared people from the closest family and prisoners for the release, co-organising post-prison support by identifying the needs of the convicts and their families. They supported the development of problem-solving skills so that convicts can deal with life difficulties independently. They analysed potential readaptation difficulties and worked out ways of overcoming them, cooperating with prison administration, local government units, entities dealing with post-penitentiary assistance, associations, foundations, organisations, institutions and other entities whose purpose is to ensure convicts have a fair start after their release.

A well-developed freedom program makes it easier for the convict to understand the situation they are in, it relieves the stress of leaving prison, determines the available means of support, builds positive self-esteem and belief in the possibility of proper functioning in an open environment (Wasilewska, et al., 1998, p. 188; Korzecka-Piber, 2000, p. 7 et seq.). The practice of parole officers in Białystok shows that under the freedom program probation officers may make many interventions for convicts: provide advice on social and economic issues, help solve problems related to addiction, suggest forms of addiction therapy, plan temporary releases, and assist in editing official documents (Gałań, 2000, p. 146).

Stanisław Pawela (1977, p. 192 et seq.) proposed appointing probation officers for convicts just before their release as early as in the 1970s. He believed that contacts of the probation officer with the prisoner would create the basis not only for collecting information about the convict but also for influencing the prison administration so that it could prepare for the release of the prisoner in advance. The described concept was reflected in the position of a parole officer. In contrast, Andrzej Bałandynowicz (1996, p. 105) believed that parole officers' primary function is bridging the gap between resocialisation in the system of isolation and repression and in the probation systems.

According to Maria Korzecka-Piber (2000, p. 140), there are three arguments justifying the introduction of parole officers preparing convicts for release. First, this solution is primarily grounded in humanitarian considerations, since convicts fear the future, problems awaiting them in their environment, and their own unresolved problems. Second, social considerations point to the need for the probation officer to act as a link between the world of free people and the closed world of the convicts. Prisoners expect the society to help and give them a chance to start a new life, while society is afraid of them and turns them away, disregarding the future life of released convicts. Third, preventive reasons include protecting the public against the return of persons leaving prisons to a life of crime.

In addition, Irena Dybalska (2007, p. 165) noted that in some cases the competence of the prison administration is insufficient to properly organise the living conditions of clients preparing for release. Problems with adaptation to life can be affected primarily by the nature of the crime, e.g. paedophilia or spectacular homicide, as well as the personal characteristics of the perpetrators, e.g. psychodegradation associated with addiction to alcohol or drugs, homelessness, or physical disability. In such cases, cooperation of the corrections officers, who only fulfil their tasks in the facility, with the probation officer is necessary. The probation officer has all the competencies to influence the social and family environment and thus help the convict in overcoming adaptation difficulties. Probation officers delegated to prisons significantly supplement and strengthen the influence of correctional staff in preparing convicts to function in an open environment. In addition, prison officers expected parole officers to provide them with information about the convict's closest environment (family) and relations between the convict and people from their environment. The prison officer will not receive this information from the convicts, and even if they would, it would be one-sided and incomplete, since the prison officer's contact with the family is usually limited to one short conversation. The probation officer, on the other hand, can observe family relations in the natural environment, and properly prepare the family for the convict's return (Szczygieł, 2002, p. 266).

Cooperation of probation officers with prison officers may take place on many levels: 1) the probation officer can participate in planning temporary releas-

es with the correctional officer by preparing an opinion on the convict's attitude, preparing the family, and supervising the release; 2) the probation officer together with the prison officer can determine the offender's needs in terms of post-prison support; 3) prison officers provide probation officers with personal information about the convict and their observations on the progress of the convict in preparation for their release; 4) prison officers and probation officers can use a wide choice of activities available to prisoners: vocational activation, courses, educational and corrective workshops, work in culture and education: amateur theatre, literary competitions, and exhibitions of prisoners' artistic work. On the basis of the convict's activity in the course of serving the sentence and the collected information, a reliable probational, criminological, and social forecast can be prepared on how well the convict is prepared for their post-prison life. Information collected by the probation officer about the client and their relationships in the family is also important when the director of the correctional institution decides about a temporary release the convict has earned or is entitled to. Information about the convict collected by the probation officer is also useful for the prison court ruling in proceedings for conditional release or various temporary release schemes. The introduction of probation officers to corrective institutions is also beneficial for probation officers working in an open environment, since they will supervise convicts already prepared for cooperation with identified adaptation problems, completely or partially solved (Szczygieł, 2001, p. 68; Szczygieł, 2002, p. 268).

