
DETERMINANTS OF TRAINING POLISH INTERVENTION GROUPS OF THE PRISON SERVICE

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Abstract: This article is devoted to the determinants of preparing and deploying Intervention Groups of the Prison Service. The period of several years in which the Intervention Groups of the Prison Service functioned have highlighted the need to implement solutions that enable their better preparation and more effective use in ensuring public security. In the structures of the Prison Service, the mobile strike groups have existed for a relatively short time, which consequently translates into a low level of experience of the staff that manage them. In practice, it appears that individual Regional Inspectorates of the Prison Service use different ways of managing their subordinate Intervention Groups. It is therefore necessary to introduce changes with regard to the preparation and use of all Intervention Groups of the Prison Service, which will enable their proper functioning and increase their effectiveness.

Keywords: Intervention Groups; Prison Service; trainings, tasks; preparation; public security

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1. Introduction

The main objective of this article is to present determinants of training Intervention Groups of the Prison Service. Intervention Groups of the Prison Service are characterised by a wide range of operational tasks that result mainly from the provisions of the Act on the Prison Service and the Executive Penal Code. Prison Intervention Groups are located both inside and outside prisons. They are designed to take action in a situation of a particular threat, from collective speeches, through interventions in inmate attacks on officers, to actions taken in the event of hazards, natural disasters and technical failures on the premises of organisational units of the Prison Service. The tasks of Intervention Groups of the Prison Service also include escorting prisoners, which requires increased protective measures. Examples include escorting aggressive, dangerous or specially protected persons.

Particularly noteworthy is the innovative use of Intervention Groups of the Prison Service in some Regional Inspectorates of the Prison Service, where these groups deal with pursuits and detention of inmates. Pursuits are used against persons who have escaped, have not returned from their temporary release or have escaped from their place of external employment.

In the several years' history of Intervention Groups of the Penitentiary Service, one can observe a clear need to improve the currently applied model of preparing and the manner of using this formation. It should also be noted that Intervention Groups have been in existence within the Prison Service only for a short period of time and

therefore the experience of those managing them is not considerable. In practice it appears that different Regional Inspectorates of Prison Service have different ways of managing their Intervention Groups, and do not have the same interpretation of the law in relation to the functioning of Intervention Groups. In the multitude of problems faced by the Prison Service on a daily basis, issues related to Prison Intervention Groups are marginalised, although in reality it is Intervention Groups of the Prison Service that are the most effective tool for protecting life and health of people in situations of direct hazard. Systematising the management model of Intervention Groups of the Prison Service is therefore very important for the officers who are part of them. It is therefore necessary to introduce changes that will enable the proper functioning of all Intervention Groups of the Prison Service and increase their effectiveness. Bearing in mind the above and the lack of publications in the examined scope, it was decided to plan the research process using the method of studying legal acts and direct observation. It should be emphasised at this point that this article is pioneering in the field, and thus will constitute a significant contribution to the discussion on the determinants of training Intervention Groups of the Prison Service.

2. Purpose and tasks of Intervention Groups of the Prison Service

The legal basis for the functioning of the Prison Service is the Act of 9 April 2010 *on the Prison Service* (Act, 2010), which normalizes the tasks of the Prison Service, the organization and scope of authorisations of the Prison Service, the Central Database of Detained Persons, the course of the officers' public service relationship, the principles of education for officers and employees of the Prison Service, the uniforms and field equipment of Prison Service officers, the rights and obligations of officers and the scope of their responsibilities. The Prison Service, as a formation subordinated to the Minister of Justice, is part of the executive (protective) subsystem responsible for ensuring internal security of the state (Poklek, 2012). To a large extent, this service implements the criminal policy of the state and its basic objectives, which include: rehabilitation, redistribution¹, positive prevention, isolation of perpetrators, repair of damage and deterrence. (Stańdo – Kawecka, 2000). In this sense, criminal policy is a system of various interrelated state measures aimed at preventing crime and removing its causes and favourable circumstances, as well as optimally reducing the possibility of any type of criminogenic factors (Pływaczewski & Kędzierska, 2001). The essence of criminal policy is primarily pre-crime and post-crime prevention, which consist of separate legislative, preventive, enforcement and punitive activities.

