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Shaping Public Security at the Level of Local Communities According to Prison Service Officers. Results of a Pilot Study

Kształtowanie bezpieczeństwa publicznego na poziomie społeczności lokalnych w opinii funkcjonariuszy Służby Więziennej. Wyniki badań pilotażowych

Managing public security constitutes a part of the logic of services performance for the benefit of an individual and to the community at large. At the same time, guaranteeing the preservation of the inviolability of life, health, dignity, freedom, property, legal order and fundamental instruments at the disposal of the State are key tasks of numerous services, including the Prison Service. It is the purpose of this paper to present the opinions of Prison Service officers regarding the level of satisfaction of public security needs in the local communities in which they operate. Learning about these opinions appears to be important in the context of the ability of prison officers to act, in the area of public security.

Key words: public security, public security management, prison officers, local communities.

Zarządzanie bezpieczeństwem publicznym wpisuje się w logikę świadczenia usług zarówno na rzecz jednostki jak i całej społeczności. Zagwarantowanie właściwych warunków życia, zdrowia, godności, wolności,

mienia, porządku prawnego i podstawowych instrumentów pozostających w dyspozycji państwa stanowi kluczowe zadanie wielu służb, w tym Służby Więziennej. Celem niniejszego artykułu jest zaprezentowanie opinii funkcjonariuszy Służby Więziennej na temat zaspokojenia potrzeb w zakresie bezpieczeństwa publicznego w społecznościach lokalnych w których działają. Poznanie tych opinii wydaje się ważne w kontekście zdolności funkcjonariuszy Służby Więziennej do działania w obszarze bezpieczeństwa publicznego.

Słowa kluczowe: bezpieczeństwo publiczne, zarządzanie bezpieczeństwem publicznym, funkcjonariusze Służby Więziennej, społeczności lokalne

The current knowledge as regards studies about the foundations of designing public security is rather disjointed. The explanations that seem to flow from it are essentially descriptive and epistemological in nature, but do not form a theory of the security design of the State. This makes it reasonable to undertake scientific research on the issue of creating safe spaces *in extenso*, taking into account the challenges and threats faced by representatives of public services, guards or inspections focusing their attention on matters of public security.

Public security is dependent on a variety of factors, such as volatility, surprise, and unpredictability, which stem from natural, legal, social or economic shifts. The turn of the 20th and 21st centuries was fraught with events that materially affected how public security itself and its institutions are perceived. The issues of challenges and threats emerging in the public security space must remain a constant topic of comprehensive and multidimensional studies¹.

Public security as a concept often evokes a positive perception of the environment surrounding a person through the elimination of threats and by ensuring the fulfilment of needs related to the protection of the life, health and property of citizens. Institutions charged with the management of public security include, first and foremost, public authorities or inspections, guards and services such as the Police or Prison Service.

¹ Kośmider T., Tocička J., *Wyzwania i zagrożenia w działalności funkcjonariuszy publicznych w zakresie bezpieczeństwa publicznego w Polsce. Wybrane aspekty*, Warszawa 2023, pp. 7-8.

At the same time, it should be emphasised that a citizen may have a different opinion regarding the level of public security than the institutions or services responsible for this area.

While the literature on the subject includes studies on how individuals rate public security in their local communities, no research has been conducted to learn the opinions of staff of institutions involved in public security management, especially the Prison Service. For this reason, it is the purpose of this paper to present the views of Prison Service officers as regards the satisfaction of public security needs in the local communities in which they operate. At the same time, it should be emphasised that this paper defines a local community as a collective living in a separate, relatively small territory, such as a parish, a village or a housing estate, featuring strong bonds on account of shared interests and needs as well as a sense of being anchored in and belonging to a specific place of residence². The article comprises explorations of both theoretical and empirical nature. The part devoted to theory puts forward certain concepts which are of key importance from the point of view of the object hereof, such as public security management and public security, and described the role of Prison Service officers in managing security. Meanwhile, the empirical part covers the methodology of the pilot study and the results thereof. The paper concludes with a summary of findings, limitations of the study and recommendations. The article forms a part of the stream of research for exploring security, reflecting the inherent multidimensional and interdisciplinary nature of the topic, that is being developed nowadays.