Białystok probation officers postulated that their work with convicts began when the convict arrived at the facility. Then interventions of the probation officer could concentrate on preparing the convict for imprisonment. For the duration of the convict's stay in detention, the intensity of the probation officer's activities will depend on the convict's needs. The probation officer's special role focuses on the period of preparing the convict to leave prison, which begins 6 months before the end of the sentence or anticipated conditional release and continues in the open environment. If supervision is not ordered, it also includes assistance in the first period after leaving prison. In addition, parole officers may alleviate stress situations experienced by convicts after negative decisions of the court or prison commission regarding a temporary release or relief in serving a sentence, which results in a decrease in the number of complaints about court or administrative decisions. After five years of probation officers' work in correctional facilities, convicts viewed supervision and the probation officer quite differently from their previous experiences. They saw probation officers as guides and advisers, not only controllers and enforcers of court orders. They experienced that their subjectivity was respected, that probation officers "did not write anyone off". The work of a probation officer in the corrective institution proved to be very beneficial for building convicts' trust for the prison administration. Cooperation of probation officers with prison service officers brought many benefits: 1) it helped convicts

prepare for post-prison life; 2) prison staff systematically received additional information about the client and their environment; 3) the probation officer could flexibly respond to changes in the offender's behaviour and modify the freedom program accordingly; 4) the probation officer could also use the convict's prison documentation without restrictions; 5) probation officers supervising convicts in their place of residence obtained a thorough diagnosis of their adaptation problems and, thus, the client was motivated to continue cooperation in an open environment (Kokorzecka-Piber, 1999, p. 219; Kokorzecka-Piber, 2008, p. 572; *Scope of activities...*, 2000, p. 40 et seq.; Szczygieł, 2001, p. 68; Szczygieł, 2002, p. 208).

The conducted evaluation studies showed that the introduction of parole officers was positively assessed by convicts, prison officers, and professional probation officers who supervise conditionally released persons in the open environment. Convicts who had direct contact with parole officers assessed their activities positively as well. The majority of prisoners (91.04%) stated that they received help from probation officers in solving their problems. In addition, almost all surveyed prison officers (98.36%) stated that the information collected by parole officers was very useful in working directly with prisoners. The majority of respondents assessed the participation of probation officers in prison commission meetings as very significant (63.93%). Also, probation officers working in the open environment were satisfied with the information prepared by probation officers working in corrective facilities (72.87%); they emphasised this data was very useful in establishing contact with conditionally released persons. Prison judges also assessed parole officers' activity positively. According to the judges, the material collected by the probation officers was useful when making decisions about conditional release or a temporary release. The judges also emphasised that parole officers working in corrective institutions effectively relieve clients' tension and stress caused by negative decisions of the prison court. Almost all prison officers in the studied group (93.44%) considered it appropriate to introduce the position of a parole officer to the Executive Penal Code – a statutory regulation would standardise their functioning. Prison officers also emphasised the need to increase the number of parole officers (Szczygieł, 2001, p. 68; Szczygieł, 2002, pp. 279, 282).

Despite such positive feedback during the Białystok experiment, the position of a parole officer affiliated with a particular corrective institution has not been introduced to the penal system. Introducing the provisions of art. 164–165 meant, in fact, abandoning the idea of parole officers (Kiryłuk, 2008, p. 319).

Meanwhile, in the process of social readaptation, convicts need professional probation officers from the moment they start serving the sentence until they leave the institution and make another attempt at social reintegration in the local environment. This solution is supported by high reoffending rates. The latest NIK report "Social support for persons released from prisons" (2019, p. 18) shows that in the group of people released due to the end of their sentence,



41.5% reoffended, while in the group of persons released conditionally 38.1% reoffended.

The 2019 NIK audit shows that people released from prisons need help in the form of an accurate freedom program that will help them find their way in the new world after leaving the prison walls. Ex-convicts face numerous challenges they cannot cope with without family support, help from probation officers and social workers. Convicts' statements attest to the difficulty of the time after the release: "I was so afraid to go out, for me to take a trip to the city centre, I would come back with a headache, I locked myself in, the TV was on, but muted. When the phone rang, I almost got a stroke, so my mother turned off the phone. If they pulled me out of the house, it would have been the end of the world for me."; "I was so overwhelmed by this whole situation, hearing 'No' here and 'No' there that I just wanted to talk to someone about it."; "The time after release was very hard. Such persons should not be viewed as criminals, the conversation should be aimed at helping them" (p. 68).

The 2019 NIK audit showed that only 6.8% of social support centres started cooperation with correctional institutions (p. 123), cooperation between social support centres and the probation officers practically did not exist, and if it did it concerned only entitlement to social welfare benefits (p. 30). Such a readaptation situation of clients released from correctional institutions is even more grim when we add that only 15.3% clients reported that the programs they participated in in prison/remand were useful for life in the open environment (p. 14).

That is why Paweł Szczepaniak, critically assessing the process of convicts' social readaptation, emphasised that after positive experiences resulting from the Białystok experiment, the provision of art. 164 of the Penal Code on cooperation of the prison service with probation officers remains a dead letter. He postulated creating a specialisation among probation officers in the field of work with prisoners returning to society (2004, p. 422).

The conditional early release of the convicted person means that part of the sentence will be served in conditions of controlled freedom in an open environment. Reducing the time spent in the correctional institution does not always mean that the client has been fully rehabilitated. That is why the function of a professional probation officer is so important during the period of serving a sentence. The officer will carry out activities in the open environment that are continuation of social rehabilitation activities undertaken in conditions of prison isolation aimed at reducing the risk of reoffending and increasing their chance for positive social readaptation (Bulenda, Musiński, 2008, p. 155 et seq.).

