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1 Lithuania has one of the highest rates of incarceration in the European Union due to the frequent imposition of long-term prison sentences. Over the last ten years the average length of sentences has increased from 23 to 34 months. In 2016, the proportion of inmates serving sentences from 5 years to 10 years was 27% while those serving sentences from 10 to 20 years made up 22%. Long-term sentences lead not only to high rates of incarceration, but also bring up the question of the psychological and sociological impact of long-term incarceration on individuals. Harsh penal policies are a legacy of the Soviet period, when the modern Lithuanian penal system was developed. Hence, Lithuania inherited particular type of prison architecture and forms of imprisonment. These forms have been conceptualised as "carceral collectivism". Carceral collectivism is characterized by three elements:

"a system of penal governance based on mutual peer surveillance, the dispersal of authority and governance to prisoners themselves, and communal living engendered by the spatial and temporal structuring of prison life through the housing of prisoners en masse in dormitories."

2 In Lithuania’s prisons, known as correctional facilities, prisoners spend their time in dormitory-style rooms, usually housing from ten to twenty persons. These dormitories are unlocked both during the day and at night to allow inmates access to toilets located in the prison’s corridors, therefore the prisoners’ movement and interaction are not limited and minimally controlled. Due to this, prisoners themselves are responsible for organizing daily life and maintaining order within the facility.

3 Although Lithuania gained independence from the USSR more than two decades ago, Lithuania’s prison system is still lacking in improvements to the material and social conditions of confinement. Little has been done to encourage prisoners to take part in working activities, the number of prisoners employed in the system has barely changed.
over the past decade. Accordingly, prisoners are responsible for occupying themselves in their spare time during their daily routine.

In such conditions, how do prisoners actually spend their time in prison in Lithuania? This question has not been touched on by sociologists of post-Soviet prisons. Access to prison to do qualitative and quantitative research that focuses on the social lives of prisoners is limited, thus we have little data about prisoners themselves and their daily routines. This article utilises a survey of prisoners inside Lithuanian prisons to analyse how inmates occupy themselves. In particular, the article looks at leisure time and perceptions of the purposefulness of activities. The article finds that prisoners are engaged in work and education programs but that these are often lacking in establishing genuine meaningfulness for prison time. In particular, leisure activities are still dominated by prisoner-organized recreation. Moreover, a large proportion of prisoners simply do not engage in organized forms of work, education or leisure at all, simply freely socializing in the communal spaces of Lithuanian colonies.

The article is structured as follows: the next section reviews the literature on how time is made meaningful in prison. This section follows Goffman’s theory of the prison as a total institution and examines the European standards for the provision of work and education opportunities as well as recreation and sport. The article then describes the data and methodology before analysing meaningful time in prison in Lithuania. The data shows that while prisoners participate in work and education programmes these are often not viewed as meaningful and many simply opt out. Moreover, leisure time is often still governed by prisoners themselves. The article concludes with some thoughts on what can be done to improve the situation.

Making Time Meaningful: Occupational Activities and Leisure Behind Bars

Correctional facilities or "total institutions" as described by Goffman, appropriate the time and space of individuals in order to produce constant control and supervision. The perception of free time in such conditions may be theorised in two ways: on the one hand, the abundance of time during imprisonment often makes it meaningless and worthless; on the other hand, prisons attempt to avoid wasting time by ensuring employment and reducing any sense that time was spent inexpediently. Perceptions of time may be divided into culturally understood useful time, which is dedicated to work or training, and free time for recreational and leisure activities; both employment and the assurance of various leisure forms are necessary for giving meaning to time during a prison sentence. Despite these understandings of what constitutes meaningful time, the repressive nature of correctional facilities contributes to a negative perception of time and encourage doubts about how time is spent.