E. Żywucka-Kozłowska indicates two areas that serve crime prevention, i.e.:

1. Pre-crime prevention area, which includes:

– legislative activities which consist in the construction of legal norms aimed at preventing the phenomenon of criminalization in social space. These activities primarily refer to the correlation of the legal system with the constantly changing reality in social space, criminalisation and decriminalisation of specific acts, establishment of principles, rules and standards in criminal proceedings, which guarantee effective prosecution of criminals, as well as a construction of methods and ways of executing punishment, which are conducive to proper rehabilitation,

– preventive actions aimed at protecting persons, property and the public good.

2. Post-crime prevention area, which includes:

– penal policy, in which we can specify the actions taken by the judiciary and law enforcement bodies, as well as the ongoing analysis of the factors that foster crime,

– executive policy, which consists of rehabilitation, education, therapy, correctional activities, and isolation (Żywucka-Kozłowska, 2008).

The tasks of the Prison Service primarily concern the executive policy in the post-crime prevention area. The core mission of the Prison Service is the broadly understood rehabilitation of prisoners convicted of crimes and their isolation, resulting in their inability to commit crimes. Prisons are therefore an enforcement mechanism for sentences, orders and judgements passed by the judiciary in relation to a specific individual who is, or may be, the perpetrator of an offence or a person suspected of having committed it. It is therefore an institution of

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the protective subsystem of the State which relates indirectly to the victim of crime and the whole community in the context of its security (Śledzik, 2006).

Prison Service executes the term of imprisonment and monitors its rules and its course in prison. The proper functioning of this service is influenced by two areas, namely the internal environment (officers and employees together with the equipment which they use) and the external environment (members of the organisation who can exert influence on its functioning) (Kołtun, 2015).

For several years, we have been observing the process of changes and transformations that take place within the Prison Service structure. In 2010, the so-called Prison Reform began, the main objective of which was, among others: to increase the competence and professionalism of Prison Service officers, and to move away from static protective actions to internal dynamic actions. The reform mainly concerned the establishment of full-time mobile, well-armed and equipped strike groups, prepared to react quickly when mediation fails and human life or health is at risk, and on a daily basis aimed at preventing crimes committed by persons in prison isolation, extraordinary incidents and, above all, rebellions and collective actions. Thus, Intervention Groups of the Prison Service have become the most important tool, the so-called armed faction and the ultimate response of the Prison Service to disturbances of order and discipline in organisational units, as well as a guarantee of security in penitentiary institutions.

Before full-time Intervention Groups of the Prison Service were created (Order, 2010), from the 1990s, in order to strengthen the security department, part-time groups for special tasks were established in prisons, where prisoners who were classified as dangerous were serving their sentences. Prison officers met outside their working hours to undergo joint training to improve their ability to carry out protective tasks.

Intervention Groups of the Prison Service operate under Order No. 58/20 of the Director General of the Prison Service of 11 August 2020 on *Intervention Groups of the Prison Service* (Order, 2020). They are a component of both the Regional Support Forces and the reserves of the Director General of Prison Service. Regional directors within the structures of individual Regional Inspectorates of Prison Service establish, by way of an order (Order, 2020), full-time intervention groups, the personnel of which amounts to 16 officers. A full-time intervention group may be divided into two sections of at least 8 officers each, who are on duty in a single shift system (Order, 2020). The range of tasks assigned to Intervention Groups of the Prison Service is very extensive. They operate not only inside but also outside prisons. In practice, the organisational unit in which an Intervention Group of the Prison Service is stationed is most often located within the administrative borders of cities which are the seats of competent regional courts. It should be emphasised here that Intervention Groups of the Prison Service in question are assigned, with regard to the staff, to security departments of one or two organisational units designated by a regional director. They deal with realisation of tasks that result directly from the provisions of the Act on Prison Service and the Executive Penal Code. In addition, they have been designed to take action in situations of particular threat, ranging from collective appearances, through interventions in inmate attacks on officers, to actions related to the hazards, natural disasters and technical failures that have occurred on the premises of organisational units of the Prison Service (Kołtun, 2015) Intervention Groups of the Prison Service are also involved in prevention activities, aimed at improving the safety not only of prisoners, but also of Prison Service officers and the penitentiary institutions themselves. Thus, Intervention Groups of the Prison Service carry out tasks aimed at preventing extraordinary incidents or eliminating their consequences, consisting, inter alia, in carrying out daily inspection activities, i.e. controlling inmates, residential cells and other premises where they are housed, as well as workplaces outside the penitentiary institution and detention facility, as well as persons arriving for visits (Kołtun, 2015).