Recently, the Ministry of Justice has taken action to link programmed social rehabilitation activities in probation officers' methodology of work with risk assessment of reoffending and the need to classify supervised persons in the appropriate risk group (Regulation of MJ 2013, item 335; Regulation of MJ 2016, item

969; Executive Penal Code, Art. 169b). The content of these legal acts is clearly in line with the new work strategy of probation services based on the case management procedure, developed in the new approach to resocialisation referred to as what works movement in corrections, aimed at identifying the conditions for effective corrective interventions. In literature written in the English language, it also appears under the name evidence based criminal policy, i.e. criminal policy based on the results of scientific research (Stańdo-Kawecka, 2010, p. 901; Węgliński, Kuziora, 2016, p. 46; Węgliński 2018, p. 412).

In accordance with current legal regulations, probation officers may classify a supervised person into one of three risk groups of reoffending: reduced risk (group A), baseline (group B), increased risk (group C), (Regulation 2016, item 969; Executive Penal Code, Art. 169b). Ministry assumes classification of supervised persons to risk groups will 1) improve public safety by reducing reoffence of persons on probation, 2) help probation officer adapt the type and intensity of their interventions to identified risk factors, 3) prevent social probation officers from managing difficult cases, 4) introduce legible and objective criteria for the division of cases according to their difficulty (risk groups), and 5) streamline procedures for cooperation with the supervised person taking into account the appropriate frequency and recommended timeline. Qualifying supervised persons to risk groups of recidivism should allow probation officers to manage their services and adjust their actions to supervision management standards outlined in European probation rules (Stańdo-Kawecka, 2014).

Persons released from prisons are usually classified to the group of high risk of returning to crime. That is why probation officers working on such difficult cases should be able to recognise static and dynamic factors of recidivism and to formulate a proper criminological forecast for the necessary education and preventive actions. A reliable diagnosis of the convicts' needs made by probation officers defines the basis of social rehabilitation understood as the elimination of criminogenic factors. According to the risk estimation model, freedom programs should be targeted specifically at those offenders who have many problem areas correlating with recidivism. Donald Andrews, James Bonta, and Robert Hoge (1990) found that the effectiveness of resocialisation programs depends on the characteristics of the client, the intensity of criminogenic factors, and the client's current situation. According to the first risk principle, social rehabilitation activities must focus on those convicts who are most likely to engage in future criminal activity (medium and high-risk group).

The probation officer working with a client collects information on their criminogenic needs, qualifies them to an appropriate risk group, plans individual activities, arranges services adequate to the client's problems, monitors client's tasks and activities, supports the process of readaptation and social reintegration, and evaluates its effects (Smrokowska-Reichmann 2009; Bonta, Andrews, 2010;



Stańdo-Kawecka, 2010; Wójcik, 2013; Barczykowska, Dzierżyńska-Breś ,2013; Sztuka, 2013; Dziadkiewicz, 2016).

The following part of the article will present the author's empirical research aimed at identifying selected risk factors and protective resources that may affect the process of social readaptation of persons conditionally released from prison placed under probation officer's supervision. Recognition of static risk factors is combined with case anamnesis: the study of factors that precede the states of illness, failure, crisis, otherness, deviation, or crime. Anamnesis attempts to determine the duration of the period preceding manifestations of violations of norms or social values. It is an analysis of past difficult situations and toxic individual or environmental factors that preceded the criminal act. Whereas identifying dynamic risk factors involves case catamnesis: analysing the period when the first symptoms of social maladjustment appeared, and the supervised person began committing criminal offences (Baładynowicz, 2012). On the basis of identified static and dynamic risk factors, probation officers predict if the supervised persons will reoffend, which is particularly important for the sense of social security and the possibility of taking preventive actions (Hołyst, 2010).

Basic information about the risk factors affecting recidivism and violent behaviour in social relations of persons released from corrective institutions was obtained from probation officers executing court ordered probation. In addition, an attempt was made to recognise selected personal resources (protective factors), which may facilitate the process of convicts' social reintegration in conditions of supervised freedom.

## RESEARCH GOALS

The main goal of the present research was to identify personal resources as well as static, dynamic, social and individual risk factors of recidivism and violent behaviours that may hinder the process of social readaptation of convicts conditionally released from prison.

The following specific questions were posed:

1. What is the family and environmental situation of the supervised persons released from prison related to criminogenic factors?
2. What are the features of the criminal biography of convicts released from prison?
3. What are the character traits and symptoms of addiction of conditionally released persons from the perspective of probation officers?
4. What are the historical, social and individual risk factors of violent behaviour in the group of convicts supervised by probation officers?
5. What are the protective factors against the risk of violent behaviour of convicts who are conditionally released from prison under the supervision of probation officers?

6. What are the types of social maladjustment of convicts who are conditionally released from prison under the supervision of probation officers?

The above questions are diagnostic and descriptive and do not require posing any working hypotheses.

