

ЗАРУБІЖНА ПЕНІТЕНЦІАРИСТИКА

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THE CZECH PRISON SERVICE ACADEMY

The Academy of the Prison Service of the Czech Republic has been a partner of the Institute of Criminal-Executive Service of Ukraine since 2016. In 2020, the Czech Prison Service Academy (the Academy) celebrates the 20th anniversary of its operation of the present building in Máchova Street, Stráž pod Ralskem. The Academy would like to present its activities to the readers of the Bulletin of the Penitentiary Association of Ukraine.

Overview of the Prison Service of the Czech Republic. The Czech Prison Service is under the authority of the Ministry of Justice. The Prison Service cooperates with the Probation and Mediation Service of the Czech Republic, but they are independent organizations.

There are 35 prisons with the population of approximately 20.000 inmates. The tasks of the Prison Service are to ensure pre-trial detention and execution of sentence; to run two preventive detention facilities; to maintain law and order in the buildings of courts and the Ministry of Justice; and to provide escorts between prisons, to courts and to hospitals.

According to the law, the Czech prison staff is formed by two sub-groups. The ratio is about two thirds of uniformed staff members (directors and their first deputies, prison guards in direct contact with prisoners, perimeter security officers, prevention officers,

escort officers, K-unit members) and one third of civilians (psychologists, social workers, pedagogues, educators, medical staff, chaplains, administrative and support staff). The total number of staff is over 11.000, out of them about 1.000 Judicial Guards serve at judicial premises.

Basic information about the Academy. The Academy is the only prison staff training centre in the Czech Republic (Figure 1). It is located at the border with Poland and with Germany in a little town of Stráž pod Ralskem (about 100 km from Prague).

Figure 1 Prison Service Academy in Stráž pod Ralskem



History of Czech Prison Staff Training. The history dates back to 1960 when new prison officers were trained in three-month courses. Since then, the school for prison staff has changed its residence; governing body; system of education; and its name several times.

The predecessor of the present institution is considered the vocational school founded by the then Minister of Justice of the former Czechoslovak Republic in Ostrov nad Ohří (close to Karlovy Vary) in 1970. The Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners of 1957 were implemented in the professional training and the study programme was based on penology and criminology. Initial course for cadets lasted seven weeks and in addition to physical and combat training it covered other subjects, such as education in corrections, psychology and pedagogy basics. A four-year study programme for future correctional educators was completed by a state leaving exam. The statistics show that between 1970 and 1980, over 4.700 new officers (out of them 350 women) passed the initial courses; and between 1970 and 1994, the number of the graduates from the secondary school programme reached 560.

In 1975, the school became a branch unit of the then Warrant Officers' School of the National Security Corps (Sbor nápravné výchovy) residing in Brno. Between 1982 and 1992 the branch occupied a six-floor accommodation and administration building and a school building. Over 2.800 new prison officers (out of them 270 women) completed the training between 1982 and 1989.

The Prison Service and Judicial Guard of the Czech Republic Act No. 555/1992 reformulated and newly stated the status of penitentiary personnel. In 1992, the then Minister of Justice renamed the school into the Institute of Education of the Prison Service. The base of the present system of education was laid. The length of initial courses varied according to the posi-

tions; courses for uniformed staff members took 16 weeks including a four-week practical training at selected prisons. The last state leaving exam at the secondary school programme was held in 1994.

In September 1994, a new Institute of Education branch was established in Stráž pod Ralskem and three classes for 90 new civilian staff members were opened. Another branch was opened in Kroměříž (Moravia) in 1996 and it finished its operation in 2006.

Since 1st November 1996, the Institute of Education was settled solely in Stráž pod Ralskem. However, the conditions were rather poor. Teachers' offices were in the students' hostel and theoretical lessons were held in a former nursery school. The Institute lacked the space for practical training.

Finally, two buildings opposite Stráž pod Ralskem Prison were purchased. They were interconnected by a central round part. The construction of a new school building began in autumn 1998.

The facility ceremonial inauguration took place on 31st August 2000. This year (2020), it has been 20 years since the building opening.

The Academy got its present name in 2013 and in 2016 it celebrated the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the prison staff training centre in Stráž pod Ralskem.

The statistics show the efficiency of the Academy training: Between 1970 and 1994, nearly 5.000 staff members completed educational programmes. Between 2000 and 2019, over 50.000 persons attended courses organized by the Academy.

The number of participants within the educational activities reached 3 776 in 2019. Out of them 623 new

uniformed staff attended Type A Initial Course and nearly 500 new treatment specialists completed their initial training. It is not unusual that there are over 300 persons in the Academy on one day. The average number of lessons a teacher delivered in 2019 was 600.

The Present Institution. Main Tasks.

The main tasks of the Academy do not differ from the tasks of any similar institution in Europe. It provides initial courses for new staff; it offers various specialized courses for prison practitioners; it organizes professional meetings, seminars and conferences; and it is also involved in scientific and research activities especially in the field of penal history. The Probation and Mediation Service, the Police and the Trade Unions use the learning spaces and the accommodation facilities for their activities.