Intervention Groups of Prison Service, as part of the tasks ordered by the regional director, are used to carry out tasks in the field of preventing the emergence of terrorist threats on the premises of organisational units and escorting inmates who require enhanced protective measures, i.e. those with a special status (the so-called dangerous, aggressive, specially protected, witnesses in important trials and members of organised criminal groups), who very often have extensive contacts outside the prison. When escorting prisoners, the regular inter-

vention groups always take into account, as a risk factor, an ambush aimed at killing or capturing the escorted person. The delegated Intervention Group of the Prison Service should therefore be prepared for various risks. With this in mind, the officers of Intervention Groups take part in intensive training in tactical avoiding and escaping from ambushes, with constant protection of the inmate, as well as, in the event of damage to a vehicle, smooth passage to another vehicle or evacuation to a safe place where support measures can be obtained.

Intervention Groups of the Prison Service are also involved in securing group activities with the participation of a large number of inmates (e.g. concerts) and providing security during meetings of penitentiary committees. Full-time intervention groups also participate in numerous protection and defence exercises, which are organised on the premises of organisational units that report to the Regional Director. It is worth noting that, in addition to operating in their own region, each Intervention Group of the Prison Service remains on standby to reinforce officers of other Intervention Groups of the Prison Service in neighbouring voivodeships, as reserves of the Director General of the Prison Service. This makes it possible to divide the country into the so-called support and cooperation forces.

The skills of the Intervention Group members can be used to conduct training courses for officers of protection departments within the Prison Service, e.g. as part of preparatory courses, especially in the field of intervention techniques, self-defence, using means of physical coercion, shooting and administering first aid. In addition, they can be used for various protective tasks that result from the plan of protecting the organisational unit, taking into account the training plan and schedule of using the group, approved by the Regional Director, in particular to carry out convoys to health care facilities, inspections of inmates and places where they are permanently or temporarily kept (Kołtun, 2015).

Operational activities of the Intervention Groups of the Prison Service also include tasks ordered by superiors. One example of such activities was the preparation for the EURO 2012 European Football Championship, for which a prepared scenario assumed the apprehension of a large number of football hooligans during possible riots, and an instant provision of detention facilities by transferring a sufficiently large number of convicts to another penitentiary institution. Intervention Groups of the Prison Service were to be responsible for escorting prisoners in the event of the above described situation (Kołtun, 2015). It is worth noting at this juncture that in some regional inspectorates Intervention Groups of the Prison Service deal with pursuit and detention of persons who have illegally terminated their term of imprisonment, i.e. have not returned from temporary releases granted by the court or have moved away from the place of external employment, where they worked without an escorting officer (Kołtun, 2015).

Empirical research conducted by the author of this monograph has shown that Intervention Groups of the Prison Service also take an active part in the search for fugitives from penal institutions or detention facilities. Actions of this type require great commitment and skills in operational work. For example, since the formation of the Intervention Group of the Prison Service in Kraków, its officers have apprehended 21 fugitives. It is worth noting at this point that activities of this nature often require several days of searching. The longest pursuit that took place in 2011 lasted continuously for almost five days (Order, 2020).

The elitism of Intervention Groups of the Prison Service is expressed not only by their purpose, but also by different uniforms, armament, and a wider scope of training and the recruitment system, which allows only selected officers with appropriate psychophysical predispositions. Particularly dangerous service and hard training are not rewarded in any additional way, so this is a profession only for enthusiasts. The recruitment, training and verification of Intervention Group candidates is the responsibility of a specialist appointed by the Regional Director in the Regional Inspectorate of the Prison Service (Order, 2020).

As far as preparations for providing support during protective actions are concerned, officers of Intervention Groups of the Prison Service have reached a very high level. In all necessary areas of improvement (tactical skills, physical fitness exercises and teamwork in various threat situations). Intervention Groups of the Prison Service have their own instructors, which ensures their current training self-sufficiency. Additionally, they co-

operate and hold joint training sessions with the Mountain Volunteer Rescue Service (GOPR), which resulted in passing a basic course in high-altitude and rope activities. Full-time intervention groups also regularly cooperate with the Central Bureau of Investigation of the Police, Border Guard, Police, Independent Anti-Terrorist Subdivisions of the Police and the Fire Department.