## METHOD, MEASURES AND RESPONDENTS

Any activity that is to achieve a specific goal requires taking appropriate actions. A cross-sectional empirical research plan (survey model) was used in the present study (Nachmias, Frankfort-Nachmias, 2001, p. 113). In the diagnostic survey procedure, research techniques are used to collect information about the structural and functional attributes of the studied social phenomena, described on the basis of the opinions and views reported by selected groups of respondents (Pilch, 2001, p. 80). Measures used in the present research were adapted to the scope of the analysed phenomena and the diversity of the study group.

To assess the risk factors of recidivism, a questionnaire was constructed for probation officers, consisting of questions aimed at examining 29 static and 23 dynamic criminogenic factors identified on the basis of the Forecast Scale for Assessing the Risk of Criminal Behavior (FSARCB), developed by Brunon Holyst (2013, pp. 39–45) – see table below.

In addition, Structured Assessment of Violence Risk in Youth (SAVRY) created by Borum, Bartel, and Forthwas was used to analyse the risk factors and protective resources conditionally released prisoners supervised by probation officers (Gierowski, 2005). SAVRY identifies four data categories with 24 risk factors and 6 protective (prevention) factors. Each risk factor in SAVRY is rated on a 3-point scale: low (0 points), moderate (1 point), or high (2 points). The higher the results obtained by the respondent the greater the likelihood that they will reveal violent behaviour in the future. Risk factors of violent behaviour include 10 historical factors (max. score is 20 points), 6 social factors (max. 12 points), 8 individual factors (max. 16 points) and 6 protective factors. Protective factors are rated on a 2-point scale, where 1 point means its presence, and 0 points means its absence (max. 6 points).

Probation officers assessed the functioning of 30 men conditionally released from prisons. Most supervised convicts were people up to 30 years of age (47%) and people aged 31 to 40 (33%). The average life expectancy of the offenders was 32 years. The majority of supervised persons are bachelors (67%), only every tenth convict is married. The offenders live in the city (70%). 60% of prisoners live in cities over 50 thousand inhabitants and only one in three of the offenders live in a rural area. The described offenders committed common crimes (57%) and violent crimes (43%). The average period of supervision by a probation officer in

Table 1. Static and dynamic risk factors for recidivism

Category	Characteristic	Factor
General biography	Upbringing in an incomplete family, foster care, orphanage	static
	No education or no higher than primary or incomplete primary	dynamic
	No vocational qualifications	dynamic
	Unemployed for less than 6 months, from 6 to 12 months, or over a year	static
	Non-believer or indifferent to religion	dynamic
	Released after serving the entire sentence	static
Criminal biography	Arrested once, twice, three times or more	static
	Committed to a youth detention centre	static
	Prison sentence	static
	Suspended sentence, without suspension of up to 3 years, without suspension over three years	static
	Unintentional crime	static
	Accessory	static
	Intentional crime	static
Personality traits	Not accepting one's own social situation	dynamic
	Contempt for the environment	dynamic
	Suspicion, distrust	dynamic
	Destructive inclinations	dynamic
	Lack of emotional balance, impulsivity	dynamic
Addictions	Alcohol	dynamic
	Drugs	dynamic
	Gambling	dynamic
	Other addictions	dynamic
Traditions-environment	Both parents uneducated	static
	Both parents have not completed primary education	static
	Both parents unbelieving or indifferent to religion	static
	Father with a sentence or suspended sentences	static
	Mother with a sentence or suspended sentences	static
	Father serving a sentence	static
	Mother serving a sentence	static
	Other relatives (one or more) with suspended sentences	static
Other relatives serving sentences	static	

Source: Hołyst, B. (2013). Forecast Scale for Assessing the Risk of Criminal Behavior – individual's recidivism prediction, *Probation 2013, 2*, 39–45.

the examined group of convicts after being released from prison was 23 months. Other features of criminal biography and the family environment of the supervised persons will be presented further in the article. Respondents included probation officers: 56% professional probation officers and 44% social probation officers. Most of the probation officers have a master's degree in pedagogy (55%). They have diverse professional and pedagogical work experience: 90% have over ten years of seniority, while the average seniority in this group was 25 years. 48% of respondents have been working as probation officers for over 10 years, and 13% have over 20 years of work experience. 18% of probation officers have a seniority of up to 5 years. The average seniority for probation officers in the studied group was 16 years.

### INTERPRETATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS

In the first part of the analysis of the collected empirical material, selected features of the general biography of the supervised persons were examined. Probation officers provided information about static factors related to upbringing in an incomplete family, foster care home or orphanage, as well as experienced unemployment before detention. In addition, certain dynamic factors were identified such as low educational attainment and lack of professional qualifications. Information on release from prison was also included. These are the criteria which, according to Bruno Hołyst (2013, pp. 39–45), increase the likelihood of reoffending.