The essence and significance of public security management – the theoretical dimension

One of the fundamental objectives of the State is to guarantee the security of its citizens and, consequently, to manage this area in an effective manner. Efficient management translates into stability of the State as well as social well-being and creates opportunities for development *sensu*

² Rozwadowski M., *Bezpieczeństwo społeczności lokalnych oraz działania zmierzające do jego poprawy*, *Kultura bezpieczeństwa* „Nauka. Praktyka. Refleksje” 2014, no. 15, p. 247.

largo. Simultaneously, the contemporary trends in perceiving public security appreciate with growing intensity the role of the individual and the citizen as the main subjects of this security³. Ensuring personal security, access to education, health care or public services of any kind can therefore be regarded as key measures in the management of public security of an individual, through which the effectiveness of these measures can be measured, e.g., at the local community level. For this very reason, it is crucial to first clarify what is meant by public security. Among the many definitions, also in the field of management, noteworthy is the definition where public security is defined as ‘a state in which the general public and its interests, as well as the State with its objectives, are protected from harm threatening them from any source (...) it is a state of absence of danger to the operation of a State organisation and to the realisation of its interests, facilitating the normal, free development thereof’⁴. Public security is ‘the totality of conditions and institutions protecting citizens and national property, the constitutional system and sovereignty of the State from any phenomena posing danger to the legal order’⁵. In this sense, public security is an expression of the absence of any threat in the life of the community. It is the absence of dangers from disasters, natural catastrophes, epidemics and, finally, the absence of dangers caused by criminal human behaviour targeting the life and health of others. As emphasised by Bernard Wiśniewski, it is a certain positive and desirable condition within the State that guarantees its existence and proper development⁶. It is made possible thanks to the public peace being protected by criminal law measures, also at the level of a local community which undertakes measures directed at activities towards personal care by preserving the inviolability of life, health, dignity, freedom, property, legal order and the fundamental instruments at the disposal of the State. This issue is of particular importance especially nowadays as the security environment can hardly be called stable and certain⁷.

³ Paździor M., *Public Security Management in the Social Policy Domain*, Teka of Political Science and International Relations – UMCS, 2020, 15/2, 25-37, DOI: 10.17951/teka.2020.15.2.25-37., pp. 26-27.

⁴ Misiuk A., *Instytucjonalny system bezpieczeństwa wewnętrznego*, Difin, Warszawa 2013, pp. 14-18.

⁵ <https://encyklopedia.pwn.pl/haslo/bezpieczenstwo-publiczne;3876790.html> (accessed on: 01.07.2023 r.).

⁶ Wiśniewski B., Zalewski S., *Bezpieczeństwo wewnętrzne RP w ujęciu systemowym i zadań administracji publicznej*, Bielsko-Biała 2006, p. 32.

⁷ Sudul R., *The Penitentiary System in Ensuring Security in Poland*, “Studia i Analizy Nauk o Polityce” 2022, no. 2.

Recent events such as the pandemic, the war in Ukraine, economic turbulence, uncertainty in the labour market and widespread public protests all serve to underline the key importance of managing public security. For this reason, one should strive to understand the nature and importance of this phenomenon especially at the lowest level of local communities. It should be emphasised that, as regards the perception of social needs, public security forms a part of public management, which in turn is a multifaceted activity covering all spheres of human life, education, health, environment and, above all, safety⁸. The management of public security can be defined as ‘an organised activity performed with the use of human, financial, technical and informational resources in order to limit potential threats, ensure the undisturbed course of social life, and protect the health and life of individuals, property and the environment. It encompasses the observance of the law and the protection of public order with a focus on furthering the public interest’⁹. It follows that the goal of public security management is identifying threats (potential or actual), carrying out anticipatory measures so as to prevent such threats from occurring, and, where a threat has occurred, to control it, mitigate its consequences and draw conclusions with the purpose of improving the quality of life within the community¹⁰.

