

edited by
Gorazd MEŠKO
Katja EMAN
Rok HACIN

Criminal Justice and Security in Central and Eastern Europe

New Risks, Crime, Policing, Courts, Prisons and Security in the
Post-COVID-19 Times – Challenges and Opportunities, Book of Abstract



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Criminal Justice and Security in Central and Eastern Europe

New Risks, Crime, Policing, Courts, Prisons and Security in the Post-COVID-19
Times – Challenges and Opportunities

Book of Abstracts

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Gorazd Meško

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Institutional Factors and Support in Prison Security Climate in Serbia

MILENA MILIĆEVIĆ

Institute of Criminological and Sociological Research, Belgrade, Serbia
milenaadresa@gmail.com

This study, part of the PrisonLIFE research project (Science Fund of the Republic of Serbia, No. 7750249), explored how institutional factors and perceived support predict security-related indicators of the Measuring the Quality of Prison Life (MQPL) framework among 525 male prisoners in Serbia. Participants, with a mean age of 40 years ($SD=10.18$), were serving sentences averaging 16 years and 10 months. A series of standard multiple regression analyses was conducted with prison regime (closed/semi-open), extended daytime cell lockdown, number of disciplinary measures, and perceived support from treatment staff, security staff, and prisoners as predictors of five MQPL-based security-related outcomes. Prison regime ($\beta=.21-.27$) and support from security staff ($\beta=.18-.27$) consistently predicted all MQPL security-related outcomes, with ranges reflecting results across five regression models. Semi-open regimes and greater perceived support from security staff were associated with more favourable perceptions of adaptation, safety, and institutional order. Extended cell confinement negatively impacted adaptation ($\beta=-.21$) and safety ($\beta=-.21$). Support from prisoners ($\beta=.13-.15$ across models) and treatment staff ($\beta=.10-.11$ across models) contributed positively to several models. Findings highlight how institutional setting and support shape prisoners' perception of prison climate, offering unique insights from a Southeast European context.

Keywords: prison climate, security, MQPL framework, Serbia, perceived support