It is also worth noting at this point that the coordinator for the training of Intervention Groups of the Prison Service organised central training and specialised seminars on the subject of coordinating activities and communication systems, exchanging experience between Intervention Groups of the Prison Service in order to systematise and standardise special tactics. They contributed to the development of task implementation methods which made it possible to effectively combine the potential and ensure the highest level of safety of the operators. In addition, the Bureau of Human Resources and Training, in cooperation with the Bureau of Security and Defence Affairs of the Central Board of Prison Service, was the organiser of the 1st Workshop and Tactical Rescue Competition of Intervention Groups of the Prison Service *Tactical Prison Rescue 2014*, conducted with the participation of officers from the Police, Border Guard and Central Bureau of Investigation, according to the latest guidelines of Tactical Combat Casualty Care, according to the motto: *We prepare the best for the worst, and every life is our priority no matter which side of the bars you are on.*

To sum up, the tasks and purposes of full-time Intervention Groups of the Prison Service, which result from the applicable legal regulations, have both a preventive and a rehabilitative dimension. Their very nature suggests that there is a possibility of extending the catalogue of undertaken activities in such a way that in the future they could be used in the best possible way.

3. Preparation of the officers of Intervention Group of the Prison Service - theoretical aspect

To prepare, according to a dictionary definition, is to do something for a specific purpose, so that it can be used for something else. Preparation is also understood as learning everything that is necessary to perform a certain action or function. To prepare means to be ready for something or to do something. Considering the above, the preparation of Intervention Group officers is, therefore, all the actions taken by them as part of their duties and beyond them, which directly aim at the best possible performance of the tasks entrusted to them. An important element of preparation is undoubtedly training aimed at improving professional competences of officers, so that they are ready to carry out the tasks set for them, which are very often performed in the face of various types of threats.

The issue of professional preparation of Prison Service officers is still insufficiently described in the literature on the subject. Wiesław Ambrozik stated that professional preparation of Prison Service officers begins at the moment of completing the qualification procedure, after their formal acceptance into the service. Training of Prison Service officers is primarily aimed at shaping competences with regard to: dealing with difficult and extreme situations, assertive behaviour and empathy, discipline and cooperation, creative problem solving, ethical behaviour and acting on the basis and within the limits of the law (Act, 2010). A person admitted to the Prison Service must undergo initial training which consists of three stages (initial professional adaptation, preparatory course, internship) (Act, 2010). Professional adaptation within the initial training is carried out under the supervision of the direct supervisor (employee's supervisor). The adaptation takes 17 working days, during which the officer should (Order, 2018):

1. receive the required external training (initial general and job training in the field of occupational safety and health, training in the field of protecting classified information and training in the field of personal data protection),
2. become familiar with general information on the mission and organisation of the Prison Service (location of the Prison Service in the state security system, the Polish penitentiary system, structure of the Prison Service organisational unit, basic duties of a Prison Service officer which result from the following acts of law: the Act of 26 October 1982 on upbringing in sobriety and counteracting alcoholism (Act, 1982), the Act of 29 July 2005 On Counteracting Drug Addiction (Act, 2005), Act of 21 November 1967 on Universal Duty to Defend the Republic of Poland – with regard to militarisation of the unit (Act, 1967), Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Convention, 1984) and rules of professional ethics for Prison Service officers,