Recapitulating these findings for the purposes of further inquiries in this paper, it is assumed that public security is a specific, positive condition within the State, facilitating its normal operation and guaranteeing the proper development of an individual or the totality of citizens; it is a safeguard against criminal attacks against life, health and property, a state of affairs in the State in which planned and deliberate preventive measures help stop excessive development of crime, while, where criminal acts have occurred, the authorised bodies are empowered to identify and punish perpetrators within a reasonable time frame and provide specific forms of assistance and redress to victims. At the same time, based on the assumptions adopted within sciences on security, management and

⁸ Kożuch B., *Zarządzanie publiczne w teorii i praktyce polskich organizacji*. Placet, Warszawa 2004, p. 60; Frączkiewicz-Wronka A., *Poszukiwanie istoty zarządzania publicznego*, [in:] Frączkiewicz-Wronka A. (ed.), *Zarządzanie publiczne – elementy teorii i praktyki*. Katowice 2009, p. 24.

⁹ Sienkiewicz-Małyjurek K., *Rola samorządów lokalnych w kształtowaniu bezpieczeństwa publicznego*, „Samorząd Terytorialny” 2010, no. 7-8, p. 127.

¹⁰ Kotowska M.E., *Implementacja metod i narzędzi zarządzania menadżerskiego w sektorze publicznym*, [in:] Harasim W. (ed.), *Zarządzanie wartościami niematerialnymi w erze gospodarki rynkowej*, Wyższa Szkoła Promocji, Mediów i Show Businessu, Warszawa 2015, p. 3.

quality, it was assumed that the tasks of the Prison Service are not limited to measures implemented within penitentiary units, but extend to the fulfilment of security needs of residents of local communities, which at the same time constitutes an important factor in creating a positive image of these services¹¹. In turn, multifaceted actions undertaken by many units, according to occurring threats and the needs of local communities, were deemed to constitute the essence of managing public security for the purposes of this paper.

Since for the most part the management of public security is attributed to the State apparatus and its authorities, including the Prison Service, it is necessary to describe the specific nature and role of this service from a public security management perspective.

Prison Service in managing public security

According to the Prison Service Act of 9 April 2010¹², the fundamental duty of officers and employees of the Prison Service in the area of public security comprises ‘the protection of the society from perpetrators of offences or fiscal offences detained in penal institutions and detention centres’¹³, and ‘ensuring order and security in penal institutions and detention centres’¹⁴. Ensuring the absence of danger from criminals is made possible by isolating detainees and separating them from the outside environment, while guaranteeing fundamental human rights. The role of the Prison Service in the area of public security boils down to the performance of protective measures¹⁵, by assigning tasks, imposing duties and granting rights to specific officers, while respecting the principles of professional ethics¹⁶.

¹¹ Piotrowski A., *Wizerunek medialny Służby Więziennej*, „Przegląd Więziennictwa Polskiego” 2010, no. 67/68.

¹² The Journal of Laws of 2022, item 2470, of 2023, item 240, 347, 641, 1053.

¹³ *Ibidem*, Article 2(2)(5).

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, Article 2(2)(6).

¹⁵ Protective measures – measures aimed at counteracting threats to security of an organisational unit, inmates or convoys, or at eliminating the effects of these threats, in particular through the use or application of means of direct coercion, sounding the alarm, establishing headquarters, organising a pursuit, using strike, retreat, transport, fire-fighting and medical groups as well as and enhancing the method of protection. The Order no. 2/2023 of the Director General of the Prison Service of 09 January 2023 on the method of protection of organisational units of the Prison Service, the methods of protection and escorting convicts and the temporarily detained as well as on protection-related duties of the Prison Service officers and staff and employees of prison industrial workshops, § 2(9).

¹⁶ More broadly: The Regulation no. 1/2010 of the Director General of the Prison Service of 18 October 2010 on the rules of professional ethics of the Prison Service officers and staff, § 1.