Various recommendations of the European Union and other international agreements establish that a prison sentence should be aimed at facilitating the reintegration of the offender back into society. Education and work have become an integral part of the modern prison system, helping to make time spent by the sentenced persons meaningful and useful both during the sentence and after a person’s release from correctional facilities. From the very beginning of the modern prison system, prison labour played a vital role in the punishment process. On the one hand, it was believed that occupational
activities have a positive impact on the sentenced persons; on the other hand, prisoners were exploited as a cheap labour force. Prison labour is no longer considered a source of profit by modern international standards; yet prison labour is still associated with making daily routines purposeful and being important for reintegration.

Debates remain about whether prison work should be seen as a duty or a right. A duty to work at least theoretically exists in most countries, yet legal restrictions on refusing to work are rare. In recent years, a shortage of work for prisoners, especially work with some sort of educational value, can be identified in many countries. The focus on work shortage shifts the conceptualization of prison labour from work as a duty to work as a right. Approaching prison labour as a right focuses on employed prisoners’ legal status and remuneration, as well as the normalization of prison work.

The basic principles related to prison labour are emphasised in the European Prison Rules of 2006 as follows:

"the work provided shall be such as will maintain or increase prisoners' ability to earn a living after release; prisoners may choose the type of employment in which they wish to participate; the organisation and methods of work in the institutions shall resemble as closely as possible those of similar work in the community."

Though approaches to prison labour are becoming more varied, international standards still play a vital role in ensuring at least minimum levels of humanity and the normalization of prisoners’ work. Nevertheless, according to European prison rules, labour should not be prioritised over education. Due to the limited opportunities to ensure diverse employment in correctional facilities, work does not always help in acquiring skills which may be useful after release. Therefore, it is established in the European Prison Rules that: "education shall have no less a status than work within the prison regime and prisoners shall not be disadvantaged financially or otherwise by taking part in education."

From a short-term perspective and aiming for rapid results, education is useful for prison administrations in ensuring prisoners’ occupation and distracting them from forbidden activities. A secondary longer-term benefit of educational programmes is the acquisition of new knowledge and skills that are necessary for returning to society. A wide range of literature indicates that there are broadly two approaches to the education of sentenced persons. One approach is more focused on the training of the sentenced persons through improvement of certain knowledge and skills; meanwhile, the other approach is focused on general education and the development of personal characteristics.

The second approach to education is more typical of Scandinavian countries. Here the sentenced persons are considered part of the general education system, where everyone without any exception are subject to the same objectives. The normalization principle aims to make conditions in prison including work and education as close to normal life as possible. This principle is also emphasised in the recommendations of the European Council and other EU institutions. For instance, the European Prison Rules state that educational programmes in prisons must be integrated and belong to the general education system of the country. From this perspective, educational systems in the correctional facilities should aim to recognize the importance of lifelong learning. The focus is not so much on knowledge itself or its application, but on the education process and the enabling of participants, increasing their motivation, satisfaction, self-esteem, and self-development. This approach emphasizes the ability for critical reflection, as well as a change of values and worldview in the educational process. In many European...
countries, the typical concept of education tends towards the first approach mentioned above. Education of sentenced persons is focused on a combination of three elements: the provision of education based on the secondary school curriculum, training focused on employability, and learning oriented toward programmes based on the type of offense committed. Inevitably, this approach aims to develop both basic and advanced knowledge and skills and is less aimed at holistic self-development.\footnote{15}

Empirical evidence indicates that it is important to focus on the individual needs of the sentenced persons by involving them not only in the education process, but also in its planning, thereby encouraging active participation and development of a sense of responsibility and enhancing decision-making skills. Teaching focused on the needs of a sentenced person focuses not only on specific knowledge or content, but also on the learning process, as well as the progress and development of participants.\footnote{16}