3. related to the organisation and settlement of duty time, availability, entitlement to annual leave, emolument and its components,
4. obtain information on personal matters and principles of professional conduct,
5. get to know formal and legal requirements concerning physical and mental capacity of a Prison Service officer,
6. get acquainted with the architecture and specificity of functioning of the parent penitentiary institution (rules of safe movement within the parent penitentiary institution, threats to the safety of the unit),
7. get acquainted with the procedures for accepting and releasing prisoners (familiarisation with the activities that take place from the entrance gate to the prisoner's cell and assisting officers who carry out activities in connection with accepting and releasing an inmate),
8. acquire information on the principles of using ICT systems (practical instruction in the use of applications and resources, granting rights to the system and familiarisation with the principles of security in the Prison Service network, discussing access to didactic resources, creating a user profile for the Prison Service educational platform, independent work with the use of ICT systems, discussing basic notions concerning personal data and processing of classified information, practical acquaintance with communication, electronic security and IT systems that function in the work place environment, acquaintance with wired and wireless communication system, practical operation of radiotelephone and visiting virtual prison),
9. get acquainted with the principles of functioning of the penitentiary institution with all the activities that make up the daily agenda during daytime,
10. get acquainted with the organisation of security work (getting acquainted with: 1) tasks carried out by the shift commander, armourer and gate-keeper and assisting them in carrying out routine activities, 2) movement of inmates within the unit by assisting the guiding officer, 3) service in the position of the officer who carries out the tasks of the gate-keeper, walking the prisoners, handling the visitors, 4) activities carried out at night time, 5) security undertakings and penitentiary work (getting acquainted with issues that include the organisation and tasks of penitentiary work (including the work of specialised educators dealing with culture and education, post-penitentiary aid, library, sports) and the functioning of diagnostic centres, therapeutic wards, schools and prison enterprises) away from the ward where inmates are accommodated,
11. learn the main activity areas of the following services:
 - quartermaster service (getting acquainted with the functioning of different services within the quartermaster department: executing the rights of officers and inmates to food, responding to inmates' requests, providing supplies to the unit, execution of the officers' uniform rights, execution of tasks that consist in ensuring proper living and sanitary conditions for inmates, issues related to the work of the inmates' own clothing storehouse),
 - health service (reception of inmates by the medical staff, assisting the nurse in administering medicines to inmates),
 - occupational medicine (acquaintance with the issues of health promotion and prevention of threats that occur in the work and service environment of the Prison Service, prophylactic examinations in the Prison Service; interventions after occurrences that can cause severe stress; support activities in the field of coping with stress, organisation and implementation of workshops, trainings and other educational activities that strengthen social competences that are necessary for performing official tasks in a manner that strengthens health, conditions for obtaining help from the occupational medicine service of the Prison Service).
 - finances (getting acquainted with topics related to the budget, remuneration and deposits of the inmates)
12. assisting designated officers who carry out official tasks.

Within the scope of the programme content, it is worthwhile to pay special attention to the tasks performed by officers from the security department who are on duty at particular posts both during daytime and at night.

Completion of the initial training provides the basis for a participation in a preparatory course conducted at the Prison Service Academy (Academy of Justice), Central Prison Service Training Centre, Prison Service Training Centre or Prison Service Personnel Development Centre. Training in the form of a preparatory course for Prison Service officers lasts 22 calendar days. It includes both theoretical and practical classes of 127 lessons conducted

within two specialisations: protection and non-protection. The programme of the preparatory course for officers of the Prison Service within the framework of protection and non-protection specialisations includes the following thematic content:

1. basics of penitentiary science (international standards of dealing with inmates, penitentiary issues, interpersonal communication at work, patriotic and historical knowledge,
2. safety of Prison Service organisational units (safety issues, shooting training, drill, health-oriented physical activity with elements of self-defence, intervention techniques, first aid, fire protection training)
3. administrative and personnel issues (official pragmatics, information systems, psychophysical health of officers, basics of clerical work.) During the preparatory course officers acquire skills in operating and handling specific weapons and intervention and rescue equipment. These competences are acquired mainly through participation in exercises and, in the case of shooting training, also through shooting practice, which takes place in accordance with the conditions specified by the Rector of the Prison Service Academy or the Commandant and approved by the General Director of the Prison Service. The preparatory course ends with an exam that consists of an oral and practical part that cover the topics of shooting training and two sets of issues: penitentiary and security.

After completing the preparatory course (a passed preparatory course should be understood as a successfully passed examination after the completed course, including verification of the degree of acquired knowledge and mastered skills, as defined in the programme), Prison Service officers complete internship within the basic training, lasting from 2 to 4 months, which consists mainly in education under the guidance of a mentor and performance of tasks entrusted to the officer within the specialisation in which he/she will ultimately serve. At this point it is worth emphasising that the training programme within the internship was divided into 11 specialisations, characterised by independent thematic scopes. The internship programme for an officer within the initial training after the preparatory course includes the following specialisations: health and safety at work, record-keeping, finances, IT, human resources, quartermaster specialisation, protection, penitentiary psychologists' section, health service, penitentiary educators' section and employment.

