

Women in prison in Slovenia: Ig prison through time

This chapter serves as an overview of women in prison in Slovenia through the last 80 years. The Ig Prison (IP) is one of the offices of the Prison Administration of the Republic of Slovenia, a body within the Ministry of Justice; it is a prison for convicted adult women, regardless of the length of imprisonment. The prison's capacity is 103 persons and is housed in an over 500-year-old mansion at Ig. From 1956, when women from the Brestanica correctional facility were transferred to Ig, it served to enforce criminal sanctions for women (Glavica & Erpič, 2019). The specifics of Slovenian prisons for women will be delineated. Through its history, the potential reasons for lower rates will be examined, emphasising the socio-therapeutic orientation and its influence on the measured social climate.

Keywords: Ig prison, women in prison, Slovenia, socio-therapeutic orientation, social climate in prison

Introduction

Slovenia's imprisonment rates are rising but still relatively low compared to the neighbouring countries. The fourteenth edition of the World Prison Population List, using data about prison population from around the world at the beginning of April 2024 reports that almost 11 million people worldwide are incarcerated, whether as pre-trial detainees or prisoners; if the numbers for few missing countries are added, numbers vastly exceed 11.5 million; the authors (Fair & Walmsley, 2024: 2) estimate the global prison population rate to be around 140 per 100.000, and just under half of all countries/ territories (49 %) have rates below 150 per 100.000. Even though they report the rates for each continent, they emphasise that the difference between regions can be expansive; the median rate for Western European countries is 73, they report, whilst in the region of Europe on the cusp of Asia, the rate is several times higher, 267 per 100.000 (Fair & Walmsley, 2024: 3).

Slovenia, with its reported rate of 85 per 100.000, is well below the rates of the rest of Southern, Central and Eastern European countries and slightly above some Nordic states. However, as the report demonstrates, the numbers have risen from the rate of 58 in 2000, 64 in 2010 to 68 in 2015, and now the most significant leap in the last nine years to the rate of 85 (Fair & Walmsley, 2024, pp. 11-14). Correspondingly, the fifth edition of the World Female Imprisonment List (Fair & Walmsley, 2022: 2) estimates that the assessment of 740.000 incarcerated women and girls imprisoned globally is also below the actual number, the majority being imprisoned in the USA (rate of 64 per 100.000). The number of women in prisons has increased by 60 % from the turn of the century, almost three times the rate of the male prison population (22 %). Now, they are 6.9 % of the global prison population; the percentage is lower in Europe – 5.9 %. Rates per 100.000 inhabitants are around 2-4 in Nordic countries and only a little higher in Southern Europe; Slovenia is among the countries with the lowest rate of 2.7, which – contrary to the general rates of the prison population, which have seen a sharp rise - had dropped significantly from 2015 when it was

3.9¹ (Fair & Walmsley, 2022: 9-12). This chapter will delineate the specifics of Slovenian prisons for women and, through its history, show the potential reasons for lower rates.

The era of first studies: 50s and early 60s

Planned penological research in Slovenia began after the establishment of the Institute of Criminology at the Faculty of Law in Ljubljana (Institute) in 1954. It was carried out by psychologists, psychiatry specialists, and social work experts. Shortly after the Second World War, the Ig castle, where the Ig Prison (IP) has been situated for the last 67 years, was taken from the previous owners, Josip and Antonia Palma (Piškurić, 2020, p. 258), together with a large piece of land surrounding the castle. After some construction work on the building, the first (male) prisoners² Began working on the land in 1947. In November of that year, they established an electro-metal company (Piškurić, 2020: 261); in one year, 249 convicts were working in this company, whilst 13 were working on the land around the castle; shortly after, the company downsized and opted out, and agriculture remained the only source of income for the imprisoned. In 1953, however, many new sources were mentioned, including shoe making, tailoring, knitting and sewing, carpentry, metalwork, bookbinding, and barbershop. In November 1954, 513 prisoners from other correctional facilities were assigned to Ig; 266 were staying at the location of the castle, and 247 were working outside on worksites (Glavica & Erpič, 2019). In that year, electric and water pipe installation was executed in the cells; flushing toilets were also incorporated in each room with the prisoners (Piškurić, 2020, p. 266). In 1956, female prisoners from the abolished KPD Brestanica correctional facility were placed in the newly formed IP (Glavica & Erpič, 2019). The reasons were twofold: the building at KPD Brestanica was impossible to renovate, and the building at Ig did not permit large-scale industrial work intended for the male prisoners. This is why a modern prison was constructed for men (now Dob prison), and women were transferred to Ig (Piškurić, 2020, p. 269). At the end of 1957, the then administration of the prison had the duty to organise an open ward for women. Ada Klanjšek participated in the selection of prisoners for this ward and the arrangement of the premises. Her work provides an interesting insight into the treatment of female prisoners at the time (Klanjšek, 1959).

In the period after World War II, when there were efforts to humanise penal systems, the tendency to successfully resocialise convicts also came to the fore. The effort went toward "making" prisoners useful for society. Klanjšek's diploma thesis "Selection of Female Prisoners for the Open Penitentiary Correctional Facility at Ig" (1959) mentions that the issue of open prisons was discussed at the first UN Congress in 1955 in connection with the

¹ Caution must be given when reporting these rates since Fair & Walmsley reported the statistics on 31.1.2021, amid the COVID-19 epidemic, when the numbers were lower. More about it further in the chapter.

² I am using the term 'prisoner' to represent incarcerated status, even though in latest research, much contemplation is given to the stigma surrounding the word; researchers are more and more utilising words like "residents"; however, when talking about the past, nothing about the experience could be assessed as being the resident of a prison; also, this harsh word is used by the women themselves in interviews, conducted by Tomažinčič (2023) and Tadič (2018).

topic of crime prevention. The women's open prison (ward), established at IP, was based on the starting points adopted at the UN Congress mentioned above (Klanjšek, 1959: 5).

The execution of sentences in such an open prison, according to Klajnšek, avoids all coercive measures for re-education. Life is based on self-discipline and responsibility towards the home community, removing all material and physical barriers to escaping (Klanjšek, 1959: 7). Thus, selecting female convicts was essential and determining factors that influenced this selection was also deemed crucial.

According to Klajnšek, an open prison is a more humane form of prison³, but the convict must make more efforts to adapt and return to society as a useful citizen. Klajnšek emphasised the importance of staff in the prison in assuring a humane treatment of incarcerated persons and their resocialisation. For the re-educational work to be effective, the institution must get appropriate professional staff as soon as possible, Klajnšek states, and this staff should work permanently and systematically, transferring their knowledge to the existing staff. She believes that there should be a full-time social worker in the institution, which could positively affect the selection of imprisoned persons for the open ward and the mental balance of the imprisoned (Klanjšek, 1959: 6).

These starting points seem important and progressive - much attention was paid to the personality traits of the imprisoned. Detailed knowledge of incarcerated women was the key to their successful resocialisation. Based on personal interviews, it was established that in most cases, the imprisoned women were already characterised by poor social conditions, a negative social environment and disordered family conditions and emotional impairment in their childhood (Klanjšek, 1959: 34).

During this period (in 1957), the selected women were transferred to a building separated from the closed part of the IP. The house rules were such that imprisoned women spent their free time in an open ward, they worked in the workshops (that were in the closed ward of the IP), and they also had meals there, but they were separated from other female convicts when eating. They could move into the immediate vicinity of their home, they were allowed unlimited correspondence with their relatives, they had unsupervised visits once a week, and any offence meant a return to the closed ward of the IP. The response of female convicts to the transfer was positive (Klanjšek, 1959).

Shortly after this important work by Klajnšek, the Institute published another study, which could be translated as "Grouping of convicts" (Vodopivec, Čerin and Skalar, 1963). Its purpose was to determine the prison/ ward types necessary in Slovenia in relation to the population of imprisoned persons and how they should be distributed. By their account, in the early 60ies, Slovenia needed at least six different types of prisons for men (first-time convicts, partial recidivists, recidivists, younger adults, sick ward, ward for old and convicts with mental health problems) and a prison for women, which would have four sections/ wings, i.e. an open ward; semi-open ward; a general ward (that would entail a wing for ill

³ The author (Klanjšek, 1959: 7) determines four advantages: it is better for social readjustment of the convicts; less stressful, which improves discipline; closer to everyday life, which in extension means stronger bonds with outside; lastly, it is cheaper to conduct this type of penitentiary.

convicts and a wing for pregnant women) and a ward for recidivists (Vodopivec, Čerin and Skalar, 1963: 42).