The normalisation of prison sentences includes not only time spent on useful activities such as work and education, but also opportunities to engage in leisure and recreation. The spending of leisure time or engagement in recreation are closely related to the development of identity and opportunities for self-expression, especially when self-expression becomes restricted by external factors. According to Goffman, total institutions perform “mortification of the self” affecting, transforming and suppressing prisoners’ individuality. By using mechanisms of control and supervision total institutions deprive an individual of autonomy and limit a person’s independence and self-perception. Therefore, total institutions not only appropriate a person’s time and space, but also limit ways to create and retain individuality and identity.\footnote{17} In such cases, an opportunity to select the most acceptable forms for leisure may mean a greater freedom to decide and freedom to act as an individual person at the same time. Thus, the feeling of helplessness decreases and self-esteem, self-assessment and intrinsic motivation increase.\footnote{18}

Goffman also emphasises that an institution’s attempt to reconstruct the personality of the sentenced persons inevitably gets a response from those persons, which is expressed by different forms of collective solidarity, which may escalate into resistance. According to Goffman, total institutions perform “mortification of the self” affecting, transforming and suppressing prisoners’ individuality. By using mechanisms of control and supervision total institutions deprive an individual of autonomy and limit a person’s independence and self-perception. Therefore, total institutions not only appropriate a person’s time and space, but also limit ways to create and retain individuality and identity.\footnote{17} In such cases, an opportunity to select the most acceptable forms for leisure may mean a greater freedom to decide and freedom to act as an individual person at the same time. Thus, the feeling of helplessness decreases and self-esteem, self-assessment and intrinsic motivation increase.\footnote{18}

Leisure time and engagement in recreation communally, along with other occupational forms, are deemed the primary source of social adjustment to the prison environment, allowing a reduction in tensions and adaptation to the existing situation. Based on the data of various research, leisure is one of the most important means of maintaining emotional balance and mental health in prison, as well as helping to fight the stress and tension. Engaging forms of leisure dissociate inmates from negativity and eases the daily life of imprisonment, the routine, the limited schedule, the discipline and control, and encourages positive thinking.\footnote{21} One of the frequent ways of coping that is available to all sentenced persons is positive thinking about future plans, as well as planning for a better life after release. Leisure activities can be deemed a part of the implementation of future
visions by using free time at correctional facilities for the development of new skills, self-
development and the discovery of new hobbies. Prisoners emphasise that useful and positive leisure time during a sentence period significantly contributes to future plans, and to changes in lifestyle\textsuperscript{12}.

17 It is emphasised in programs that develop skills related to positive leisure time that involvement of prisoners in how to plan their leisure meaningfully contributes to the creation of positive interpersonal relations among the prisoners, improvement of the prison atmosphere and a reduction in tension. In the long-term, positive leisure at prison institutions teaches prisoners to use to be active when returning back to society. Recreational activities often do not require substantial resources and are easily accessible after prison. Positive recreation in correctional facilities may be focused on activities related to the re-establishment or improvement of relations with close relatives, the development of skills related to planning of a family recreation and the development of a healthy lifestyle\textsuperscript{23}.

18 As already mentioned, recreation may help to cope with negative emotions and tension; it may also counterbalance the need to be challenged and overcome boredom\textsuperscript{24}. Empirical evidence indicates that it is important for sentenced persons to choose various forms of leisure not only to simply pass the time, but also to experience new challenges and socialise with other prisoners. For example, gambling games or other forms of gambling or betting are popular, as they provide light relief to the daily routine in correctional facilities, they produce the experience of risk, and satisfy the need for adrenalin and ardour\textsuperscript{25}.

19 The most popular forms of leisure in correctional facilities are physical activities and various sports. Research analysing the importance of sport in correctional facilities refers to the impact of sport and its role in improving physical and mental health. Empirical studies clearly confirm the important of sport for well-being\textsuperscript{26}. Sports and leisure help "to sustain sanity in an insane place"\textsuperscript{27}. Speaking of the correlation of emotional well-being with physical activity, it is emphasised that spending free time by playing sports or being involved in physical activities contributes to a more positive evaluation of the environment and the self.