The head of the organisational unit of the Penitentiary Service, in cases justified by the needs of the service (e.g. the necessity to secure the proper course of service), may take a decision on reinforcing the protection division. In the event of such a situation, the officers, regardless of the division in which they serve, may be sent for a period of up to 3 months to the protection division, in which they will be on duty and serve their internship, under the supervision of the head of protection and a mentor, and then after that period, they will implement the training programme in other divisions, for a period of up to 4 months.

After the initial training is completed, a Prison Service officer may begin vocational training that deepens the knowledge and professional skills necessary for the proper performance of official tasks in the non-commissioned officer, warrant-officer and officer corps (Act, 2010). Vocational training is provided by the Prison Service Academy, the Central Prison Service Training Centre, the Prison Service Training Centres or the Prison Service Personnel Development Centres. Basic aims of the training:

- preparing officers to perform tasks that result from the Prison Service Act and other legal regulations that govern the activities of this formation,
- developing general and professional knowledge, supporting self-education and analytical skills, developing and maintaining physical and mental capability to serve in the Prison Service and the necessary interpersonal skills,
- supporting comprehensive professional and personal development of officers and employees and preventing diseases and illnesses related to service or work through health promotion, as well as shaping law-abiding behaviour of officers and employees in accordance with the principles of integrity and equality.

In professional training, the achievements of the Polish penitentiary system as well as international achievements and standards are taken into consideration, in particular with regard to: 1) humane treatment of inmates, 2) counteracting discrimination and intolerance, 3) respecting the right to an individual complaint and the significance of the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights with respect to the protection of human

rights in Europe, 4) preventing victimisation, detecting acts of violence and respecting the needs and rights of victims of violence, 5) enforcing the applicable legislation on the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Professional training dedicated to Prison Service officers of all corps consists of two parts, the first of which (unitary) is, as a rule, identical for all corps in terms of duration and programme contents (the exception is professional training for doctors in the officer corps of the Prison Service). Classes are conducted at the Prison Service Academy or at the Prison Service training centre, in groups without division into specialties. The unitary part ends with internship, which is conducted in designated organisational units (internship of 40 hours over 5 days is conducted in designated prisons and detention facilities. Students who undergo professional training are directed to organisational units designated respectively by the Rector of the Prison Service Academy or the Commandant of the Prison Service Training Centre), and it also covers the protection training (Order, 2018). The second part (specialist), on the other hand, is implemented through a division into individual specialisations and differentiation of programme content and duration in individual corps at the Prison Service Academy or training centre. Professional training of a Prison Service officer is composed of the following specialisations: administration, human resources, organisational and legal, record-keeping, finances, IT, quartermaster, doctors, protection, penitentiary, psychologists, health services, employment and occupational health and safety. A graduate of professional training should master the necessary range of skills and knowledge with respect to: the penitentiary, human rights and fundamental freedoms, law, criminology, protection and defence of organisational units, as well as practical operation of equipment that constitutes the equipment, which condition the proper performance of Prison Service tasks (Order, 2018)

Within the framework of training Prison Service officers, we can also specify specialist trainings that are complementary to the initial training or professional training in the scope that prepares a Prison Service officer for independent service at an official position, and for performing tasks related to:

- conducting penitentiary, rehabilitative and therapeutic activities,
- protection and defence of organisational units and techniques of intervention activities,
- leading a team and managing organisational units,
- legal, human resources, record-keeping, financial and quartermaster issues, employment of inmates, information technology, protection of classified information, prison health service, occupational medicine, fire protection, and occupational safety and health,
- the implementation of other tasks that result from the regulations in force, in particular with regard to the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms (Act, 2010).