Interestingly, the researchers (Vodopivec, Čerin and Skalar, 1963: 42) said that the women's prison should be close to the city centre so that women from the open and semi-open prison system can commute into the city. They also suggest that a ward for female convicts with mental health problems should be merged with a ward for male convicts with mental health problems and that this institution also belongs in the city centre (Vodopivec, Čerin and Skalar, 1963: 44). The research estimates that more than a third (38 %) of imprisoned men could serve their sentence in a semi-open or open prison, while the assessed percentage of female convicts is slightly lower - 32%. They emphasise that modern buildings (prisons) are essential, but the atmosphere in which they will live is even more critical for imprisoned men and women. This depends mainly on the personnel who will be employed in the prison. Therefore, even greater care than constructing prisons must be devoted to selecting and training personnel (Vodopivec, Čerin and Skalar, 1963: 57-58). In 1968, the matter of prisons was transferred from (the Ministry of) Internal Affairs to the field of justice. As a result, new research fields were created, especially those focused on researching work with the imprisoned. In 1973, the first Law on the Enforcement of Criminal Sanctions (*Zakon o izvrševanju kazenskih sankcij*) was adopted, which marked a departure from Yugoslav penology, with the transfer of the authority to enforce criminal sanctions in the former Yugoslavia from the federal to the republic level.

Towards less oppression

In 1967, the Institute initiated an experiment that represented a milestone in the development of Slovenian penology. A less repressive, more humane and, in the long run, more effective approach came to the forefront of interest. The main idea, simply put, was that group counselling can overcome differences and bring theory closer to practice (Petrovec, 1999). The idea of an experiment was born to prove that it is possible to work more permissively with delinquent youth, and as a result, no one would be at risk (Petrovec, 2018).

In the Logatec educational institution, the experiment lasted four and a half years, and they wanted to prove that successful work with delinquent youth is possible with work methods based on humanistic psychology, and such work is less repressive and more relaxed. More permissive work, open communication, and less punishment were put in the foreground. As a result, this meant improving the well-being of inmates and staff, with the price of a few more escapes and a payoff of less crime (Petrovec, 1999).

The Republic Secretariat for Justice –Ministry of Justice in 1975 - wanted to apply the proven practice similarly in other prisons to alleviate the unfavourable conditions that prevailed. The IP was chosen to test the permissive treatment.⁴ Work in prison was

⁴ Although one could conclude that a women's prison was chosen to make achieving goals for the female population easier, Petrovec (2001: 123) believes that working with women in particular conditions, such as those in prison, is more demanding than the same work with men. He goes on to explain that such a hypothesis challenges several objections and cannot be proven but could be confirmed by the participants in

organised in such a way that all important matters, including the regime and benefits, were discussed at joint meetings of imprisoned women and employees. Although the leadership retained formal power, such a method established a kind of "convict self-government". A significant achievement was that after two years of work, most convicts could live in an open regime, they could spend every weekend outside the prison, and abuse of this benefit was very rare. In the following fifteen years, no disciplinary punishment was imposed on the convicts (Petrovec, 1999).

Petrovec (2018) explains that the "Ig experiment" was never defined as an experiment, as the latter requires appropriate protocols. However, instead, it was a gradual introduction of different practices and principles of working with convicts without predetermined goals and hypotheses and verification of results.

The director of the IP, Dunja Košir, ran the IP from 1975 to 1991, and the institution became a reference institution for serving prison sentences on an international scale (Petrovec, 2001: 123).

The proportion of imprisoned women in the open ward was 90 percent, 20 percent were reoffenders (60 percent in other Slovenian prisons) (Petrovec, 2015). Such successful work with the imprisoned continued until 1991 when the management was changed, and the new practice was slowly introduced. In the following years, the successful practice, i.e. all the previous advantages of democratising the prison system, was lost, according to Petrovec (2001: 128).

At the beginning of the 1980s, the doctrine of "socio-therapeutic orientation" was verified in the (then) parliament (assembly). Its most essential directions and characteristics were as follows: institutions should have a maximum of 100 convicts, a horizontal flow of communications and a democratic management style, openness of the institution – that is, less emphasis on security elements, trust in the positive personality traits of the imprisoned persons, these should co-decide on all essential matters, be involved in group work and the external environment. With this kind of management, the prison would become a more "democratically" organised institution, with a high degree of "self-management" compared to the rest of the hierarchically structured state administration. Group work is supposed to help train both employees and convicts in constructive interpersonal communication, as conflicts are a common problem in prisons. Depending on specific cases, an individual approach should still be maintained Petrovec, 2001: 123).

Last 25 years; sporadic studies based on interviews

Besides measurements of social climate conducted in 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, 2000 (Brinc, 1995, 1997, 2000, 2001), 2005 (Brglez et al., 2006), 2010 (Brinc & Petrovec, 2011) and 2017 (Bokalič et al., 2017), only a few researchers conducted their studies in IP. Damijana Žist (2003) studied victimisation during prison sentences and concluded that women reported the presence of various forms of victimisation, but there were no programs available to respond to this (Žist, 2003). The same author published a book of interviews

the experiment. Women from all over Slovenia served their sentences at Ig; the length of the prison sentence varied, as did the crime itself.

with IP prisoners (Žist, 2008). Muršič (2005) determined the characteristics of the treatment of female drug users in the research "Women, drugs and prison" conducted by the Institute. The research took place at the end of 2004 in the IP. Interviews were conducted with five women who were serving sentences for drug-related crimes and whom themselves had the experience of being addicted to illegal drugs. In order to obtain a comprehensive picture of what was happening in IP, an interview was also conducted with an on-site psychologist who dealt with the problem of addiction. In his master's thesis, Ivačić (2016) addressed the discrepancy between prison and motherhood: how a prisoner can also be a mother in prison, how the time spent in prison affects children, what restrictions and losses women face and what strategies they use to maintain their maternal role in prison, and what strategies they use to manage both identities; being a mother and being in prison. She conducted interviews with eleven female prisoners at the IP⁵.

More recent is the collection of ten stories of women serving prison sentences at IP (Antić Gaber et al., 2017), which serves as a contemplation on crime, punishment and guilt, stigmatisation, the search for answers to the question of why and relationships within and outside the prison.

In her doctoral dissertation, Tadič (2018) investigates the gendered characteristics of imprisoned women and the execution of prison sentences for women in Slovenia. The author presents the reasons for the rapid increase in the number of imprisoned women in Slovenian prisons and draws attention to the peculiarities of the Slovenian prison system, which are specific to women's prisons. It draws on essential similarities between Slovenian and foreign prisons for women and highlights the multifaceted discrimination against women in the Slovenian prison system. As a primary finding of the research, it states that the Slovenian prison environment is also characterised by the peculiarities of imprisoned women (for example, compliance with prison rules, the structure of crimes, socioeconomic status, mental health, maternal role) and women's prisons (about with education, discriminatory practice of access to work).

Monography "Ženske in kriminaliteta: Značilnosti ženske kriminalitete in družbeno odzivanje nanjo" (eng.: "Women and criminality: Characteristics of female criminality and social response to it"), edited by Plesničar, Šelih and Filipčič (2018) the characteristics of female criminality, factors of female criminality and the specifics of the enforcement of criminal sanctions for women are discussed in three sections. The first part deals with views on female criminality (in our country and around the world). The second part covers the factors of female criminality and the treatment of social issues that can affect women's criminality. In the third section, which refers to the punishment of women, the emphasis is also on the enforcement of criminal sanctions.

⁵ According to the data available by the latest SPACE I report (Aebi, Cocco, & Molnar; 2023: 30), Slovenia is among countries that allow women to have children with them in prison for the shortest period – from 1 to 2 years of age (other countries with a short period are Turkey, Romania, Malta, UK – England and Wales). The majority of other countries allow children in prison until the age of 3 years. Unsurprisingly, researchers report only one child being with their mother in Slovenia in 2022.

The study of Tomažinčič (2022) amongst IP prisoners had a sample of sixteen prisoners (ages 26-67; sentences 1-11 years). Semi-structured interviews were conducted about detailed experiences of imprisonment. Women admitted to prison have different habits and self-images, and they describe various disturbing factors as a consequence of the rules of communal living. After a certain period, some of them adapt to prison life because they have no other option; some describe it as subjugation. They mostly want to avoid being sanctioned. Women find it disturbing that they are forced to live in one room with many people and, thus, feel deprived of privacy; all other facilities are shared. They lack appropriate facilities for visits, especially visits by their children (sleepovers are not possible). They describe relationships as very disturbing since verbal and physical conflict also presents a problem in the adjustment phase.