20 Prisoners in different correctional facilities in Australia, for example, emphasised that involvement in programmes of physical activity not only allowed them to become stronger physically and encouraged them to resist harmful habits, but also contributed to positive thinking and mood, as well as control of tension, aggression and violent behaviour. Respondents also noticed that they acquired more self-esteem\textsuperscript{28}. It should be noted that involvement in various programmes of sport helps to reduce tension not only on the individual level, but on the institutional level too. It is noted in research from England that the involvement of young prisoners in sports academies had a positive impact on the behaviour of prisoners. Meanwhile, young prisoners emphasised that purposeful physical activity helped them to adapt to daily life in prison and its regime, to run away from casual routine and to control daily tension. According to the prisoners, the restricted space, continuous control, limited opportunities and mundane routine cause constant disappointment, anger and a negative mood, leading to a generally negative atmosphere. Sport and physical activity help to neutralise tension and increase positive moods, which accordingly help the sentenced persons not only communicate with each other, but also to improve relations with prison employees. According to these
employees, various sport programmes decrease the fragmentation among prisoners, increase solidarity and social support.29

Sports are also deemed a primary source of self-expression and a tool of empowerment and resistance, especially by male prisoners. As mentioned above, Goffman notes that prisoners, experiencing constant restriction and control, attempt to search for other available sources of collective self-expression and resistance, which he labels as the secondary adjustment of prisoners.30 Sports become activities where control belongs to the sentenced persons, allowing them to create alternative spaces in a limited residential environment, where recreational time spent would become a counterbalance to routine and daily life. Thus, physical activity together with the spaces where it is performed offers a piece of freedom, as well as a release from the role of the convict at least for a while. It also offers an opportunity for self-development and an emphasis on individuality.31

Nevertheless, the environment of prison often distorts the purpose of sports, which should be related to free choice, self-expression and enjoyment. According to a wide range of literature, minimum measures that are necessary for a certain sport are not provided for inmates, since conditions for sport are frequently simulated rather than actually implemented. The choice in the correctional facilities is very poor; therefore, prisoners often cannot choose their preferred or favourite activities, but activities that are offered or promoted by the institution.32 At the same time, the opportunity to play sport is used as a demonstrative measure helping to mask the lack of effective employment or training programmes in correctional facilities.33 Sports may also be used as a tool of control, designed to put prisoners at ease or promote desirable behaviour by considering the provision of sport not one of a right granted, but of a privilege bestowed.34 Different forms of leisure, especially requiring expensive equipment, are considered a luxury which prisoners do not deserve. Furthermore, sports equipment and recreational spaces are the subject of disagreements among prisoners. Sports equipment and spaces are monopolised by the dominant prisoners; therefore, they are available only to a certain group of privileged persons. Through sport, the segregation of prisoners and informal relations based on dominance and subordination show up and are perpetuated.35 Therefore, in order for physical activities to be directed in a positive way, it is necessary to set a clear vision about their purpose and objectives by focusing more not on the goals of institution, but on the free choice of the sentenced persons.

The penological literature has shown how prison labour has been viewed as both a duty and a right. Modern European states, particularly in Scandinavia, have adopted a broad focus on work and education as a means of broader lifelong learning and self-development. Moreover, recreation is also seen as a positive force for adaptation to the prison environment. Sport in particular can be a means of improving prison environments as well as helping prisoners for life after prison. At the same time, research suggests sport can also be problematic in terms of reinforcing informal power relations. Below, I will show how prisoners spend their time in Lithuania. Before this, I describe the methods and data that the analysis is based on.

Methodology

24 The data used in this article come from a quantitative survey conducted in 2016 across all penal institutions of Lithuania (including female, excluding juvenile establishments).
survey focuses on prison conditions and was intended to identify opportunities for resocialisation, as well as to capture daily life in prison. The research was organised and conducted by the team of the Law Institute of Lithuania.