Ensuring that citizens feel secure is one of the basic tasks of a democratic government. Without a basic level of security and public order, people are unable to 'live freely'. Since the challenges for managing public security change over time, societies need to rethink how these tasks should be implemented. The Prison Service is one of the leading institutions through whose activities the State strives to ensure the security of its citizens. How safe citizens feel is partly a function of how much they trust the institutions that exist to protect them. This underlines how important it is for the Prison Service to treat people fairly and to be respectful when responding to any calls for help from anywhere and for it to be active in engaging with the public. When beginning our considerations on the development of needs as regards public security management in local communities in the opinion of Prison Service officers, it is necessary to explain the specificity of this – strongly and permanently isolated as it is – institution as well as the rules prevailing therein, and to show what working in this specific environment entails. For many people, one's profession constitutes one of the most important factors in life. By spending a significant portion of our time at work, we are exposed to various factors associated with it; both positive and negative. In addition to physical, biological or chemical factors, employees (officers) very often have to deal with the psychological impact of the external and internal environment. The most common risks and adverse phenomena at the workplace or on duty include, for instance, assigning tasks at work, imposing too many duties and the associated time limit pressure, a limited and constant working framework (both as regards time consumed and tasks performed), supervision over the work performed, often a very specific work environment (resources – people and means – equipment), the culture and functions in the organisation, interpersonal relations at work, the role within the organisation, career development, the work-home relationship. All the factors referred to above have a decisive impact on how an individual (an officer) functions in the working environment (penitentiary unit). It should be emphasised that penitentiary units are closed, isolated structures, strongly hierarchical both for the detainees themselves and the Prison Service guards. The aspect of being cut off from society and the formalised way of life affects both groups at different time frames. Functioning in this framework requires full commitment and dedication which are necessary if one is to live in a slightly different world and in a specific environment. Prison Service officers are subject to similar constraints as detainees – they need to be perfectly organised, to operate in

an efficient manner, and to carry out the tasks that were ascribed to them. Although officers are not forcibly conscripted into the unit, they are, like detainees, confined. The long period of social isolation makes them exposed to the factors that are inherent to total institutions¹⁷. Also important are the characteristics of the Prison Service, building a positive image of penitentiary services and units in the local community. It is the mission of the Prison Service, which it performs through an officer motivated to serve and fulfil the designated role, to – on the one hand – protect society and, on the other hand, to provide assistance to detainees who are ready to change their lives in the future.

Penitentiary units employ individuals of different ages, genders and levels of education and who have graduated from various disciplines, which makes them feel and react to stimuli in specific ways. These factors also translate into differing perceptions of certain feelings, needs and aspirations, not only in the work environment, but also outside the prison walls in their own local communities.

Research methodology and specification of the research sample

This paper pertains to public security management needs in a local community. It is its objective to present the views of Prison Service officers regarding the fulfilment of public security needs in their own local communities. Undertaking research in this problem area is justified by there being a gap in the literature as regards the role and involvement of the Prison Service in the management of public security in local communities. It is also worth noting that with the changing approach to public security management primarily due to Covid-19, the war in Ukraine and the influx of immigrants, this topic deserves even greater attention.

The paper poses the following research question:

- To what extent are, in the opinion of Prison Service officers, public security needs met in their local communities?

¹⁷ More broadly: Goffman E., *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates*, Doubleday & Company, Garden City, N.Y., 1961.

- Are demographical data, in the opinion of Prison Service officers, of material importance for the perception of public security?

In order to answer the research questions posed in this paper, the empirical data quantitative analysis method was applied – with the assistance of the PS IMAGO PRO 8.0 software. The response variants in the research questionnaire were evaluated based on a 5-point scale, with ‘1’ meaning the lowest rating given by the respondent and with ‘5’ constituting the highest rating. Descriptive statistics analysis (mainly the arithmetic mean of the respondents’ ratings) was used. The survey was conducted between October and December 2022.

The survey covered Prison Service officers. The empirical study was carried out by means of a survey questionnaire on a targeted sample of respondents who were officers. The specification of the respondents can be found in Table 1.

Considering the survey did not meet the criterion of a minimum representative sample size (N=203), inference on the population at large was substantially limited. However, it must be borne in mind that this is an empirical pilot study aimed not at providing proof for universal assertions, but at analysing general ratings given by the respondents regarding the importance of specific public security needs in their own local communities. For this reason, putting forward general recommendations regarding the topic at hand is possible.