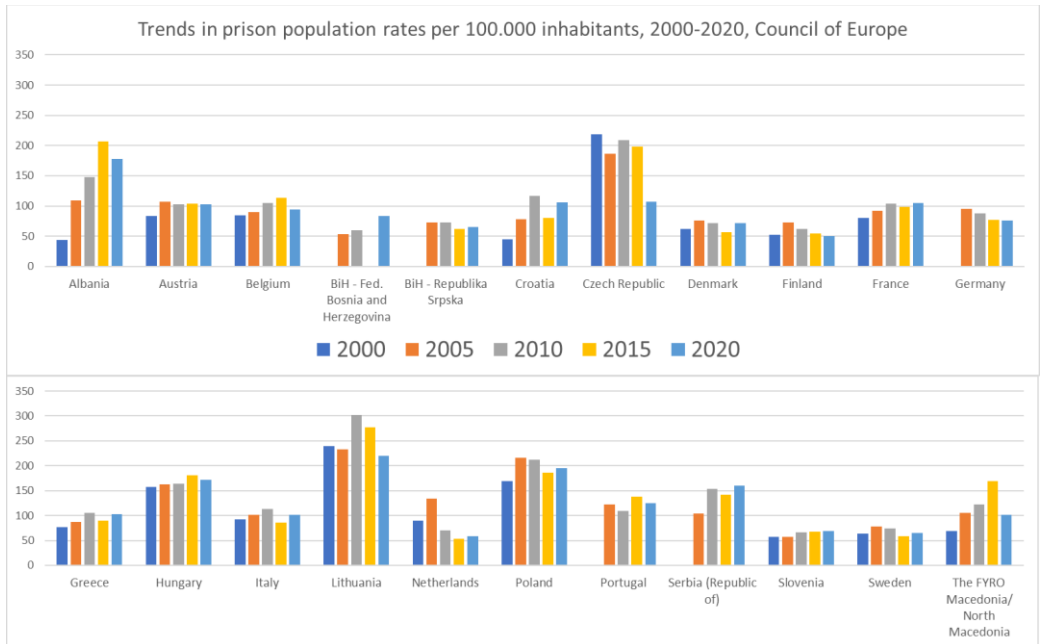
Nowadays, at IP, three prison regimens are put in place, which also impact security management (Glavica & Erpič, 2019). The open regimen features facilities outside the main prison building; life in the semi-open and closed regimens take place on separate floors, but it is intertwined to the extent that women of the semi-open regimen do not have access to certain benefits, such as mobile phones or the Internet. Supervision and observation are conducted using video surveillance and prison officers four times daily. Prison officers also monitor the surroundings of the prison. Most female prisoners are not bothered by such supervision as it makes them feel safe. Some are bothered by personal check-ups, which are conducted upon returning from their temporary release. They consider being asked to take their clothes off as degrading treatment. Some also feel that unannounced urine testing is degrading. Women point out they are being deprived of their adult status with the new dining hall procedure, which makes them feel like little children being escorted and monitored on their way to the meal and back. Such infantilisation procedures in prison involve disciplining and subjugation. Adjustment is also tricky due to inmates with mental disorders, who disturb the order and initiate verbal conflict. The most notable problem is women who are addicted to drugs, among whom are also those who have relapsed. Regarding adjustment, it means a lot to women that they can wear their clothes and style themselves however they want. They are not bothered by the uniforms worn by prison officers, or they are only bothered by them when the prison officers wear them while escorting them on a temporary release, especially if they are also handcuffed.

An insight into the state of convictions, number of people in the Ig prison, age groups

After delineating what the research outside social climate at IP in the last sixty years entailed, it would be beneficial to look at the available general statistics before we delve into social climate results.

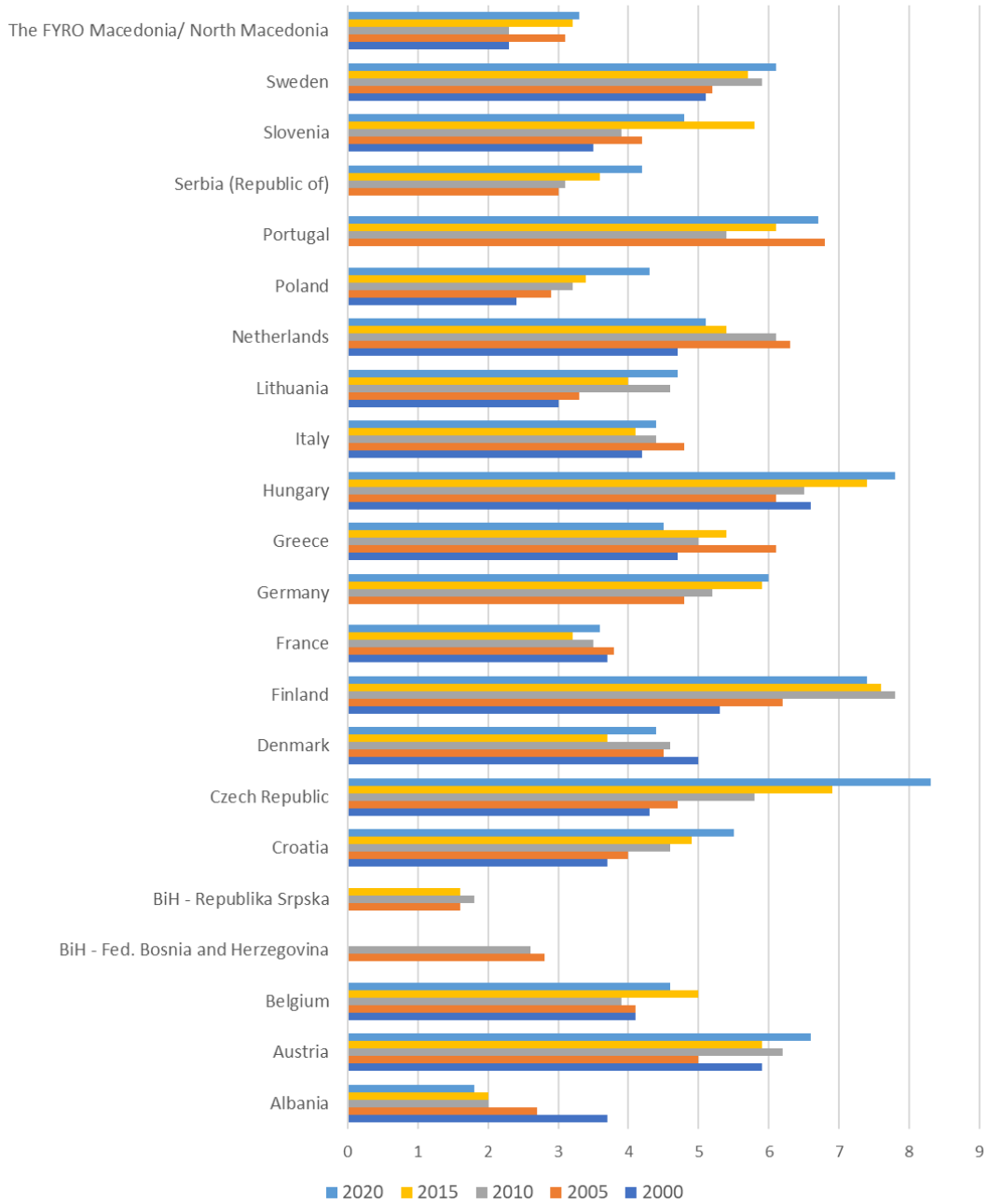
First, the overall prison population in European countries; data collected by the Council of Europe (Aebi & Stadnic, 2007; Aebi & Delgrande, 2012; Aebi, Tiago, & Burkhardt, 2016; Aebi, & Tiago, 2021; Tournier, 2001) are presented in Graph 1; according to prison population per 100.000 inhabitants, Slovenia can be grouped with countries as Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Netherlands in the last decade; slightly below Germany, Austria,

Belgium, Croatia, Serbia, Greece, Portugal, and Italy; and vastly below the numbers of countries like Albania, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Hungary and Poland (Graph 1).

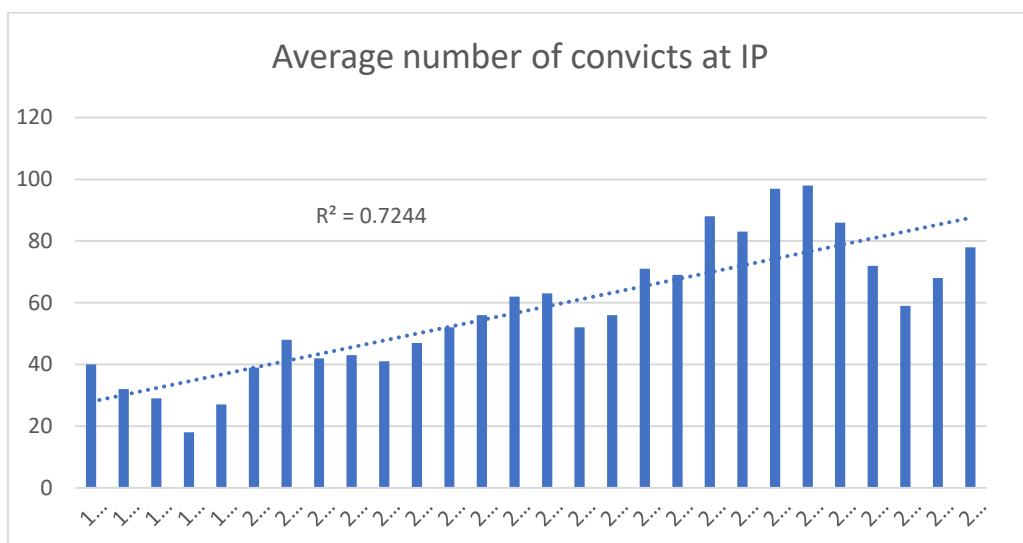


The same sources (Aebi & Stadnic, 2007; Aebi & Delgrande, 2012; Aebi, Tiago, & Burkhardt, 2016; Aebi & Tiago, 2021; Tournier, 2001) offer us another comparison - the percentage of female inmates (Graph 2), where the Nordic countries have over the time had the highest percentage of incarcerated women, closely followed by Netherlands, Portugal, Austria, Slovenia, Italy. Lately (as of 2020), Hungary and the Czech Republic are leading (Graph 2).