During the research no special site selection procedure of respondents was applied. On the one hand, the standardised selection would be difficult to apply due to the very different specifics of the correctional facilities; on the other hand, the survey was voluntary; therefore, even if the preferred categories and number of respondents for the survey would be predefined, it would be difficult to ensure such implementation in practice. The various prison administrations were asked to provide the conditions to survey prisoners belonging to various groups, sorted by demographic characteristics, committed crimes and duration of the imposed sentence. The respondents were interviewed in groups at premises designated by the prison administration (i.e. in educational classes, event venues and so on). Before the survey, the objectives of survey, the items in the interview and instructions were introduced to the participants. During the survey, one or several researchers were constantly present in the room and, in case of necessity, could always answer questions of the participants. On average, it took approximately 1 hour for the respondents to complete the survey.

During the research 690 valid questionnaires were received and recognised as suitable for further data analysis from all the obtained questionnaires. The questionnaire consisted of 150 questions, the majority of which were close-ended questions with multiple options or semi-open questions, where respondents could write their optional answers in addition to already provided options. The questionnaire of the research was divided into certain modules, sorting them by topics and research objectives. Work, education and leisure, analysed in this article, formed one out of 12 topics listed in survey.

In terms of the characteristics of participants, it should be noted that half of respondents (50%) were imprisoned for the first time during the research; the other half of respondents noted that it was not their first experience of imprisonment. Of the respondents, 87% were males and 13% of participants were females. The age of respondents ranged from 18 to 66 years; the average age was 35 years. Excluding survey participants sentenced to life imprisonment, who also participated in the research, the average imposed sentence was 6 years and 8 months, and the average completed sentence was 3 years and 7 months.

Prisoners’ Engagement in Work and Education Activities within Lithuanian Prisons

Judged on official statistical data, Lithuania may be categorised as a country where employment rates at correctional facilities are low. There were no significant changes in this area during the last 15 years, for example, there were 35% of people working at the correctional facilities in 2004 and 40% in 2018. The results of the survey only confirmed the above-mentioned tendencies. Almost 60% of the study participants said they were unemployed at the institution. The majority (45%) of employed sentenced persons, who participated in the study, performed household or cleaning works; meanwhile, the other part (36%) worked in the field of production and manufacturing. Nevertheless, up to 73% of study participants said that they could not choose the type of work, which was
assigned to them. Moreover, nearly half of the employed persons (49%) said that the work they performed did not meet their needs (See Graph 1 below).

Graph 1 on working tendencies inside establishments

The reasons due to which prisoners do not work were also covered in the survey. Some respondents emphasised that they do not work due to a lack of employment - 49%, extremely low salary - 39%, poor working conditions - 30%, the fact that they were learning or participating in the educational programmes - 30%, as well as the fact that other sentenced persons have negative attitude towards working prisoners - 9%. The study results not only showed poor levels of prisoner involvement in occupational activities and a lack of employment places, but also revealed that occupational activities are not attractive for sentenced persons because there is no opportunity to choose the type of work; therefore, such work does not meet their needs. On top of this, low salary and poor working conditions demotivate prisoners.

Furthermore, prisoners engage in the learning process more actively than in occupational activities. Of all respondents, 60% of them said that they were participating in some type of educational/learning programmes. Moreover, 44% of persons said that they wanted to acquire a graduate certificate representing completed secondary education, 36% of persons said that they have acquired such a certificate at the current correctional facility and 58% of persons said that they were participating in vocational training. The male prisoners said that they usually acquire professions such as finisher, auto mechanic, furniture-maker, electrician, baker, crane operator, bricklayer, tailor, welder, metal-worker, plasterer or lathe operator. Meanwhile, the female prisoners confessed that they were learning to acquire the profession of finisher, hairdresser, manicurist, tailor or a cook. The sentenced persons also indicated that learning English or other foreign languages, participation in programmes related to the treatment of addictions or psychological support, art therapies or activities offered by religious communities and courses of computer literacy are a part of qualification improvement courses.