Table 1. Basic characteristics of respondents qualified for inclusion in the research sample (N=203)

Details	Number of respondents
Sex	
Women	61
Men	142
Education	
Primary	19
Secondary	46
Vocational	3
Tertiary	134

Source: Own study

Results of empirical studies

The first of the research questions under consideration concerned various aspects of fulfilling public security needs in local communities. The study took account of sixteen different variables (Table 1), which were rated on a 5-point scale (where a value of 1 means ‘to a very low degree’ and a value of 5 means ‘to a very high degree’). The highest rated aspects are: access to a commercial and service network satisfying essential subsistence needs (mean score of 3.96), ensuring public security (mean score of 3.88) and ensuring personal security in the public space (3.87). In contrast, access to firearms (2.72) and provision of military security (2.77) received the lowest scores.

The distribution of replies given by the respondents as regards the fulfilment of public security needs in local communities is presented in Chart 1. The chart shows that the highest percentage of responses with a value of 5 – ‘to a very high degree’ and a value of 4 ‘to a high degree’ concerns the following claims: ensuring public security, ensuring personal security in the public space, access to educational and training institutions and access to a commercial and service network satisfying essential subsistence needs. In contrast, the biggest share of responses where rates of 1 – ‘to a very low degree’ and 2 – ‘to a low degree’ were given relates to access to firearms and ensuring military security.

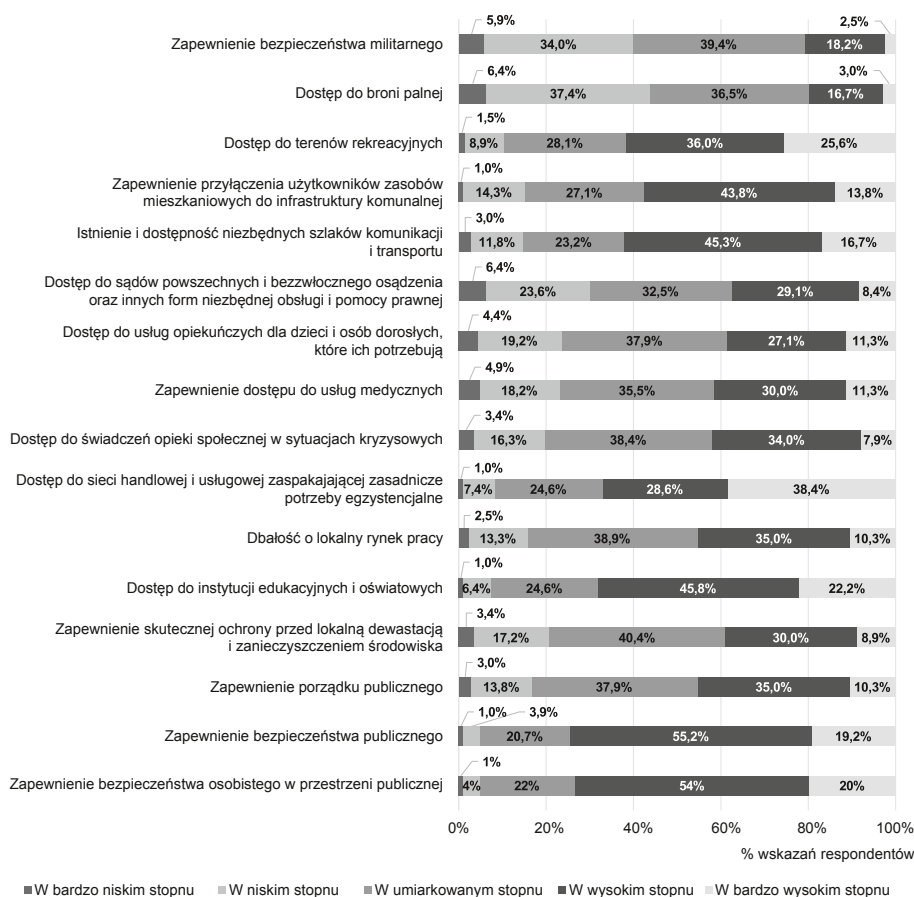
In turn, the second research question concerned the potential differences in how the provision of local community security needs were rated; in this respect, two criteria (i.e., grouping variables) were selected, i.e., sex (female, male) and education (primary, secondary, vocational, tertiary). In reference to the sex criterion, the Mann-Whitney U test for independent samples was used. The test pointed to a significant statistical difference among the respondents in rating such areas of guaranteeing local community security needs as ensuring personal security in the public space, ensuring public security, ensuring public order, and ensuring effective protection against local devastation and environmental pollution (Table 2). In the case of other areas, the ratings given by the respondents did not show any great statistical discrepancy.