Percentage of female inmates per country, 2000-2020, Council of Europe



In the early days of IP, Vodopivec, Čerin and Skalar (1963: 18) offered us detailed numbers about female convicts and comparisons of the percentage of female convicts that were imprisoned for the first time (30 persons, 23 % of the female population, compared to 25 % of male population); partial recidivists (15 persons, 10 % of female population/ 15 % of the male population were partial recidivists); recidivists (12 persons, 9 % of female population/ 29 % of male population were recidivists); young adults (8 persons, 6 % of female population/ 11 % of male population were young adults); physically ill or old (34 persons, 26 % of female population/ 10 % of male population); with mental health problems (34 persons, 26 % of female population/ 10 % of male population).



In the annual report for 2022, the Administration for the Enforcement of Criminal Sanctions - Uprava za izvrševanje sankcij (2023) states that in 2022, the average number of women in Ig prison was 786. An overview of the average number of imprisoned women from 1995 to 2022 is shown in Graph 3 (Uprava za izvrševanje sankcij, 2001, 2006, 2011, 2016, 2021, 2023). The years 2014-2017 show a sharp increase in the share of imprisoned women (27 % in 2014, a drop of 5 % in 2015 and then again almost a 17 % increase in 2016). On the other hand, in the same period, the total number of incarcerated persons decreased, but only in the category of incarcerated men. In contrast, the average number of incarcerated women increased (Plesničar, 2018). After 2017, the number of women at IP decreased significantly, even before the COVID epidemic (12 % in 2018, 16 % in 2019 and 18 % in 2020) and in 2022 rose again to the pre-2014 numbers.

⁶ Interestingly, Fair and Walmsley (2022: 11) report the number of incarcerated women in Slovenia as 56 women since they have the number collected on 31.1.2021. This has a profound effect on the rate of incarcerated women since the authors report the rate to be 2.7, but with the number being 78, on average, it should be 3.7.

What can prison climate survey results tell us about what is happening inside the prison walls?

Moreover, now to the main topic of this chapter: As proof of the suitability of socio-therapeutic orientation as a treatment model, the results of the measurement of the social climate in prisons serving prison sentences, which has been held every five years since 1980, serve as evidence (Petrovec, 2018). The purpose of the longitudinal research was to measure the social climate (social atmosphere) in individual institutions and compare it with the results of past measurements. A favourable social climate created in prisons by both employees and convicts is a condition for the well-being of both (Brinc, 2001).

We are mainly interested in data on the social climate at the IP.

The theoretical starting point for the research was that the social atmosphere represents the state of psychosocial relations between group members and their attitudes towards the group. The social atmosphere is reflected in the consciousness of each member of the group, which allows us to measure it. If the atmosphere is favourable, the connection between the members is greater, and the group is more effective in action, and vice versa (Brinc, 2001). Franci Brinc, who conducted earlier measurements of social climate at Slovenian prisons, utilised Moos questionnaire about life in the institution; three dimensions are critical, namely the relationship between prisoners and workers (employees), the treatment program in the institution and the maintenance of order and discipline, which are described in more detail in Table 1 (Brinc, 2001).

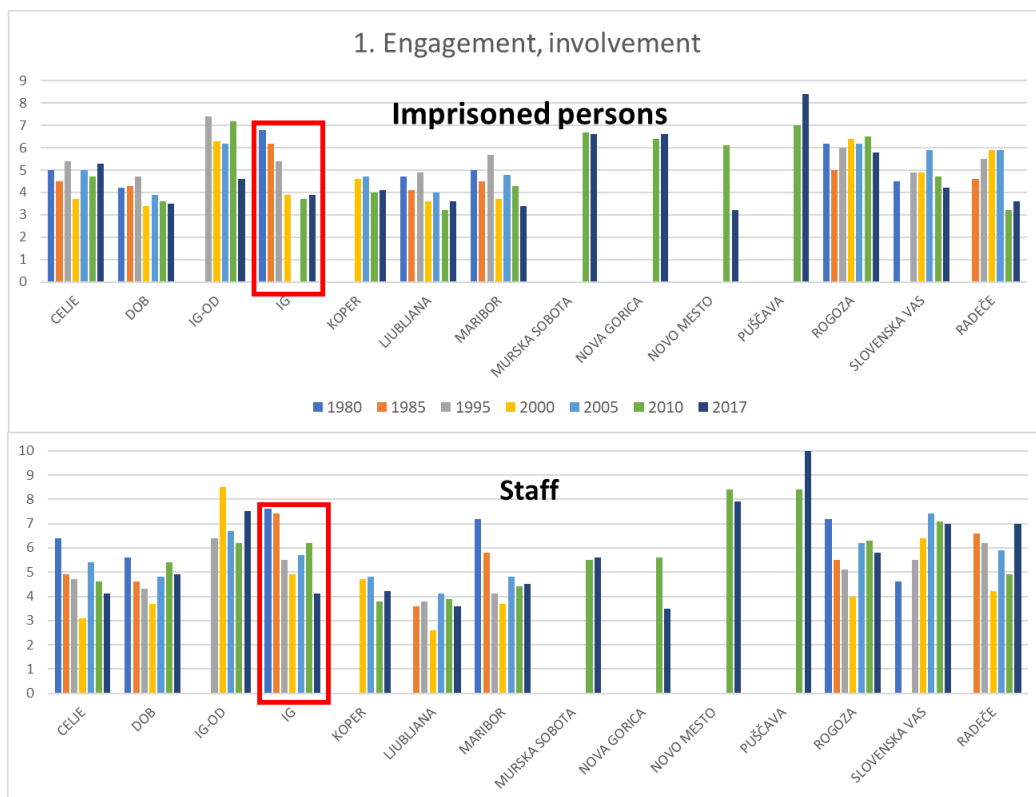
Table 1. Dimensions of social climate (social atmosphere)

Relations between convicts and workers	
Engagement involvement	- How active are the staff and prisoners in implementing the program, how much do they participate, and what do they do on their own initiative?
Help	How much do the staff encourage convicts to help each other, and how much do they help them?
Openness of expression	How much does the prison program encourage prisoners and staff to express their emotions openly?
Treatment program in the institution	
Autonomy	It measures the degree to which prisoners are encouraged to participate in the planning of activities in the institution.
Practical orientation	It measures the degree to which the institution encourages prisoners to prepare for life after release.
Solving personal problems	It shows how much the workers are trying to solve the personal problems of the convicts.
Maintaining order and discipline	
Order and organisation	It measures the degree to which order and organisation are essential in implementing the prison programme, the personal appearance of the prisoners, and how the staff achieve order and organisation.
Clarity of the programme	It measures the degree to which staff and prisoners know about the day-to-day implementation of the programme and how clear the programme guidelines are.
Supervision of convicts	It measures the degree to which staff implement measures to ensure the necessary supervision of prisoners and how they formulate rules for behaviour and disciplinary action.

As mentioned, social climate was measured in 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, 2000 (Brinc, 1995, 1997, 2000, 2001), 2005 (Brglez et al., 2006), 2010 (Brinc & Petrovec, 2011) and 2017 (Bokalič et al., 2017). In the next section, averages of measured values according to individual components of the social climate are presented. Higher values represent a more favourable social climate for all components, except for the last component of supervision, where higher values result in a less favourable social climate. The highest values are measured for the component order and organisation (5.2), supervision (5.0) and clarity of the programme (4,4).

Unsurprisingly, it was found that they experience the most favourable social atmosphere in the open wards of prisons in Slovenia (Brinc, 1995, 1997, 2000, 2001; Brglez et al., 2006; Brinc & Petrovec, 2011; Bokalič et al., 2017). On Graphs 4-12, open wards are “IG-OD” (third cluster from left), Dob – open ward - “PUŠČAVA” (fourth cluster from right), Maribor – open ward “ROGOZA” (third cluster from right). Among the closed institutions, the most favourable atmosphere was in the IP. This institution was also established as the most practically oriented and the most focused on solving the personal problems of (female) convicts. There were slight differences between the closed institutions in order and organisation, so in this case, the IP did not stand out. Even the relations between staff and prisoners, because they are in a closed institution, are less favourable than in cases of open wards. The results of the research showed that among the closed institutions, the IP is the most rehabilitation-oriented, which may be the reason for the better social climate.