In general, the survey participants assessed the diversity of learning and working at the correctional institutions more positively, emphasising that learning is very important for them because it helps to escape from daily life and routine (See Table 1 below).
However, a proportion noted that there is a lack of diversity in terms of profession selection, and that there is a significant lack of prospective and marketable specialities. Prisoners also emphasised that they do not fully use their skills during work or learning processes – 34% of persons completely agreed with this statement and 33% partly agreed. Prisoners prefer to improve their language skills, develop in the field of information technologies, graduate from higher education institutions and to pass theory tests which is deemed a part of driving courses; however, the current limited conditions and opportunities demotivate them because more conventional specialities based on physical work are no longer attractive.

Prisoners admit that they participate in various programmes or acquire several professions due to several various reasons. First of all, they want to spend their time usefully: “I participate to communicate and improve because I don’t want to degrade or become a couch potato. I attend the school; also try to become a welder and a baker”\(^\text{36}\). Second of all, prisoners engage in the learning process as they think that it is an important aspect that can help to achieve early conditional release: “It (learning – author’s note) is necessary only to put a check mark regarding the conditional release”\(^\text{37}\). Half of the study’s participants also admitted that they participate in various courses or programmes in order to meet and communicate with other sentenced persons.

Respondents who do not participate in learning programmes distinguished the most important reasons for their refusal to get involved in educational processes. The majority emphasised that there is a lack of diversity, the offered professions do not meet inmates’ needs and have no prospects; therefore, they think that such work would be meaningless: “There is no purpose because people on the outside do not need what they can offer us here”\(^\text{38}\). They also stated that teaching is performed formally, so it does neither provide any experience nor practice. The other half of prisoners think that their education, obtained outside the facility is sufficient and that they had completed all important possible courses that had been offered. Another group of respondents emphasised that it is important to earn money for a living; therefore, they prioritise work over education. Finally, the study participants highlighted that sometimes they lack information about learning opportunities or strong encouragement from prison officials.

Thus, the research revealed that prisoners quite actively engage both in general and vocational training. The results also show and the sentenced persons confirm that, on the one hand, the variety of work and education is sufficient, but, on the other hand, they pay
attention to the lack of real prospective specialities that would reflect the current situation of the labour market. Therefore, prisoners participate in employment or educational processes not to obtain knowledge, specialities and development, but due to occupational, financial reasons, as well as in order to pass time, to change their surrounding environment or to achieve early conditional release. Part of the respondents said that they seek to acquire several specialities that are not related to each other. Therefore, it may be assumed that professional development of prisoners can sometimes lack internal consistency or be purposeful in the sense of aimed at a specific long term goal. The work and vocational training at the correctional facilities suggest that at times random decisions are being made by choosing not what is important and prospective for person, but rather based just on what occupational activities are offered to them. Therefore, there seemed to be some miscomprehension between the purposes of prison education and employment as the institution views it and how the prisoners understand it. Some respondents did not see that in order to integrate in the labour market successfully, they were supposed to learn how to be proactive formers of their professional path and to seek such self-improvement opportunities that would meet their needs the most.

**Killing Free Time Inside Lithuanian Correctional Facilities**

35 As previously mentioned, the employment of the sentenced persons at the correctional institutions of Lithuania only slightly increased over the past decade – approximately one-third of sentenced persons at the correctional establishments do not participate either in work or the training processes. Therefore, it is also necessary to critically analyse the use of the spare time of those unoccupied prisoners and capture their beliefs about the importance of free time during their sentence. According to the research on adaptation to imprisonment in Lithuanian establishments, one of the main coping strategies emphasized by prisoners is being occupied and spending time usefully by means of self-education, work and taking part in sport or studies. It shows that the sentenced persons have to be occupied and participate in certain activities in order to adapt and survive under imprisonment conditions. However, a lack of employment, variety and choice remain significant obstacles to spending time meaningfully.