Table 2. Basic descriptive statistics for respondents' responses (ratings) for areas regarding the fulfilment of public security needs of a local community (N=203)

Areas regarding the fulfilment of public security needs of the local community	Average	Median	Dominant	Standard deviation	Variance	Skewness	Kurtosis	Spread	Minimum	Maximum
Ensuring personal security in the public space	3.87	4.00	4	0.804	0.647	-0.686	-0.910	4	1	5
Ensuring public security	3.88	4.00	4	0.796	0.633	-0.728	1.065	4	1	5
Ensuring public order	3.36	3.00	3	0.946	0.895	-0.245	-0.198	4	1	5
Ensuring effective protection against local devastation and environmental pollution	3.24	3.00	3	0.956	0.914	-0.113	-0.286	4	1	5
Access to educational and training institutions	3.82	4.00	4	0.885	0.783	-0.542	0.099	4	1	5
Caring for the local labour market	3.37	3.00	3	0.927	0.859	-0.211	-0.182	4	1	5
Access to a commercial and services network satisfying essential subsistence needs	3.96	4.00	5	1.009	1.018	-0.592	-0.542	4	1	5
Access to social care services in emergency situations	3.27	3.00	3	0.943	0.889	-0.234	-0.244	4	1	5
Ensuring access to medical services	3.25	3.00	3	1.038	1.078	-0.160	-0.492	4	1	5
Access to care services for children and adults in need	3.22	3.00	3	1.026	1.052	-0.057	-0.481	4	1	5
Access to common courts and expedited adjudication as well as to other forms of requisite legal services and assistance	3.09	3.00	3	1.056	1.115	-0.087	-0.654	4	1	5
Existence and availability of necessary communication and transport routes	3.61	4.00	4	0.996	0.991	-0.614	-0.058	4	1	5
Ensuring that housing stock users are connected to the municipal infrastructure	3.55	4.00	4	0.934	0.872	-0.354	-0.466	4	1	5
Access to recreational areas	3.75	4.00	4	0.984	0.969	-0.432	-0.399	4	1	5
Access to firearms	2.72	3.00	2	0.919	0.844	0.306	-0.275	4	1	5
Ensuring military security	2.77	3.00	3	0.900	0.810	0.175	-0.321	4	1	5

Source: own study.

Chart 1. Distribution of respondents' responses (ratings) for areas regarding the fulfilment of the local community security needs (N=203)



Source: own study

As regards the education criterion, the Kruskal-Wallis test for independent samples was used, which indicated that the respondents significantly differ statistically from one another in how they rate such areas of provision of local community security needs as ensuring public order, access to social care services in emergency situations, ensuring access to medical services, and access to firearms (Table 4). In the case of other areas, the ratings given by the respondents did not show any great statistical discrepancy.

Table 3. Summary of the hypothesis test for the grouping variable ‘sex’ – the Mann-Whitney U test for independent samples

Item	Null hypothesis	Test	Relevance a, b	Decision
1.	The distribution of Ensuring personal security in the public space is the same for the Sex category.	The Mann-Whitney U test for independent samples	0.005	Reject the null hypothesis.
2.	The distribution of Ensuring public security is the same for the Sex category.	The Mann-Whitney U test for independent samples	0.012	Reject the null hypothesis.
3.	The distribution of Ensuring public order is the same for the Sex category.	The Mann-Whitney U test for independent samples	0.031	Reject the null hypothesis.
4.	The distribution of Ensuring effective protection against local devastation and environmental pollution is the same for the Sex category.	The Mann-Whitney U test for independent samples	0.006	Reject the null hypothesis.

a. The relevance level is 0.050. b. Asymptotic relevance is presented.