The collected information shows that the vast majority of the supervised people grew up in a complete family (73%). In contrast, only eight convicts (27%) were brought up in a foster family. Another analysed static factor was the experience of unemployment. 23% of the supervised offenders did not work for a year, and one for over one year. In the area of analysed dynamic factors referring to general biography, the convicts' education attainment was analysed. The supervised persons had secondary (37%), primary (23%), junior high (23%) and vocational (20%) education. In the studied group only two convicts had higher education (6%). None of the supervised persons had no education, not higher than primary or incomplete primary education. In the group of dynamic factors, professional qualifications of the supervised persons were assessed. According to the obtained information 43% of the supervised offenders were not qualified for any profession. The last dynamic factor assessed by the probation officers was the offenders' attitude to religion. Despite the anonymity of the research, 42% of probation officers said that the question posed this way invaded the inmates' privacy and they refused to provide information. Ultimately, the obtained information shows that eight prisoners (27%) were indifferent to religion. Summing up this part of the research, in the field of static factors related to general

biography increasing the likelihood of undertaking future criminal behaviour upbringing of almost every third supervised person in a foster family is noteworthy. Also, more than every fifth of the convicts experienced a period of no permanent or temporary employment, reporting significant stress and a sense of professional exclusion. In the scope of the analysed dynamic factors, probation officers working with the offender should focus on the lack of professional qualifications reported by 43% offenders, as well as the experience caused by previous detention in a corrective facility, which may have negative or even destructive consequences for the offenders' mental state suggesting the convict's assimilation into the inmate subculture.

An important supplement to the presented biographical factors is the analysis of selected static factors of the family environment, considering the criminal record of the father, mother, and close relatives, as well as information related to the parents' lack of education, professional qualifications or religious awareness. These factors may have a significant impact on the asocial behaviour and criminogenesis of the supervised persons. Unfortunately, most probation officers were unable to provide any information about the family environment of the convicts, explaining that the convicts are adults. Among the probation officers participating in the research, over 40% did not have basic socio-pedagogical information about fathers and mothers of the supervised persons. The obtained scarce information shows that only seven fathers (23%) and two mothers (7%) of the convicts are persons with sentences (suspended and served). In addition, it was found that eight of the siblings (27%) and five relatives (17%) of the supervised convicts were punished for their crimes. In two cases, probation officers noted that both parents had no professional training (7%). It was also found that 7% of parents are non-believing or religiously indifferent. In the studied group no parents had lower than primary education. It is surprising that the surveyed probation officers were not interested in recognising dysfunctional or criminogenic characteristics of the family environment, and thus did not gather information on static risk factors that could have a decisive impact on the convicts' committing their first crime. This is even more strange because 47% of the convicts still live together with their parents. Then selected static criminogenic factors related to the criminal biography of the supervised persons were analysed (see table below).

Data in Table 2 shows that 27% of supervised persons were arrested twice or three times, and 23%, in addition to imprisonment, had previous suspended sentences of up to 3 years and committed intentional crimes. A factor that is particularly important for further successful supervision is that three convicts were committed to a youth detention centre. In general, the presented criminal biography of the offenders does not indicate a particularly severe process of criminalisation – only every third supervised person was arrested more than twice before being ordered supervision by a probation officer.

Table 2. Criminal biography of the supervised persons released from prison

Factors	Offender /n=30/	
	N	%
arrested twice or three times	8	27
had a suspended sentence	7	23
served a sentence up to 3 years	7	23
committed an intentional crime	7	23
arrested once	5	17
served a sentence over 3 years	5	17
committed a crime unintentionally	4	13
committed to a youth detention centre	3	10
was ancillary to the crime	2	7
arrested more than three times	1	3
had a restriction of liberty order	0	0

Please note that data do not add up to 100%.

Probation officers were then asked to describe selected character traits that supervised persons display in social relations. The officers could indicate which traits are clearly visible and which are striking. The described traits are dynamic risk factors of recidivism. Distribution of traits manifested in a striking manner was analysed here.

Observations of probation officers show that the vast majority of convicts under their supervision do not accept their own social situation (70%), are suspicious and distrustful (67%), and lack emotional balance – are impulsive (67%). In addition, 63% of the ex-prisoners showed contempt for the environment and destructive inclinations. However, only one person was strikingly anxious. The indicated traits may have a special impact on the process of social readaptation of people supervised in an open environment and the safety of people from their immediate environment. The creation and maintenance of positive social relations of convicts based on their ties with significant people in the local environment will be an important condition for successful social rehabilitation in conditions of supervised freedom. Probation officers should particularly control, care and support those convicts who openly manifest negative and even destructive social behaviour. Accurate recognition of these manifestations will make it easier for officers to effectively plan preventive and corrective interventions for specific clients and will contribute to the sense of social security.

The description of the character traits of supervised persons made by probation officers should be approached with great caution because the traits taken from the FSARCB scale developed by Bruno Holyst were defined in such a way that they are easily recognisable using the Rorschach test. In the present study, probation officers' reports about convicts were presented, so the study is limited to an analysis of infer-



Table 3. Personality traits of conditionally supervised persons released from prison in the assessment of probation officers

Traits	Offenders /n=30/	
	N	%
a) not accepting one's own social situation	21	70
c) suspicion, distrust	20	67
e) lack of emotional balance – impulsivity	20	67
b) contempt for the environment	19	63
d) destructive inclinations	19	63
f) anxiety	1	3

ential indicators. Complementary research using standardised techniques related for recognising characterological traits of convicts will be presented in another study.