36 After entering most correctional facilities in Lithuania, one can usually see an identical view – prisoners walking in circles in several, small or one big yard or square. The view at the correctional facilities in post-Soviet countries slightly differ from the view that is typical to the correctional establishments in other European countries, where it is unusual to see unemployed prisoners walking around during the working hours. Of our survey participants, 38% admitted that they constantly walk around the territory; meanwhile, 36% said that they do it occasionally; 35% of respondents said that they constantly associate their free time with being together with other inmates; meanwhile, 33% of persons said that they occasionally spend their leisure this way. Such figures show that it is typical for prisoners to spend their free time just by walking around the territory and spending time with other inmates.

37 Speaking of the most popular leisure forms at the correctional institutions, 42% of prisoners noted that they watch TV occasionally and 36%, frequently. Also 46% of
respondents noted that they listen to music frequently and 33%, occasionally. Occupations related to physical activity is no less popular among sentenced persons: 35% of interviewees said that they are constantly lifting heavy weights, 22% of persons said that they do it occasionally, 33% of respondents noted that they exercise outside of doing weights. Answering an open-ended question about leisure forms and available opportunities, prisoners noted that they like playing various games, such as basketball or football. However, special programs for physical activities or professionally organized sports are very rare in prison establishments. Thus, there is still a lot of room for using the active engagement of prisoners in sports by adding positive and educational value. Currently, more than half of respondents evaluated the opportunities and diversity of opportunities for recreation at the correctional facilities negatively; 55% of respondents indicated a lack of diversity, though 86% said that they fully use the provided leisure opportunities.

Naming the different forms of recreation, prisoners paid a lot of attention to self-education, as well as correspondence with their close relatives, computer or board games. According to the prisoners, the major problem related to recreation is the aforementioned lack of diversity, especially the lack of activities that are usually organised outside the residential premises. The study participants resented that they are responsible for their leisure time and that their recreation is limited to their residential premises. Prisoners also noted that matters related to their occupation, which are important and relevant to them are forbidden, especially in terms of information technologies as this allows them to have greater contact with the outside world.

As has been noted in studies analysing the significance of sports at correctional facilities, the spaces and infrastructure used for sports activities frequently become the subject of disagreement among the prisoners and a place for expressing power relations. The survey participants also noticed that all prisoners cannot use certain equipment designed for leisure activities. During the study, it was emphasised to the researchers at one of the correctional houses that a billiard table could be used only by a certain group of prisoners, who financially contributed to the acquisition of equipment. The fact that such practice is especially widespread at the correctional facilities of Lithuania, where prisoners not only purchased various household items or renovated residential premises from their own funds, but also purchased various leisure inventories, was also revealed in other studies performed.

To sum up, there is a lack of purposeful and varied occupational activities, reflecting life outside the prison’s limits, at the correctional facilities. The employment opportunities are not attractive enough to prisoners; therefore, only about 40% of all prisoners engage in them. The small variety of work, low salary and poor working conditions demotivate prisoners; therefore, they rather choose to participate in various educational programmes, which are attended by approximately 60% of prisoners. However, such programmes also lack variety because specialities offered at the correctional institutions are more focused on conventional professions, related to physical work, which neither seem perspective nor marketable to prisoners. Due to these conditions, engagement in the educational process is often informed by random decisions rather than systematic and purposeful career planning. Meanwhile, the primary reasons for engagement in the educational process become passing time, adding variety to daily life, communication with other sentenced persons or to achieve early conditional release.
Many occupational opportunities do not seem attractive to prisoners; therefore, some prisoners choose “fooling around” or “killing time” by walking around the territory and spending time with other sentenced persons over work and education. Recreation is not characterised by diversity either because, according to some survey participants, they themselves are responsible for their own leisure time. Prisoners try to compensate for the lack of diversity by purchasing sports or entertainment equipment from their own funds, which then become available only to a certain group of prisoners, reinforcing informal power dynamics. Thus, differentiation increases not only between the living conditions, but opportunities available at the correctional facilities, when some sentenced persons are entitled to more varied forms of leisure than others, the latter have to be content with very simple forms of “killing” the excess of their free time.