Accommodation

To accommodate the attendees of initial courses, the Academy runs a hostel with 300 beds. A hotel with 175 beds is available to the participants of specialized courses, meetings, study visits and conferences.

Staff. The Academy is managed by the director and two deputies. Four departments – Education, Finance, Logistics and IT – are managed by the respective leaders. The total number of the Academy staff is 51. Two thirds of them are civilians. They are administrative and logistics staff and 6 civilian teachers. Uniformed managers and 14 uniformed teachers make one third of the staff members.

In addition to the premises in Stráž pod Ralskem, the Academy operates a detached unit of History and Documentation of the Czech Peniten-

tiary System in Prague. Apart from other tasks, the unit is responsible for the Czech penitentiary museum at Prague Pankrác Remand Prison. Three researchers are developing a very fruitful cooperation in the field of penal history with their French, Lower-Saxon and Slovak partners.

Conditions for Education and Training. The school areas include an auditorium with 90 seats; 11 standard classrooms for theoretical lessons with the capacity of 24 students each; and one large and two small PC classrooms. Four classrooms for groups of 15 students are basically used for theoretical and practical final exams that succeed initial courses.

Practical training takes place in specialized areas. A multipurpose room has capacity for 80 persons and it is suitable not only for lectures but also for some specific training such as the use of the means of restraint. It is also appropriate for round-table meetings or conference receptions. A simulation cell, a simulation prison/court entrance, a DO-JO for self-defence training, a shooting training classroom and language classrooms are very important. In 2016, a former kindergarten located opposite to the Academy was purchased and it is undergoing a thorough reconstruction. There will be a simulation centre for practical training in the future.

A permanent exhibition of illegal objects detected in Czech prisons is situated in the Academy as well. A library is opened not only to the prison staff but also to the general public. Sport activities, standard drill, marching or intervention techniques are carried out outdoor. A fitness room is open for students and teachers.

Figure 2 Auditorium



Figure 3 Multipurpose Room



Figure 4 Large PC Classroom



Figure 5 Permanent Exhibition of Illegal Objects



Figure 6 Simulation Room I



Figure 7 Simulation Room II



Initial Training. Initial courses held at the Academy can be divided into three main types according to the recruits' future assignments. New uniformed staff attend Type A Initial Course. The training takes 13 weeks. Type B Initial Course addresses the

needs of new treatment specialists. The initial course for psychologists, social workers, special pedagogues, educators and vocational training teachers lasts 7 weeks. One-day initial seminars for administrative and support staff are organized at prisons.

Successful students of Type A and Type B courses receive certificates at a ceremonial graduation meeting.

At the end of their probationary (orientation) employment period that lasts three years, uniformed staff are invited to a short revision course and pass the professional exam. Only then they receive the unlimited contract.

Staff Enhancement Opportunities. To address prison staff's professional enhancement, the Academy opens a number of specialized courses for different groups of practitioners every year. The contents and duration of the courses vary according to the needs of the specific staff. Specialized courses for psychologists; social-psychological training courses; complementary courses on pedagogy; courses on mediation techniques for social workers; or courses focused on procedures of security checks at entrances to judicial buildings illustrate the fields the courses may focus on.

Conferences. A number of professional meetings and conferences take place at the Academy every year. The most significant conference is considered the Penology Days Conference. It is attended by a hundred of prison professionals as well as probation officers, scientists, representatives of Czech universities, NGOs and other guests. In September 2019, the 7th Penology Days Conference was held.

Innovative Programmes and Modern Handbooks. Innovative educational programmes and modern manuals are developed by the teachers. English seminars for penitentiary practice and workshops on penitentiary Polish are unique staff training programmes in Europe. They combine progressive methods and specific approaches to effectively develop selected

staff's professional communication in foreign languages. In a relatively short period with not too much effort, the participants are ready to take part in meetings with their partners from abroad. International professional English seminars are open to foreign prison professionals and some of them are facilitated by distinguished experts like Doug Dretke, Executive Director of Correctional Management Institute of Texas, Sam Houston State University; Raluca Stuparu, International Relations Department Executive Member, Romanian Prison Administration; or Jacek Matrejek, former Polish Prison Director; to name just a few.

Activities in the international penitentiary field. The Academy has concluded bilateral agreements with prison staff training centres in Ukraine, Slovakia, Poland, Lower Saxony, France, Romania and Latvia. A system of exchange study visits has been brought into practice. Every year, about 10 foreign delegations visit the Academy. Teachers and other staff members participate in about 10 study visits or international conferences abroad.

The Academy joined EPTA (the European Penitentiary Training Association) in 2016. The Academy Director introduced the Institute of Criminal-Executive Service of Ukraine to the EPTA members and supported its formal admission to the network, which took place a year later. The partner organization representatives meet at EPTA conferences once a year.

Yevgen Barash, Head of the Institute of the Criminal-Executive Service, major-general of internal service, Doctor in Law, Associate Professor, Honoured Worker of Science and Technology of Ukraine, visited the Academy in 2016; the Academy Director paid a

working visit to Kiev in 2017. The Czech delegation was led by Deputy Director General Brig. Gen. Simon Michailidis.

The communication between the Ukrainian and the Czech educational facilities is professional but also open and friendly.

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