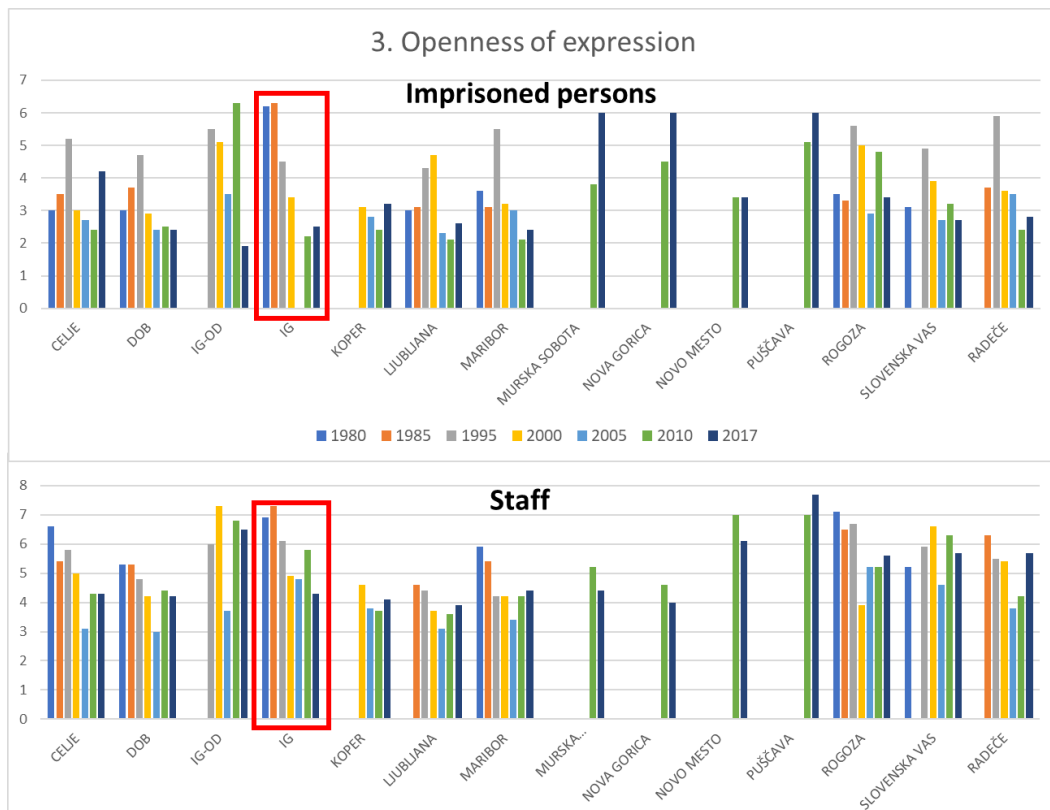
In the last measurement of climate in 2017, the highest values of the comprehensive social atmosphere among prison staff were measured in institutions: Dob - Open ward Puščava (65.7), Ljubljana – Open ward Ig (59.1) and Novo mesto (54.3), while the lowest values were measured in institutions: Ljubljana (33.7), Koper (36.1) and Ig – women's prison (36.4) (Plesničar, Petrovec, Drobnjak, Brvar and Cvikl, 2019: 57).



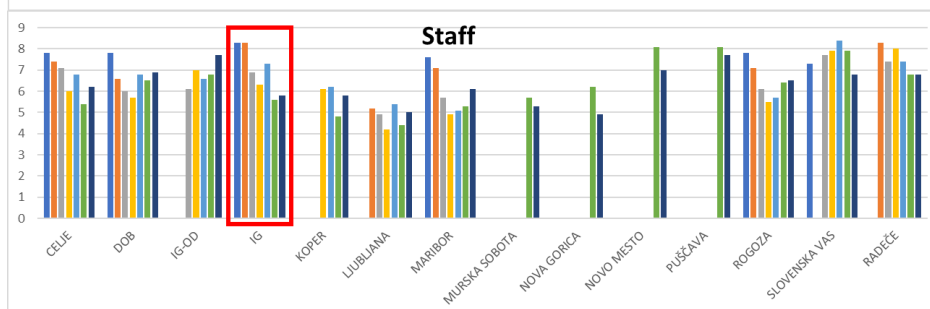
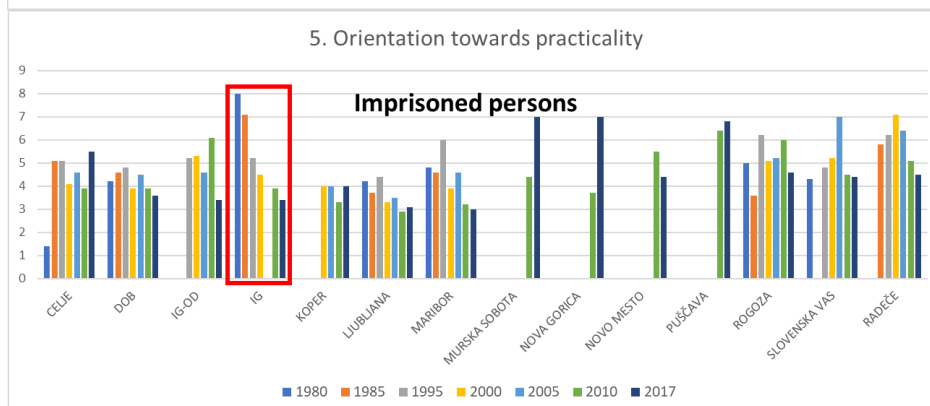
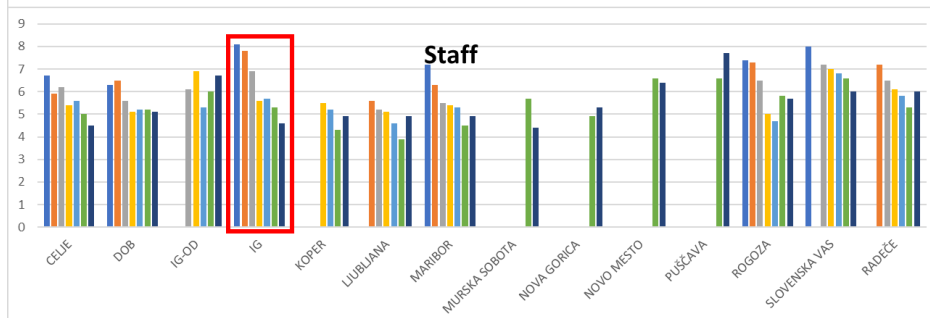
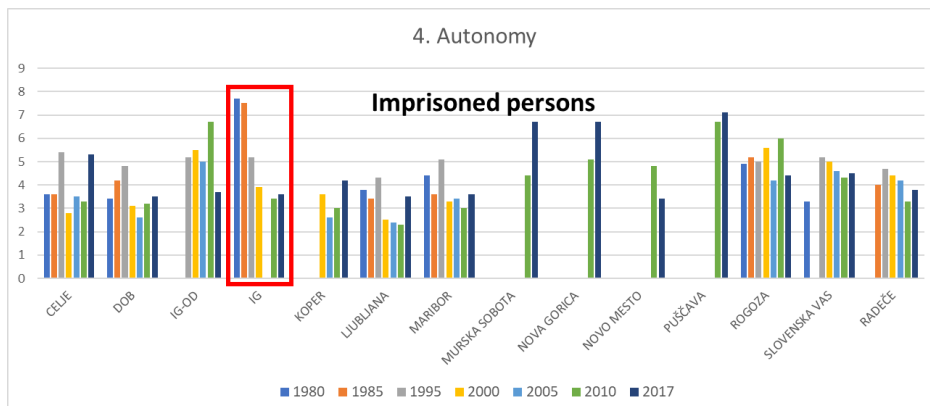
When observing the data in Graphs 4-12, it is evident that the social climate rates in all observed nine dimensions at IP (marked by a red square) have dropped considerably from 1980 to 2010 (columns from left to right in chronological order) both in the assessment of imprisoned women and staff at IP. According to the assessment, the social atmosphere at IP was worse by 58.5 percent from 1980 to 2010. Incarcerated women answered 86 identical questions, and the same methodology was used for statistical processing. During these years, the attitudes of prisoners changed less, as did their ideas about the social climate, but the attitudes and behaviour of the staff towards incarcerated women changed more. A comparison between individual years for thirty years shows that the control over prisoners constantly increases and emphasises the importance of order and rules (Brinc, 2011).