Conclusions

International standards and EU institutions, as well as progressive penal systems and empirical evidence, suggest that prison labour is no longer seen as a value itself. Work in prisons should focus on rehabilitative and educative measures, recognizing the right to choose and accomplish the principles of normalization. A shortage of work is identified in many countries and Lithuania is not an exception. The quality and variety of work is crucial. However, work in Lithuanian correctional facilities neither provides choice nor meets prisoners’ needs. Prisoners feel demotivated because of working conditions, low salary, and the low utility specialities which are usually offered during a sentence.

Although survey participants engage in the learning process more than in working activities, such engagement is not always related to educational interests. As has been argued elsewhere, the importance of lifelong learning should be recognized as well as self-development and the capacity for critical reflection, which could ensure a change of values and worldview. However, the survey results show that in Lithuanian correctional establishments’ education is mainly focused on vocational training and special skills. Meanwhile, prisoners’ decisions regarding education remain very random by choosing what is offered, but not what is important to them. There is a lack of prisoners’ active participation in decision making and career planning. Therefore, the potential of prisoner engagement in educational processes remains underemployed and cannot have a great impact on their integration back to society.

Accordingly, unattractive opportunities for work and education in Lithuanian prisons cause some prisoners to choose to spend their time by walking around the territory and spending time with other inmates. The results reveal that some prisoners willingly spend time by doing sports and exercising, however, they are often responsible for such activities themselves. It can be concluded that such kind of activities organized institutionally could have more positive or educational value. Therefore, the attitude that prisoners’ free time is their own business restrains the possibilities and variety of recreation on offer. Institutionally, it is necessary to rethink the significance of various leisure forms, stressing that positive ways of spending spare time could have an impact on daily life outside prison. Major changes could be made by more active prison worker engagement in recreation together with prisoners giving some additional meanings to the daily activities or organizing them in a more positive way.
In the past decade there have been ongoing debates on reforming the post-Soviet penal system in Lithuania, especially on the reconstruction of camp-style prisons and moving towards dynamic security. High incarceration rates and consistent criticism from EU institutions encourages major changes; therefore, policy makers believe that a cell system could solve significant number of problems. The evidence of this paper suggests that a gradual transition to individual cell-type confinement with some remaining elements of carceral collectivism would be desirable. Some elements of collective imprisonment could be seen as a compensational mechanism for a lack of meaningful purposeful and leisure activities. The communal living arrangements give prisoners an alternative way to socialize and spend time in the yard eschewing the official opportunities to work or learn on offer. However, this paper has also shown that reformers should place more time on making those opportunities meaningful. This is a more essential step in creating purpose and meaning for prisoners than the reconstruction of physical space.

NOTES

4. G. Sakalauskas, “Kalinių sąlygos ir kalinių resocializacijos prieštalai”, Teisės problemos, Vol. 88, # 2, 2015, p. 34


17. E. Goffman, op.cit.

18. Ibid.


22. Ibid. 2015, pp. 297- 303.


30. E. Goffman, op. cit.


How do prisoners in Lithuania spend their time? This article provides evidence from a unique survey of prisoners. The article shows that the rationale for meaningful prison work and education has shifted away from the Soviet emphasis on productivity and correction of deviance towards a logic of vocational training and self-development. Yet, data from the survey suggest that while most Lithuanian prisoners engage in some sort of work or educational program, these programs often do not achieve the aims they set for themselves. Prisoners have limited choices on offer, see little ultimate purpose to the activities, and often simply make do. Moreover, many prisoners opt out completely, finding pastimes in walking in the open space and collective living of Lithuania’s colony-style correctional facilities. Furthermore, outside of work and education, leisure time is still largely defined by the prisoners themselves, leading to inequities in the distribution of recreational resources due to informal power hierarchies.

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