Next, the probation officers were asked to provide information on convicts' addictions since they are criminogenic dynamic factors that may be related to recidivism. The officers focused on diagnosing the occurrence of moderate and severe addiction to alcohol, drugs, gambling, and other addictions.

According to the obtained information, probation officers observed a strong alcohol dependence in 17% clients, and moderate in 53%. However, every third offender did not show a tendency to abuse alcohol (30%). In addition, five convicts (17%) were reported to be highly addicted, and one person (3%) moderately addicted to drugs. The vast majority of the clients did not have symptoms of drug use (80%). In addition to addiction to toxic substances, probation officers mentioned gambling which strongly affected five convicts (17%). Among other addictions, the probation officers noticed a tendency of convicts to abuse medication, which strongly affected five convicts (17%). As expected, abuse of alcohol, which affects more than half of the inmates, may be an important criminogenic factor in this group. In some cases, alcohol and drug addiction co-occur, which was observed by probation officers in every fifth convict. Working with a person with an alcohol problem will require the probation officer to recognise the pathological mechanisms accompanying the addiction syndrome, as well as internal and situational factors that trigger these mechanisms. Alcohol abuse entails a number of deficits and restrictions that can significantly hinder the work with a supervised person and their fulfilment of the obligations imposed by the court. Solving the alcohol problem of the convict should be a primary task, because it is the loss of control over drinking that may lead to criminal acts (Mellibruda, 1996; Baładynowicz, 2006; Węgliński, Kuziora, 2016).

The probation officers identified the risk factors for recidivism on the basis of their own observations resulting from the analysis of events preceding the criminal act by the supervised person (case anamnesis) and observable manifestations indi-

Table 4. Symptoms of addiction in offenders released from prison assessed by their probation officers

Addiction	Offender /n=30/						Chi square values
	Strong		Moderate		None		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
a) nicotine	11	37	10	33	9	30	0.06
b) alcohol	5	17	16	53	9	30	0.001
c) drugs	5	17	1	3	24	80	0.001
d) medication	5	17	0	0	25	83	0.001
e) gambling	5	17	0	0	25	83	0.001

cating the convict matures as a criminal (case catamnesis). Data shows that court-appointed probation officers focused on daily control of supervised persons gather information on static risk factors (empirical predictors of future criminal behaviour) to a very limited extent. Meanwhile, according to the creators of the Risk-Need-Responsivity model, the isolation and accurate estimation of the severity of these factors determines the chances of successful social rehabilitation in conditions of supervised freedom (Andrews, Bonta, Hoge, 1990; Bonta, Andrews, 2010).

Then, risk factors for the occurrence of aggressive behaviour were identified for convicts released from prison and placed under the supervision of probation officers. Using SAVRY, probation officers identified 24 risk factors and 6 protective factors that make up four groups: 1) historical risk factors (including violent behaviour in the past – 10 categories); 2) social risk factors (containing a description of interpersonal relations, contacts with family and peers – 6 categories); 3) individual risk factors (used to recognise the attitudes and functioning of the individual in psychological and behavioural aspects – 8 categories); 4) supporting (protective) factors mitigating the negative effects of risk factors – 6 categories). Risk factors on the SAVRY scale are assessed using three points (low – 0 points; moderate – 1 point; high – 2 points), while protective factors are evaluated on the dichotomous scale (absent – 0 points; present – 1 point). The table below summarises information collected from probation officers showing historical risk factors in the group of supervised persons.

Risk factors that occur in a high and moderate degree in the group of supervised persons conditionally released from prison, according to probation officers include past violent behaviour (60%) and past non-violent criminal behaviour (50%). In addition, one in three supervised persons observed various forms of violence in the family environment, as well as disruptions in the relationship with the caretaker (47%) and parents' criminal behaviour (27%).

These features indicate the lack of regularity of the influence of people who are significant for upbringing and the dysfunctionality of the family environment (various forms of violence) which could result in the occurrence of antagonistic and destructive behaviours in the convicts.

Table 5. Historical risk factors for violent behaviour in the group of supervised persons

Risk factors	Offenders (n=30)						Chi square values
	High		Moderate		None		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
History of violent behaviour	8	27	10	33	12	40	0.67
History of non-violent criminal behaviour in the past	7	23	8	27	15	50	0.15
Early appearance of violence	5	17	5	17	20	66	0.001
Observing violence at home	5	17	7	23	18	60	0.02
Disruptions in the relationship with the caretaker	5	17	9	30	16	53	0.05
Deliberate infliction of physical pain and neglect in childhood by caretakers	4	13	3	10	23	77	0.001
Educational difficulties	4	13	12	40	14	47	0.06
Parents'/caretakers' criminal behaviour	3	10	5	17	22	73	0.001
Self-harm and suicide attempts	1	3	6	20	23	77	0.001
Failed supervision or intervention attempts	0	0	7	23	23	77	0.003

Then, the social risk factors in the described group of convicts were assessed. The results are summarised in the table below.

In the group of supervised persons, a high level of social risk factors was observed by probation officers primarily in inconsistent parenting (31%) and living in a pathological community (23%). In addition, convicts experienced high or moderate levels of stressful events (67%) and had contact with a peer criminal group (63%).

