

Response

of the Hungarian Government to the report of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) on its visit to Hungary

from 25 March to 1 April 2025

The Government of Hungary has requested the publication of this response. The CPT's report on the 2025 visit to Hungary is set out in document CPT/Inf (2025) 41.

Strasbourg, 16 December 2025

Note: In accordance with Article 11, paragraph 3, of the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, names of individuals have been deleted.

Chapter II
Prison establishments
1. Preliminary remarks

„12. The CPT would like to receive updated information on the implementation of these plans, including information on the profile of prisoners placed under electronic monitoring.”

Currently, 600 electronic monitoring devices are available nationwide. As of 10 September 2025, 250 devices were in use in the framework of reintegration custody, 150 in relation to employment outside the prison, and 29 in the context of home care custody. The IT Department of the Hungarian Prison Service Headquarters (hereinafter: BVOP), based on the needs of prison establishments, plans to procure, and deploy an additional 300 devices in 2025.

Electronic monitoring devices may be applied in the course of ordering home care custody or reintegration custody, which falls within the competence of the penitentiary judge. In addition, pursuant to Section 149 of Act CCXL of 2013 on the enforcement of penalties, measures, certain coercive measures and infraction confinement (hereinafter: Punishment Enforcement Act), the prison service is authorised to apply electronic monitoring devices to supervise the movements of convicted persons outside the institution. This includes employment outside the prison, guarding and supervising convicted persons placed in healthcare institutions not operated by the prison service, supervision of a convicted person visiting a seriously ill close relative, attending the funeral of a close relative, or during supervised group leave.

In cases of employment outside the penitentiary system, the decision to apply electronic monitoring is taken by the Admission and Detention Committee, while in cases of temporary leave from the prison institution, such decision is taken by the governor of the prison.

„15. The CPT once again recommends that the Hungarian authorities step up their efforts to reduce the prison population, in light of the aforementioned remarks. The Committee trusts that, in their efforts, the authorities will take due account of the principles listed in the relevant recommendations of the Council of Europe’s Committee of Ministers, in particular, the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers Recommendation No. R(99)22 concerning prison overcrowding and prison population inflation, Recommendation Rec(2006)13 on the use of remand in custody, the conditions in which it takes place and the provision of safeguards against abuse, Recommendation Rec(2003)22 on conditional release (parole), Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)1 on the Council of Europe probation rules, Recommendation Rec(2014)4 on electronic monitoring and Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)3 on the European Rules on community sanctions and measures.

Prosecutors and judges should be sensitised, through the appropriate channels, with these principles.

Further, the Committee would like to receive updated information as to when Csenger National Prison will be taken into service. It would appreciate receiving more detailed information about the concept of a “smart prison” and the use of modern technology therein, including as regards the detection of “inappropriate behaviour”. It would also like to be informed to what extent artificial intelligence will be used in the new prison.⁸

In addition, it would like to receive updated information on the overall prison population and the capacity of the prison estate in Hungary.”

Modern technology, innovative security systems and the “smart prison” concept

The “smart prison” project of the Csenger National Prison reached its final form partly in 2023 and at the beginning of 2024, based on which the institution was able to commence actual operation in 2025. Particular emphasis was placed during the design phase on ensuring that the achievements of the present age contribute to reducing the workload of staff, supporting safe detention, as well as safeguarding and enforcing the rights and obligations of prisoners. In line with both governmental and professional considerations, the aim was clear: to establish a prison institution that uniquely combines 21st century technological innovations with the field of penal enforcement.

At Csenger, a new version of the KIOSK system, already known and used in all prison institutions, was installed. Beyond the existing functionalities, it introduced a new feature: for the first time, detainees can maintain contact with their relatives through video calls without leaving their assigned cell. This represents a significant achievement. Moreover, upon a request submitted for a personal hearing with the head of the competent organisational unit of the prison, it will also be possible for the convicted person to consult with the designated staff member via video through the KIOSK, without the need for physical movement within the institution.

For the first time, an interactive “smart board” supporting the education of prisoners will also be introduced at the Csenger National Prison. This device is a multimedia interactive tool equipped with a touch screen, a built-in camera, microphone, and operating system, capable of accommodating all forms and types of education.

Artificial intelligence will support the performance of staff tasks not only during video calls but also in the monitoring of electronic correspondence, thereby reducing the likelihood of disciplinary offences and extraordinary incidents.

In the field of electronic surveillance, the prison service will pilot a behavioural analytics system at the Csenger National Prison. This system, which is under continuous refinement and training, is designed to detect behaviours and incidents such as group gatherings, line-crossing, scuffles, attempted hanging, climbing, and running.

The implemented technical solutions and the combined use of dynamic security elements make it possible for the new prison establishments to operate in line with, or even surpassing, contemporary expectations, as Hungary’s most modern and one of its largest prisons. A key consideration in developing the concept was to minimise direct contact between staff and prisoners by deploying state-of-the-art technologies, while ensuring that the level of security risk inherent in scheduled daily activities does not increase.