Specialised training is conducted in order to acquire and increase the officer's knowledge and professional skills and must be consistent with the profile and scope of tasks that are performed by the officer on an official position in the relevant corps. Prison Service officers can undergo the following specialist training: 1) specialist training in budgetary accounting and financial management, 2) specialist training in safekeeping of cash and valuables of the inmates, 3) specialist training for field teams (officers and civilian employees) responsible for Electronic Monitoring System, 4) specialist training for statisticians of the registry departments conducted by Regional Inspectorates of Prison Service 5) specialised training for statisticians of registry departments provided by the Central Board of the Prison Service, 6) specialist training in basic registry issues, 7) specialist training for heads of registry departments, 8) specialist training for officers and civilian employees responsible for managing HR, financial, social and training matters in the organisational units of the Prison Service, 9) specialist training for managerial staff in the scope of managing a team and managing organisational units, 10) specialist training for heads of quartermaster departments 11) specialist training for officers who perform the housing service tasks 12) specialist training in the scope of maintenance and repair service tasks, 13) specialist training in the scope of the tasks of transport service, 14) specialist training for officers of quartermaster departments dealing with power management 15) specialist training in the scope of the food service tasks for the head chef, 16) specialist training in the scope of food service tasks, 17) specialist training for shift commanders of protection departments in the Prison Service, 18) specialist training for heads of protection departments in the Prison Service, 19) specialist training for the prison warders from protection departments in the Prison Service 20) specialist training for officers forming Intervention Groups of the Prison Service, 21) specialist training for commanders of Intervention Groups of the Prison Service 22) Specialist training for officers responsible

for managing armament in organisational units of the Prison Service, 23) Specialist training for fire protection inspectors, 24) specialist training in basic skills necessary to conduct group rehabilitation programmes for officers and employees who work as junior educators, educators and senior educators in correctional institutions and detention facilities - 'GROUP WORK', 25) training for implementers of the 'Motivator' programme 26) training for implementers of the programme "Stop violence – second chance", 27) specialised training for leaders of the job club, 28) specialised training for the trainer of the job club leaders, 29) specialised training in the field of rehabilitation programmes for inmates, 30) specialised training for penitentiary staff as part of preparing convicts to return to open environment, for educators of post-penitentiary aid in detention facilities and penitentiary institutions, 31) specialist training for Prison Service officers and employees who perform tasks in the scope of employment of inmates, 32) designing rehabilitation activities through cultural and educational programmes, sports and reading, 33) specialist training in the scope of conducting specialist activities towards convicts over 60 years of age or disabled inmates, 34) specialist training in the scope of preventing radicalisation of attitudes and counteracting negative behaviours in penitentiary isolation, 35) specialist training for psychologists of penitentiary departments therapeutic departments and Diagnostic Centres, 36) criminological and social anticipation as an important factor in diagnosing inmates, 37) specialist training in organisational and legal issues, 38) specialist training for candidates for data protection officers in organisational units of the Prison Service, 39) specialist training for managers of secret offices in organisational units of the Prison Service, 40) specialist training for officers and civilian employees responsible for the implementation of tasks of the occupational medicine service of the Prison Service towards employees and officers in organisational units of the Prison Service (Regulation, 2018). In terms of training officers of full-time intervention groups it is particularly important to provide specialist training for officers that form Intervention Groups of the Prison Service as well as specialist training for commanders of Intervention Groups of the Prison Service, during which an officer prepares to:

- perform specialist tasks that require above-average skills in the field of self-defence, intervention activities, shooting and administering first aid,
- command a group of officers performing specialist tasks connected with securing and eliminating crisis situations in organisational units of the Prison Service (Regulation, 2018).

The specialist training for officers who are part of Intervention Groups of the Prison Service lasts 11 days including the final exam (86 lessons). Candidates for the training must meet the entry requirements before entering the training in question, which include: positive medical opinion, positive results of a psychological examination conducted by a competent field unit of occupational medicine, passed fitness tests, skills in self-defence and intervention techniques. The training plan assumes that students will be familiarised with the thematic scope concerning:

- legal basis and principles of operation of intervention groups (organisation of protective actions, implementation of a system of controlling and organising movement, use of means of physical coercion),
- actions of the group taken in situations of threat (communication in teams, group actions taken in situations of threat, intervention actions taken by the group in open terrain and in prison buildings and facilities, improving selected restraining locks, active and preventive forms of convoy protection),
- shooting training (dynamic and situational shooting, dry fire training (PM - 98, P-99 Walther, 5.56mm Beretta rifle, .12 calibre shotgun)
- psychosocial skills (psychosocial conditions of humans functioning in difficult situations),
- premedical rescue (principles of first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, first aid in emergencies),
- practical verification of the group's mobility (announcing practice alarms, achieving full readiness to take action, possible departure of the group to a selected organizational unit of the Prison Service),
- fitness, strength and efficiency exercises (psycho-motor exercises, fight with several attackers in dark and small rooms),