Table 6. Social risk factors in the group of supervised persons conditionally released from prison

Risk factors	Offenders (n=30)						Chi square values
	High		Moderate		Low		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Inconsistent parenting	9	31	9	31	11	38	0.87
Living in a pathological community	7	23	12	40	11	37	0.50
Stressful events and weak coping strategies	5	17	15	50	10	33	0.08
Contacts with a peer criminal group	3	10	16	53	11	37	0.01
Lack of social / personal support	3	10	14	46	13	44	0.03
Rejection by crime group	2	7	6	20	22	73	0.001

The information collected by the probation officers confirms previous findings indicating dysfunctional features of the family environment, as well as contacts of convicts with an antisocial peer group.

Then, the intensity of individual risk factors was assessed in the described group of convicts. The obtained results are summarised in the table below.

Table 7. Individual risk factors in the group of supervised persons conditionally released from prison

Risk factor	Offender (n=30)						Chi square values
	High		Moderate		Low		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Negative attitudes (accepting violence as a method of solving problems)	7	23	9	30	14	47	0.27
Propensity to engage in risky / impulsive behaviour	6	20	12	40	12	40	0.30
Problems with alcohol and drug abuse	5	17	14	46	11	37	0.12
Lack of interest in education or professional pre-orientation	5	17	10	33	15	50	0.08
Problems in dealing with anger (problems with revealing anger, irritation)	4	13	9	30	17	57	0.01
Weak motivation to undergo social rehabilitation	3	10	10	33	17	57	0.02
Low level of empathy and no remorse	2	7	13	43	15	50	0.02
Attention deficits, hyperactivity difficulties (ADHD)	0	0	6	20	24	80	0.001

The obtained data shows that high individual risk factors in the studied group included accepting violence as a method of solving problems (23%) and propensity to engage in impulsive risky behaviour (20%). In addition, assessed convicts experienced problems resulting from risky contact with alcohol (63%), and were also characterised by a lack of interest in education or work (50%) to a high or moderate degree.

In general, probation officers observed violent behaviour in convicts' social relations in the past. Due to the dysfunctional traits of the closest environment, convicts have learned to accept violence as a means of fulfilling their own needs and resolving conflicts in interpersonal relationships.

Then, protective resources in the studied group were analysed. The obtained results are summarised in the table below.

Among the analysed protective resources, probation officers most often observed positive attitudes towards resocialisation and authority (83%) and various manifestations of prosocial behaviour (69%). In the studied group of convicts, protective personality resources such as flexible personality were reported least frequently (20%).

In general, positive attitudes of supervised persons to probation officers and significant persons in the local environment were noted, which may facilitate social readaptation of convicts in conditions of supervised freedom.

Table 8. Protective resources in the group of supervised persons released from prison

Resources	Offenders (n=30)				Chi square values
	Present		Absent		
	N	%	N	%	
Positive attitudes towards resocialisation and authority	25	83	5	17	0.001
Prosocial behaviour	20	67	10	33	0.07
Strong emotional bonds	14	47	16	53	0.72
Strong social support	10	33	20	67	0.07
Strong motivation to gain knowledge and learn	8	27	22	73	0.01
“Flexible” personality; above average intelligence, personality and temperamental features of maturity and “flexibility”	6	20	24	80	0.001

Based on the SAVRY results, considering specific intensity and configuration of risk factors and protective resources, specific social maladjustment syndromes can be identified. The syndrome of total maladjustment characterises persons with the highest intensity of all groups of risk factors: historical, social, and individual, and very low intensity of protective factors. The syndrome of personality disorders includes people with the lowest intensity of historical and social factors as well as average intensity of individual factors and a very high level of protective factors. Lastly, the sociopathic maladaptation syndrome occurs when the assessed person manifests average intensity of historical and social factors as well as the very low intensity of individual and protective factors (Gierowski, 2005). The table below presents the distribution of results illustrating the types of social maladjustment in the described group of supervised persons.

Table 9. Type of social maladjustment of the supervised persons conditionally released from prison

Type	Offenders /n=30/	
	N1	%
<b>Total maladjustment</b>		
high level of historical factors (14–20 points)	3	10
high level of social factors (9–12 points)	2	7
high level of individual factors (12–16 points)	3	10
low level of protective factors (0–1 points)	6	20
<b>Personality disorders</b>		
low level of historical factors (0–6 points)	20	67
low level of social factors (0–3 points)	13	43
moderate level of individual factors (5–11 points)	10	33
high level of protective factors (4–6 points)	11	37

Table 9. continued

<b>Sociopathic maladjustment</b>		
moderate level of historical factors (7–13 points)	7	23
moderate level of social factors (4–8 points)	14	47
low level of individual factors (0–4 points)	16	53
low level of protective factors (0–1 points)	6	20

Among the convicts, only three persons were characterized by the highest level of historical and individual risk factors, and two persons by the highest level of social factors. In addition, 20% offenders presented low levels of protective factors. Generally, only a few people in the study group can be classified as totally maladjusted based on the collected data.