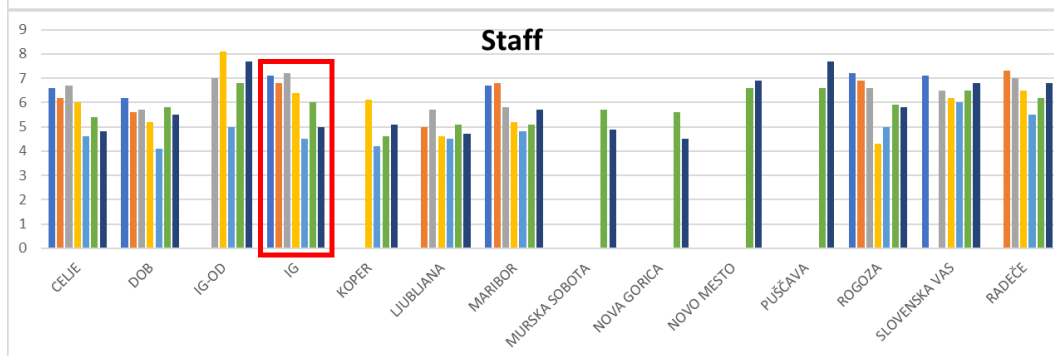
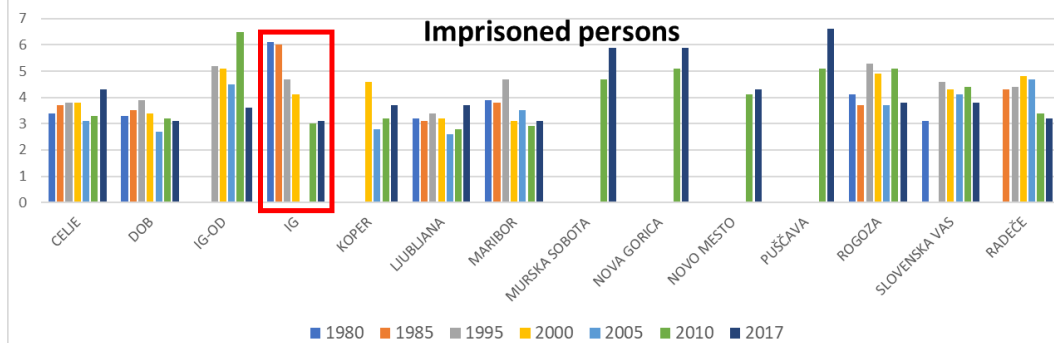
When measuring the social atmosphere in 2017, it was found that there were changes for the worse in several smaller institutions, especially the IP. In comparing 2017 with 2010, a negative trend can also be detected among the employees there. There was also a marked drop in the relationship dimension. A comparison between the overall social atmosphere as perceived by employees and as perceived by imprisoned persons shows that the differences in the perception of the social climate are significantly different. The differences are most apparent precisely in institutions where employees evaluate the social climate predominantly positively (open ward at the IP), while the assessment of imprisoned is much worse. It is established that in the IP (and the open ward of IP), no positive change of attitudes was detected (which was detected in other institutions). A comparison of the social climate in 2017 with 2010 among employees at IP showed that negative changes prevail in all components of the social atmosphere, the exceptions being practical direction and control with positive changes. In a comparison of the attitudes of male employees and female convicts, positive changes in attitudes can be detected among female employees but not among female convicts (Plesničar, Petrovec, Drobňjak, Brvar and Cvikl, 2019: 157-160).



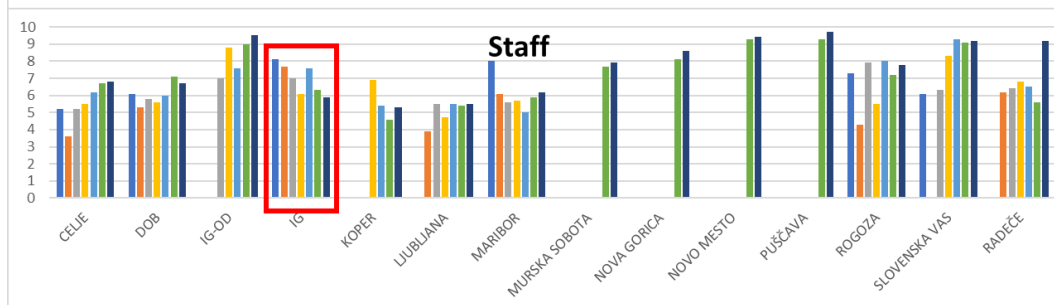
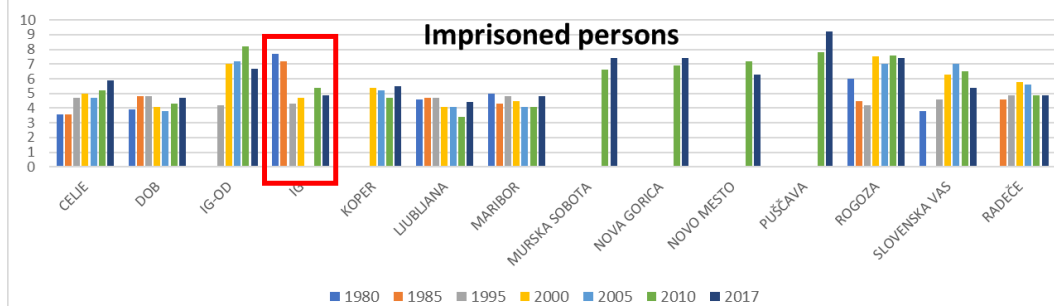
As it was established, the results of the latest assessment of the social climate in prisons and re-education centres could be more encouraging. A downward trend in the social climate has been detected for decades, and this trend continues. This can be attributed to the fact that the area of enforcement of criminal sanctions was neglected in both the financial and personnel areas. Based on these results, better decisions should be made in the future that would stop and reverse the downward trend in the social climate (Plesničar et al., 2017).



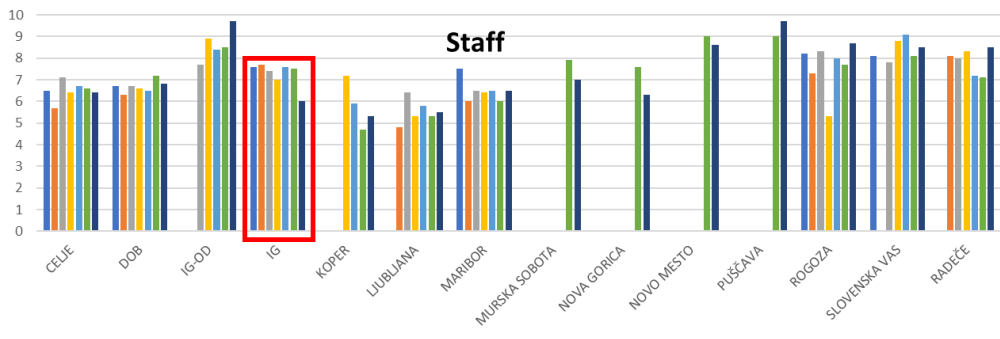
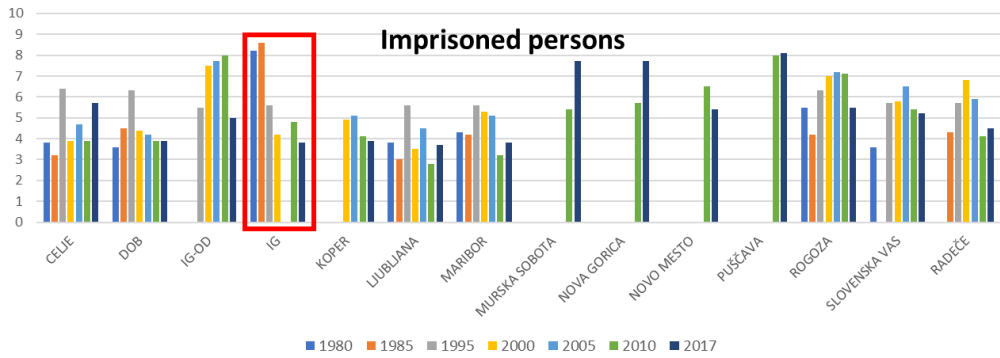
6. Solving personal problems