Such training is of interdisciplinary nature in the scope of psycho-social preparation and shaping skills in intervention activities. Selection of methods and didactic aids during training is oriented at the effect of maximum assimilation of practical skills that enable their quick and effective application in professional work. The following didactic aids are used during specialist training for officers who are part of Intervention Groups

of the Prison Service: Means of physical coercion, elements of battlefield simulation RGD, bangers, flash-bang grenades, 'RED MAN', gas masks, operational vehicle of the Prison Service, personal protection equipment, firearms: PM-98, P-99Walther, 5.56mm Beretta, rifles caliber .12, pneumatic Paintball weapon, FX simulation system (pistols, rifles), firearms ammunition, 'dry' ammunition, gel ball bullets caliber .68. After specialist training, officers of Intervention Groups of the Prison Service should acquire practical skills in the use of intervention equipment and firearms allowing them to respond to crisis situations which may occur on the premises of a penitentiary institution. Specialist training for officers aims to prepare them to perform official tasks within Intervention Groups of the Prison Service, in particular:

- broadening skills in the field of intervention activities, using of means of coercion and firearms,
- developing tactical skills necessary for individual and collective actions in difficult and extreme situations,
- raising awareness of the importance of routine and preventive actions for the security of the penitentiary institution,
- developing skills of giving pre-medical aid,
- developing skills of effective communication and recognising signs of stress (Order, 2018).

Specialized training for commanders of Intervention Groups of the Prison Service, on the other hand, prepares an officer to perform specialized tasks that require expert knowledge and skills in commanding a group of officers who perform specialized tasks related to securing and eliminating crisis situations in organizational units of the Prison Service (Order, 2018).

Conclusions

The spread of organised crime and the considerable increase in the number of committed crimes, including international crimes, has directly contributed to the systematic growth in the number of prisoners, and in particular those classified as 'dangerous'. In order to ensure the proper functioning of penitentiary institutions, Prison Guard officers should cope with both existing and newly created threats that occur in the prison environment. The implementation of this objective will be made possible by undertaking actions aimed at increasing competences and professionalisation of the Prison Service, which consist in a more effective use of the potential of this formation in the scope of ensuring general security and adjusting to social phenomena that can be observed at present, or those that can occur in the nearest future.

The Prison Service is a hierarchical, uniformed formation responsible for the implementation of tasks in the area of national security. These tasks include, inter alia, broadly understood rehabilitation of persons sentenced to imprisonment and execution of temporary arrest, imprisonment sentences and means of physical coercion that result in incarceration, which in consequence reduces the possibility of committing further crimes. The level of rehabilitation of prisoners depends to a significant degree on the effective functioning of the Prison Service. In the process in question, the actions taken by officers in the course of performing their official duties which directly aim at ensuring the safety of prisoners, officers and other persons who may be present on the premises of penitentiary institutions, are of particular significance.

The process of changes taking place in the Prison Service was initiated in 2010, when the General Director of the Prison Service, by way of Order No. 14 of 3 August 2010, appointed mobile strike groups – Intervention Groups of the Prison Service, capable of reacting quickly in extraordinary situations in which people's lives and health are at risk. They are an example of uniformed services of non-military social system, established within larger social structures in connection with the occurrence of both permanent and *day-to-day* threats. Due to the environment in which such groups function (sphere of public security) they cannot be formed *ad hoc*. On the other hand, they should be characterized by finely selected members, as well as by a high level of training and command, since the tasks set before them require the use of structured and team-based methods of operation, even under extreme conditions. Intervention Groups of the Prison Service are elitist, well-trained units which operate within regional inspectorates. In order to better perform their duties, they are subject to a continuous training of their own skills, both practical and theoretical, like other paramilitary formations. The use of Intervention Groups of the Prison Service depends on the situation and type of intervention. In order to make the best

use of these groups, they are supervised by commanders who inspire authority among subordinates. This article shows that the determinants of preparing the groups do not pose a potential threat to their use. The synthesis of all partial conclusions, as well as their generalisation, are necessary for the implementation of further research.

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