Analysing the type of maladjustment in the area of personality disorders, 67% of supervised persons were characterised by the lowest level of historical risk factors; almost every second inmate experienced a low level of social risk factors (43%), and every third convict was characterised by a moderate level of individual risk factors (33%) and a high level of protective resources (37%).

In terms of social maladaptation of the sociopathic type, it was found that every second offender was characterised by a low level of individual risk factors (53%) and a moderate level of risky social influences (47%). In addition, in the described group of convicts, only a few clients exhibited moderate intensity of historical risk factors (23%) and low level of influence of protective factors (20%).

## CONCLUSION

In accordance with European Prison Rules setting out recommendations for member states of the Council of Europe, the task of penitentiary administration is to minimise the effects of convicts' alienation from society by maintaining and strengthening relationships with the non-prison community and coordinating the cooperation of social services supporting the process of social readaptation of persons released from prisons in an open environment (Płatek, 1997).

The presented research shows that prisoners conditionally released from corrective institutions, in conditions of supervised freedom experience problems that may result in the collapse of the process of social reintegration and re-entering conflict with the law. Released ex-convicts lack qualifications to perform a specific profession, which results in difficulties in taking up employment and experiencing a sense of occupational exclusion. In addition, probation officers report that the vast majority of clients after leaving prison do not accept their own social situation, they are suspicious and distrustful, they suffer from lack of emotional



balance, they also show contempt for the environment and have destructive inclinations, which can cause conflicts with people from the immediate environment, rejection, condemnation leading to integration with destructive antisocial groups and engaging in criminal activity.

In this group, important criminogenic factors include the use of alcohol and drugs, as well as acts of violence experienced in the past in a dysfunctional family environment, which may result in accepting violence as a means of satisfying one's own needs and a way of resolving conflicts in interpersonal relations. Positive attitudes of convicts to probation officers may be a factor that protects against re-entering into conflict with the law, significantly facilitating the process of social readaptation.

In the early 1970s, as an experiment, professional probation officers were introduced to correctional facilities. They were to provide comprehensive support to convicts selected for conditional release. Several years of functioning of these parole officers proved that this form of cooperation of probation officers with prison service officers is very beneficial for stakeholders involved in the execution of a prison sentence, and above all for persons released from prison who, during this important period of life, cannot be left alone. Despite the positive outcomes of the Białystok experiment, the position of a parole officer affiliated to a particular corrective institution was not introduced to the criminal justice system. It was a surprising decision for officers of corrective facilities, professional probation officers and scientists assessing the effectiveness of implemented solutions. This is still incomprehensible in the situation of numerous barriers hindering the return of convicts from prisons to society.

The 2019 NIK Report "Social support for persons released from prisons" shows that the reintegration of ex-convicts into the social environment is difficult due to the stigmatising and excluding social attitudes and the lack of coordinated support from social welfare. Only a few social support centres had cooperation agreements with corrective institutions, and cooperation between social support centres and probation officers was practically non-existent. Therefore, it is even more necessary to place professional probation officers in the corrective institution and to develop an effective model for supporting clients selected for conditional release while they still serve a prison sentence. At the same time probation officers should coordinate systematic cooperation of prison service officers with social support centres, local government units, and families to which convicts will return after their release.

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## NORMATIVE ACTS

- Rozporządzenia Ministra Sprawiedliwości z dnia 13 czerwca 2016 r. w sprawie sposobu i trybu wykonywania czynności przez kuratorów sądowych w sprawach karnych wykonawczych, poz. 969.
- Rozporządzenia Ministra Sprawiedliwości z dnia 26 lutego 2013r. W sprawie sposobu wykonywania obowiązków i uprawnień przez kuratorów sądowych w sprawach karnych wykonawczych, poz. 335.
- Rozporządzenie Ministra Sprawiedliwości z dn. 25 sierpnia 2003 w sprawie regulaminu organizacyjno-porządkowego wykonywania kary pozbawienia wolności (Dz.U. 2003 nr 152 poz. 1493).
- Ustawa – kodeks karny wykonawczy (Dz.U. 1997 nr 90 poz. 557).

## STRESZCZENIE

Readaptacja osób opuszczających zakłady karne jest jednym z najbardziej istotnych problemów społecznych, a jednocześnie jednym z najrzadziej podejmowanych. Nadal w świadomości społecznej były skazany to ktoś „gorszy”, zagrażający bezpieczeństwu publicznemu. Powrotność skazanych do przestępstwa często wynika z braku pomocy i wsparcia ze strony wielu służb i insty-

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tucji do tego powołanych. Okres po opuszczeniu więzienia jest bardzo ważny i trudny, ponieważ wpływa na życie danej osoby. Przygotowanie do społecznej reintegracji więźnia rozpoczyna się już w zakładzie karnym i powinno być kontynuowane po jego zwolnieniu. Współpraca kuratorów sądowych z funkcjonariuszami służby więziennej stanowi nieodłączny i integralny aspekt pracy wychowawczo-resocjalizacyjnej, realizowanej w środowisku otwartym.

**Słowa kluczowe:** readaptacja społeczna skazanych; współpraca instytucjonalna kuratorów sądowych i funkcjonariuszy służby więziennej