Source: own study

Table 4. Summary of the hypothesis test for the grouping variable ‘education’ – the Kruskal-Wallis test for independent samples

Item	Null hypothesis	Test	Relevance a, b	Decision
1.	The distribution of Ensuring public order is the same for the Education category.	The Kruskal-Wallis test for independent samples	0.046	Reject the null hypothesis.
2.	The distribution of Access to social care services in emergency situations is the same for the Education category.	The Kruskal-Wallis test for independent samples	0.028	Reject the null hypothesis.
3.	The distribution of Ensuring access to medical services is the same for the Education category.	The Kruskal-Wallis test for independent samples	0.001	Reject the null hypothesis.
4.	The distribution of Access to firearms jest is the same for the Education category.	The Kruskal-Wallis test for independent samples	0.001	Reject the null hypothesis.

a. The relevance level is 0.050. b. Asymptotic relevance is presented.

Source: own study

Findings

The literature on the subject indicates that public security is largely perceived through the lens of the security of an individual, i.e., personal security, which, due to the operation of environmental factors, is the basis for creating something larger, institutional and systemic.¹⁸ The challenge posed by ensuring public security, especially in a local community, has changed over the last twenty years and will certainly continue to evolve¹⁹. An example of this shift can be found in the document drafted by ‘scholars and leaders’, regarding police reform in the United States, which re-evaluated the approach to public security from a ‘hard’ approach focusing on:

- deterrence, harsh legal repression, promoting obedience through fear,
- reduction of crime, rules that promote a strategy to decrease crime by increasing pro-social investments to prevent crime,
- reducing harm done to law enforcement institutions by reducing the number of people who go to prison, in favour of a ‘soft’ approach characterised by:
- encouraging voluntary adherence to the law by promoting trust rather than compliance for fear of punishment,
- public safety and crime prevention requiring a focus on institutions outside the current traditional punishment paradigm,
- focus on social support, for instance in education, health and housing²⁰.

Over the last few years, changes can also be seen as regards the Prison Service, where the human being (officer), with his/her competences and work quality framework, comes first²¹. Public satisfaction with the local Prison Service is relevant because it affects trust in the institution and in the tasks it performs in the area of managing public security, increases public support and makes communities more active in reporting any instances of security breaches in the local space. At the same time, it is

¹⁸ Without a doubt, it can be assumed that man is a social being and that his development, in addition to his inherent features, is largely determined by those traits which have been acquired (behavioural); the environment in which he functions has a profound impact for this very reason. See: Kośmider T., Kołtun L. (eds.), *Współczesny wymiar bezpieczeństwa publicznego. Kształtowanie bezpiecznych przestrzeni. Działania profilaktyczne*, Warszawa 2019, p. 7.

¹⁹ *Public Safety and Security in the 21st Century, The First Report of the Strategic Review of Policing in England and Wales*, 2020, p. 2.

²⁰ Goff P.A., Hinton E., Meares T.L., Nobo Sarnoff C., Tyler T.R., *Re-imagining Public Safety. Prevent Harm and Lead with the Truth*, 2019.

²¹ *Competency and Qualities Framework, HM Prison Service, Enjoy Involve Communicate Recognise Empower Enable Support*.

important how officers themselves feel about the security needs in their local communities, particularly because self-awareness in this respect has a significant impact on pro-efficiency approach to public security management not only in the officers themselves, but also in other members of the communities in which they operate. The results of empirical research show that, as regards public safety in their own local communities, officers feel that such needs as 'personal and structural security in public spaces', 'access to educational and training institutions' and 'access to a commercial and service network satisfying essential subsistence needs' are satisfied to the greatest extent. In contrast, the lowest degree of satisfaction of public safety needs was reported in 'access to firearms' and 'ensuring military security'.

It is also worth emphasising that there are differences in how public security needs are perceived by reference to sex and level of education, which may suggest the need to carry out changes in the internal education and in-service training systems of Prison Service officers in the context of levelling out differences between officers.