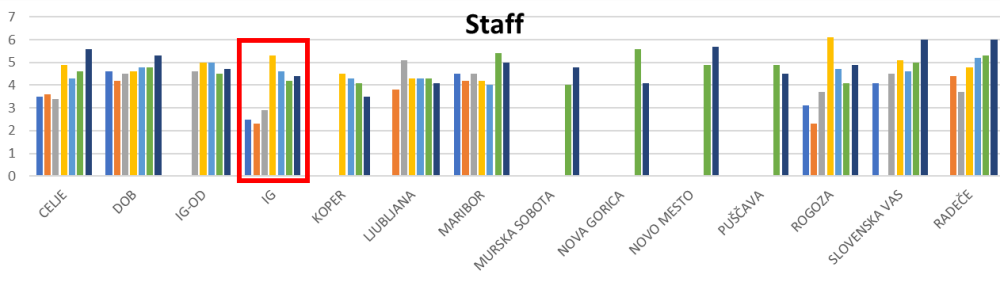
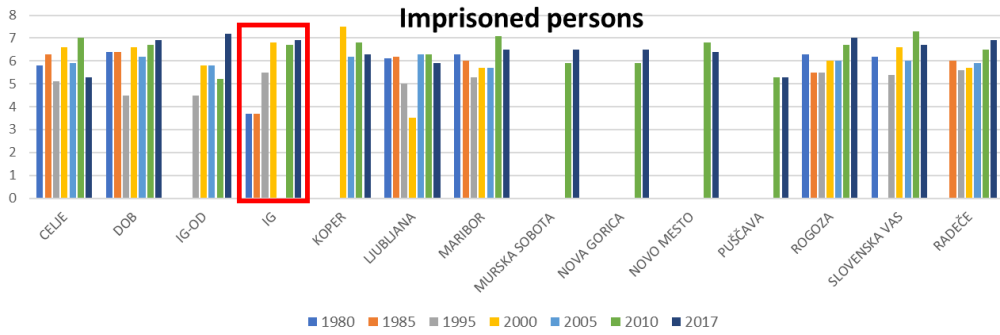
7. Order and organisation



8. Clarity



9. Supervision



It is difficult to say to what extent the worst results found during the measurements in 1985, 1995, and 2000 compared to 1980 are the result of supervisory policies or changes in the rehabilitation policy. The period after 1980 is still considered the "golden" age of Slovenian social therapy, which had positive effects and contributed to a favourable social climate. Brinc (2001) believes that the social climate scores achieved in the year 2000 demonstrate results that best suit the purposes of punishment and execution of prison sentences. During the observed period, the accommodation and sanitary-hygiene standards of convicts improved in prisons; they were granted new rights and benefits (rights began to be monitored by the Human Rights Ombudsman). On the other hand, workers' working conditions and wages improved; after 1991, democratisation took place, an independent Administration for the Execution of Criminal Sanctions was formed, and control over prisons was strengthened (Brinc, 2001).

Final remarks

The issue of gender and prisons is a complex one (e.g., Plesničar, 2019; Kanduč, 2001); only in the last twenty years have researchers been vocal about the way women experience incarceration and how it should be seen broadly, how it often stems from disadvantage, how it is reproducing vulnerabilities, among which Carlton (2011) includes "institutionalisation, criminalisation, ongoing state intervention and various forms of harm to self, to family and to the community". The author firmly states that not all women who experience imprisonment will have traumatic experiences, which in turn will result in their suffering; not all of them will have significant histories of trauma and disadvantage. However, as Baldry (2010) delineates in the term *structural account of liminality*, intervention by state institutions has an ongoing role in incarcerated women's lives. This role, with its emotional impacts, extends beyond imprisonment to a period before and after serving a sentence.

Although open wards in prisons are also known abroad - for a comprehensive guide, I recommend Waite (2024) - the experience at IP significantly differs from others. In prisons abroad (much like Klanjšek, 1959), prisoners were collected through selection, namely, those prisoners who were motivated to participate in group therapy. The Slovenian concept, on the other hand, was based on trust or the assumption that everyone gains something good from the open regime. Slovenian penology can thus consider as an achievement the very proof that it is possible to establish an open regime for the vast majority of convicts (about ten percent of prisoners were given a special regime). It was also shown that the openness of the prison is more influenced by the management (staff) than the structure of the prisoners. Based on the good results or experience with the IP, there were attempts to introduce a similar regime in other Slovenian prisons, with limited success. It turned out that few employees were willing to give up their power over the incarcerated and insisted on the traditional - hierarchical - structure of the prisons. When the socio-therapeutic approach was implemented, it had a positive effect on both employees and imprisoned (Petrovec, 2015).

Given the assumption that the humanisation of prisons is related to the welfare state, it is also not surprising that such a project was more accessible to implement in the 1970s and 1980s (Petrovec, 2015). Nowadays, in postmodern society, a "new penology" appears, which does not deal with the individual, his behaviour and treatment, but with the masses,

populations that do not adhere to social norms. The goal is no longer to prevent crime but to "manage" it through strict control. The goal of the new penology is no more to assess individuals but to control certain (marginal) groups deemed and stigmatised as dangerous for society (Petrovec, 2000).

Recent studies at IP show that female convicts think highly of prison officers there; they appraise their work conduct as professional and see them as helpful to the inmates. Nevertheless, communication with them is increasingly limited, which is a step back towards a total institution (Tomažinčič, 2022, p. 178).

The same study showed that the extent of supervision has increased in recent years, contrary to the proclaimed socio-therapeutic orientation, and this was felt strongly by the residents (Tomažinčič, 2022: 131). From 1991 onwards, they have put up surveillance cameras; they have established locking of passages between sections. Women are also observed and assessed based on whom they communicate and socialise with. Women who are believed to have the intention of escaping are handcuffed and escorted on their temporary release for visiting the doctor or going to court. The entrance to the prison is closed; when prisoners go for a walk in the park, they have to go through the security system (detector). Reoffenders note that the prison staff does not consider the possibility that they have changed, treating them solely based on the experience they have had with them during previous sentences. They also sense an absence of horizontal communication with the management or staff (Tomažinčič, 2022: 130-134).

References

- Aebi, M. F., & Stadnic, N. (2007). *SPACE I – Council of Europe Annual Penal Statistics: Prison populations. Survey 2005*. Council of Europe and the University of Lausanne.
- Aebi, M. F., & Delgrande, N. (2012). *SPACE I – Council of Europe Annual Penal Statistics: Prison populations. Survey 2010*. Council of Europe and the University of Lausanne.
- Aebi, M. F., Tiago, M. M. & Burkhardt, C. (2016). *SPACE I – Council of Europe Annual Penal Statistics: Prison populations. Survey 2015*. Council of Europe and University of Lausanne
- Aebi, M. F., & Tiago, M. M. (2021). *SPACE I - 2020 – Council of Europe Annual Penal Statistics: Prison populations*. Council of Europe and University of Lausanne
- Aebi, M. F., Cocco, E., & Molnar, L., (2023). *SPACE I - 2022 – Council of Europe Annual Penal Statistics: Prison Populations*. Council of Europe and the University of Lausanne.
- Antić Gaber, M., Crnović, D., Perger, N., Podreka, J., & Tadič, D. (2017). Začasno bivališče: Na grad 25, Ig: življenjske zgodbe žensk na prestajanju kazni zapora [Temporary residence: Na grad 25, Ig: life stories of women serving prison sentences]. Javna agencija za knjigo Republike Slovenije.
- Baldry, E. (2010). Women transitioning from prison to ... Current Issues in Criminal Justice: Special Issue on Women and Imprisonment, 22(2).
- Bokalič, N., Cimerman, A., Čuš, M., Dolenc, M., Lovka, A., Podgorski, K., Samobor, A., Šturm, I., Thaler, I., & Trplan, A. (2017). *Socialno vzdušje v zavodih za prestajanje kazni zapora in prevzgojnem domu leta 2017 v Republiki Sloveniji: poročilo [Social atmosphere in prisons and re-education centre in the Republic of Slovenia in 2017: report]*. Pravna fakulteta.
- Brinc, F. (1995) Družbeno vzdušje v zavodih za prestajanje kazni zapora [Social atmosphere in prisons]. Ljubljana: Inštitut za kriminologijo pri Pravni fakulteti.
- Brinc, F. (2000). Zapor za koga, kako, s kakšnim ciljem in za kakšno ceno [Imprisonment for whom, how, with what goal and at what price]. *Varstvoslovje*, 3, 229–238.

- Brinc, F. (2001). Družbeno vzdušje v zavodih za prestajanje kazni zapora in v Prevezgojnem domu v Radečah. [Social atmosphere in penitentiaries and re-education centre in Radeče]. *Revija za kriminalistiko in kriminologijo*, 52(4), 287–302.
- Brinc, F., & Petrovec, D. (2001) Družbeno vzdušje v zavodih za prestajanje kazni zapora v Republiki Sloveniji: poročilo [Social atmosphere in prisons in the Republic of Slovenia: report]. Ljubljana: Inštitut za kriminologijo pri Pravni fakulteti.
- Brinc, F., & Petrovec, D. (2011) Družbeno vzdušje v zavodih za prestajanje kazni zapora in v Prevezgojnem domu Radeče leta 2010: poročilo [Social atmosphere in prisons and re-education centre Radeče in 2010: report]. Ljubljana: Inštitut za kriminologijo pri Pravni fakulteti.
- Brglez, A. (2006). Socialno vzdušje v zavodih za prestajanje kazni zapora in prevzgojnem domu leta 2005: poročilo [Social atmosphere in prisons and re-education centre in 2005: report]. Inštitut za civilizacijo in kulturo.
- Carlton, B., & Segrave, M. (2011). Women's survival post-imprisonment: Connecting imprisonment with pains past and present. *Punishment & Society*, 13(5), 551–570.
- Drenik Bavdek, S., Pavlin, P., & Tadič, D. (2019). O posebnem položaju žensk v zaporih: Prispevki in izbrani mednarodni akti: zbornik ob 40-letnici Konvencije o odpravi vseh oblik diskriminacije žensk [On the special situation of women in prisons: Contributions and selected international acts: 40th anniversary of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women Anthology]. Ministrstvo za pravosodje.
- Glavica, T., & Erpič, V. (2019). Ženske na prestajanju kazni zapora v Zavodu za prestajanje kazni zapora Ig. [Women serving a prison sentence in the Prison Ig.]. In S. D. Bavdek, P. Pavlin in D. Tadič (Eds.), *O posebnem položaju žensk v zaporih* (p. 29–41). Ministrstvo za pravosodje.
- Hacin, R. (2015). Pregled slovenskega penološkega raziskovanja od sredine petdesetih let dvajsetega stoletja [A review of Slovenian penological research from the 1950ies onward]. *Revija za Kriminalistiko in Kriminologijo*, 66(3).
- Ivačič, B. (2016). Materinstvo za rešetkami: neskladje med zaporom in materinstvom: magistrsko delo [Motherhood behind bars: The discrepancy between prison and motherhood: master's thesis], Univerza v Ljubljani, Fakulteta za družbene vede.
- Kanduč, Z. (2001). Žene, zločini, zatvori: pregled nekih od središnjih kriminoloških problemskih cjelina. In V. Grozdanič, (Ed.). (2011). *Kada žena ubije: Interdisciplinarni pristup* [When women kill: Interdisciplinary approach] (p. 5–49). Pravni fakultet Sveučilišta.
- Kanduč, Z., Mihelj Plesničar, M., Kmet, S., Petrovec, D., Završnik, A., & Zgaga Markelj, S. (2012). *Nežnejši spol? Ženske, nasilje in kazensko-pravni sistem* [The gentler sex? Women, violence and the criminal justice system]. Inštitut za kriminologijo pri Pravni fakulteti.
- Klanjšek, A. (1958). Selekcija obsojenk za odprti kazenski poboljševalni-dom na Igu: diplomsko delo [Selection of female convicts for the open penitentiary correctional facility at Ig: undergraduate thesis]. Univerza v Ljubljani, Višja šola za socialne delavce.
- Muršič, M. (2005). Razmišljanje ob izpovedih obsojenk z izkušnjo zasvojenosti z nedovoljenimi drogami [Reflecting on the confessions of female convicts with an experience of addiction to illicit drugs]. In *Ženske, droge in zapor* (Ed. Zoran Kanduč) (p. 41–79). Inštitut za kriminologijo pri PF.
- Petrovec, D. (1999). Ideja in realnost socioterapevtske usmeritve: študija [The idea and the reality of sociotherapeutic intervention: study] (Vol. 126). Inštitut za kriminologijo pri Pravni fakulteti.
- Petrovec, D. (2000). Konflikti med zahtevami po varnosti in resocializaciji [Conflicts between security requirements and resocialization]. In M. Pagon (Ed.), *Dnevi varstvoslovja* (conference proceedings). Ljubljana. Visoka policijska varnostna šola.
- Petrovec, D. (2001). Izvršavanje kazne zatvora v Igu. In: Velinka Grozdanič & Alenka Šelih (Eds.). *Žene i kazna zatvora* [Women and imprisonment]. Pravni fakultet Sveučilišta u Rijeci.
- Petrovec, D. (2011). Sklepno razmišljanje o družbenem vzdušju [Concluding thoughts on social climate]. In Družbeno vzdušje v zavodih za prestajanje kazni zapora in v Prevezgojnem domu Radeče leta 2010: študija [The social atmosphere in prisons and the Prevezgojne dom Radeče in 2010: study]. Ljubljana: Inštitut za kriminologijo pri Pravni fakulteti v Ljubljani.

- Petrovec, D. (2015). Penologija – zadnje poglavje kazenskega prava [Penology – the last chapter of criminal law]. In A. Šelih in K. Filipčič (eds.), *Kriminologija*. Ljubljana: GV Založba
- Petrovec, D. (2018). Ženski zapor nekoč in danes [Women's prison then and now]. In M. M. Plesničar, A. Šelih in K. Filipčič (eds.), *Ženske in kriminaliteta: Značilnosti ženske kriminalitete in družbeno odzivanje nanjo* [Women and crime: Characteristics of women's crime and social response to it]. Inštitut za kriminologijo pri Pravni fakulteti v Ljubljani.
- Piškuric, J. (2020). Začetki zapora na Ižanskem gradu (1946–1956) [The beginnings of the prison at Ig castle (1946–1956)]. *Kronika*, 68(2), 257–272.
- Plesničar, M. M. (2018). Kaznovanje žensk v Sloveniji [Punishment of women in Slovenia]. In M. M. Plesničar, A. Šelih in K. Filipčič (Eds.), *Ženske in kriminaliteta: Značilnosti ženske kriminalitete in družbeno odzivanje nanjo* (p. 131–150). Inštitut za kriminologijo pri Pravni fakulteti v Ljubljani.
- Plesničar, M. M. (2019). Zakaj drugačna obravnava zapornic? [Why the different treatment for female prisoners?]. In S. D. Bavdek, P. Pavlin in D. Tadič (Eds.), *O posebnem položaju žensk v zaporih* (p. 41–59). Ministrstvo za pravosodje.
- Plesničar, M. M., Petrovec, D., Drobnjak, M., Brvar, B., and Cvikl, L. (2019). Družbeno vzdušje v zavodih za prestajanje kazni zapora in v prevzgojnem domu Radeče leta 2017: poročilo [Social atmosphere in prisons and re-education centre Radeče in 2017: report]. Ljubljana: Inštitut za kriminologijo pri Pravni fakulteti.
- Plesničar, M. M., Šelih, A., & Filipčič, K. (Eds.). (2018). *Ženske in kriminaliteta: Značilnosti ženske kriminalitete in družbeno odzivanje nanjo: študija* [Women and crime: Characteristics of women's crime and social response to it: study] (Vol. 36). Slovenska akademija znanosti in umetnosti; Inštitut za kriminologijo pri Pravni fakulteti.
- Puhar, S. (1995). Diskriminacija žensk v kazenskem postopku in pri izvrševanju kazni [Discrimination against women in criminal proceedings and execution of sentences]. *Socialno delo*, 5: 309-320.
- Tadič, D. (2018). *Spolno zaznamovane značilnosti zapora za ženske: doktorska disertacija* [Gendered characteristics of women's prisons: doctoral dissertation]. Univerza v Ljubljani, Pravna fakulteta.
- Tomažinčič, L. (2023). *Vsakdanje življenje žensk v zaporu: doktorska disertacija* [Everyday life of women in prison: doctoral dissertation]. Univerza v Ljubljani, Fakulteta za družbene vede).
- Tournier, P. V. (2001). SPACE I – Council of Europe Annual Penal Statistics: Prison populations. Survey 2000. Council of Europe and CNRS.
- Uprava za izvrševanje sankcij (2001). *Letno poročilo 2000*. Uprava RS za izvrševanje sankcij.
- Uprava za izvrševanje sankcij (2006). *Letno poročilo 2005*. Uprava RS za izvrševanje sankcij.
- Uprava za izvrševanje sankcij (2011). *Letno poročilo 2010*. Uprava RS za izvrševanje sankcij.
- Uprava za izvrševanje sankcij (2016). *Letno poročilo 2015*. Uprava RS za izvrševanje sankcij.
- Uprava za izvrševanje sankcij (2021). *Letno poročilo 2020*. Uprava RS za izvrševanje sankcij.
- Uprava za izvrševanje sankcij (2023). *Letno poročilo 2022*. Uprava RS za izvrševanje sankcij.
- Vodopivec, K., Čerin, M., & Skalar, V. (1963). *Grupiranje obsojencev: študija* [Grouping of convicts: study] (Vol. 11, p. 2). Inštitut za kriminologijo pri Pravni fakulteti v Ljubljani.
- Waite, S. (2024). 'A whole new world ...': Exploring transcarceral habitus and women's transition from a closed to an open prison. *The Howard Journal of Crime and Justice*, 63, 82–97
- Walmsley R., & Fair H. (2024). *World prison population list. 14th edition*. https://www.prisonstudies.org/sites/default/files/resources/downloads/world_prison_population_list_14th_edition.pdf
- Walmsley R., & Fair H. (2022). *World Female Imprisonment List. 5th edition*. https://www.prisonstudies.org/sites/default/files/resources/downloads/world_female_imprisonment_list_5th_edition.pdf
- Žišt, D. (2003). Obsojenke kot žrtve nasilja v zaporu [Female convicts as victims of violence in prison]. In M. Pagon (ed.) *Dnevi varstvoslovja* (conference proceedings).
- Žišt, D. (2008). Utrinki iz življenja za rešetkami. Večer.