Recapitulating the results of the literature review and the pilot empirical study, the following general recommendations can be formulated:

1. Education is inextricably linked to public security management. For this reason, it is recommended that schools and educational institutions, especially those training Prison Service officers, become more active in developing prevention-oriented strategies and educational programmes and in promoting good practices in the field of public security. Partnerships should also be entered with other schools providing security-related education to uniformed services. At the same time, it is recommended to educate those convicted by Prison Service officers, which would not only raise the self-evaluation of officers but would also contribute to building a culture of safety among convicts and staff of penitentiary facilities. As shown by the research, such practices are one of the most important factors that protect against aggressive behaviour²². Furthermore, a review of literature devoted to security-related education found that 'participation in prison

²² Willman A. & Makisaka M., *Interpersonal Violence Prevention: A Review of the Evidence and Emerging Lessons*. World Bank, 2010. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/951901468161370036/Interpersonalviolence-prevention-a-review-of-the-evidence-and-emerging-lessons>

- education is associated with a more than 40% reduction in recidivism²³.
2. Efforts should be made to increase the level of security management in local communities by involving Prison Service officers, especially those most affected by public insecurity in their community, in initiatives aimed at designing and implementing crime prevention programmes and so to perceive the ‘community through the prism of assets’. This means that in addition to engaging the community, the government should value the wisdom, contributions and strengths of particular individuals²⁴. The voices of the community and the research conducted in this area show that a meaningful involvement of the community in determining public security strategies can help prevent crime and promote public security.
 3. It is necessary to organise public debates with the involvement of Prison Service officers on the topic of effective management of public security in the local community. Such debates to take various forms, from meetings in schools, offices, and parishes to associations and peer groups promoting activities in this field. An extremely important aspect in this regard is to carry out such educational measures in the youth community²⁵. Inducing younger members of the society to particular in security-related programmes organised by public authorities, including the Prison Service, will certainly lead to there being fewer threats in local communities.

Conclusions

The management of public security is fundamental to functioning and development of human beings, as it defines virtually every aspect of human activity. The *differentia specifica* of the concept of security is not only the preservation of continuity, often reduced to biological existence, but also the achievement of proper quality levels in personal and social

²³ Caruso G.D., *Public Health and Safety: The Social determinants of Health and Criminal Behavior*. ResearchGate, 2017. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/320456432_Public_Health_and_Safety_The_Social_Determinants_of_Health_and_Criminal_Behavior.

²⁴ Petesch P., *How Communities Manage Risks of Crime and Violence*. World Bank, 2013. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/16340?locale-attribute=en>

²⁵ *Prevention Institute, Community Safety: A Building Block for Healthy Communities*, 2015. <https://www.preventioninstitute.org/publications/community-safety-a-buildingblock-for-community-health>.

life. This is particularly important in the context of the threats associated with crime which has a substantial impact on the society at large²⁶.

The purpose of research presented in this paper was to learn the opinions of Prison Service officers about whether the sense of public security in their local communities is being satisfied. The results of the studies point to the areas of security where the security-related needs of the respondents are indeed fulfilled as well as those in which they feel that their expectations are not being met. Highest ratings were given to such areas as ensuring public security, ensuring personal security in the public space, access to educational and training institutions, and access to a commercial and service network satisfying essential subsistence needs. In contrast, the lowest level of satisfaction of public security needs was recorded in: access to firearms and ensuring military security, which may be due to the increased awareness of threats and safeguards against them in and outside the work environment. Based on the results, it can be inferred that there is a link between officers' personal security and public security in their own local community. This leads to the conclusion that the effective functioning of the public security management system also depends on the ability of Prison Guard officers to act, such officers to be considered as a specific element of this system.

The authors of this paper are well aware of the limitations of the conducted studies, especially considering the non-representative sample. However, given that this is a pilot study, it appears that the results obtained provide a sufficient basis for further empirical explorations on the topic of public security management, which the authors intend to pursue further.

²⁶ R. Suduła, *System penitencjarny w zapewnieniu bezpieczeństwa w Polsce*, „Studia i analizy nauk o polityce” 2022, no. 2, p. 131.

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