Independent movement of prisoners

A key feature to highlight is the ability of the installed systems to communicate with each other. One of the most significant - and unique even in Europe - technical innovations was the establishment of independent movement for prisoners. Within this framework, the prison service enables prisoners, while maintaining the required level of security, to move partially independently along designated routes, under control established by means of various security technologies. For this purpose, facial recognition has been added to the electronic surveillance system, complementing the monitoring of transmitted images and the remote-controlled opening of doors.

Remotely controlled, motorised cell doors

Cell doors can be operated by staff from a central control station or via the SAFE device, but locally, next to the cells, a touch screen control unit has also been installed. Through this unit, the hand and leg cuff aperture can be opened, and the power supply of the respective cell can also be managed. A digital film was placed on the cell door’s inspection window, which can be rendered transparent at the press of a button, allowing staff to perform their prescribed control duties in the traditional manner, but with the support of a modern technology-enhanced tool.

Prisoner wristband

Control over prisoners is further reinforced by the wristband provided to convicted persons in the prison, which primarily serves for location tracking. In addition, if pre-set individual health data or vital parameter thresholds are exceeded, the system generates an alert, enabling staff members to take the necessary immediate measures without delay.

Staff wristband

Similar to the prisoner wristband but equipped with extended functionalities, the supervisory wristband provided to staff members is also considered an innovative system element, developed to enhance staff protection. In addition to monitoring vital functions and location, the device is equipped with an accelerometer. Consequently, if the wearer falls to the ground suddenly - due to illness or a

potential attack by a prisoner - it automatically generates an alert, and it also serves as a personal alarm. Moving away from the previous methodology of opening doors with magnetic cards, staff members can now move within areas (where no facial recognition was required for security reasons) by using, in addition to facial identification, the NFC chip integrated into the smartwatch.

Body scanner

Preventing the entry of prohibited items - in particular illegally held mobile phones - into the facilities has always been a priority for the prison service. Measures were taken to identify and procure body scanners capable, due to their different operating mechanisms, of detecting prohibited items concealed both on the body and inside the body. These devices were installed at entry points of the prison institution, at junctions intersecting prisoner routes, and at the entrances of workshops, thereby ensuring a two-step screening procedure. The use of walk-through gates and handheld metal detectors is also maintained, but by combining the old and new methods, the level of security can be further increased.

Drone patrol and drone detection

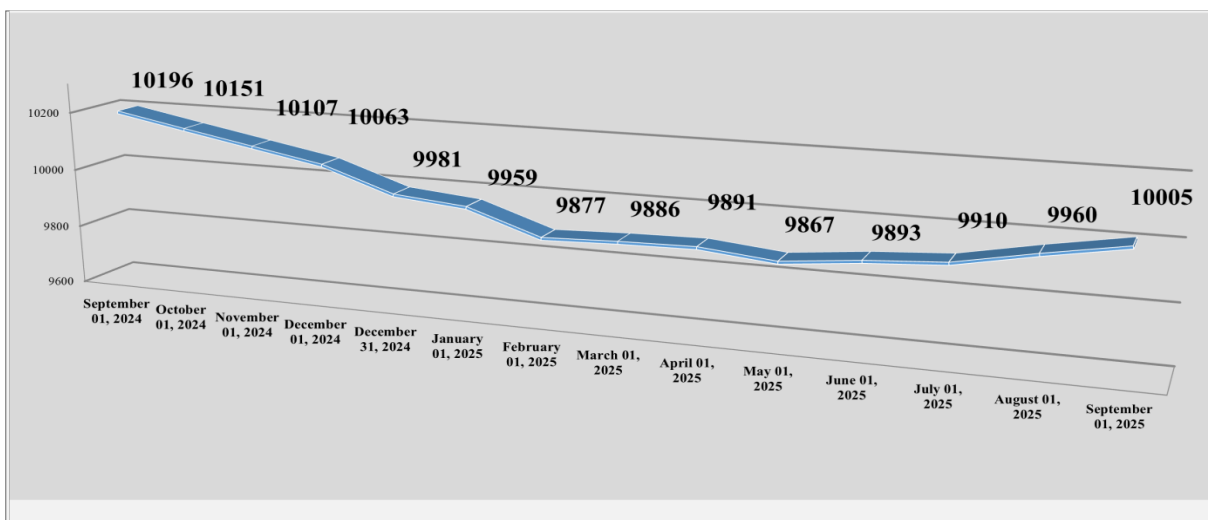
The inspection of the external security perimeter of the prison, which was previously carried out by staff patrols, will be replaced by drones. These will follow pre-programmed patrol routes automatically, transmitting the images captured by their cameras to the system, which compares them with previous images and generates an alert in case of discrepancies. Staff members may also monitor the live footage, ensuring that reliance is not placed solely on the technological background. Given the spread of the civilian use of unmanned aerial vehicles, and the resulting risk of prohibited items being introduced by air, a drone detection system has also been deployed, capable of identifying unauthorised aircraft.

Prison estate and overall prison population in Hungary

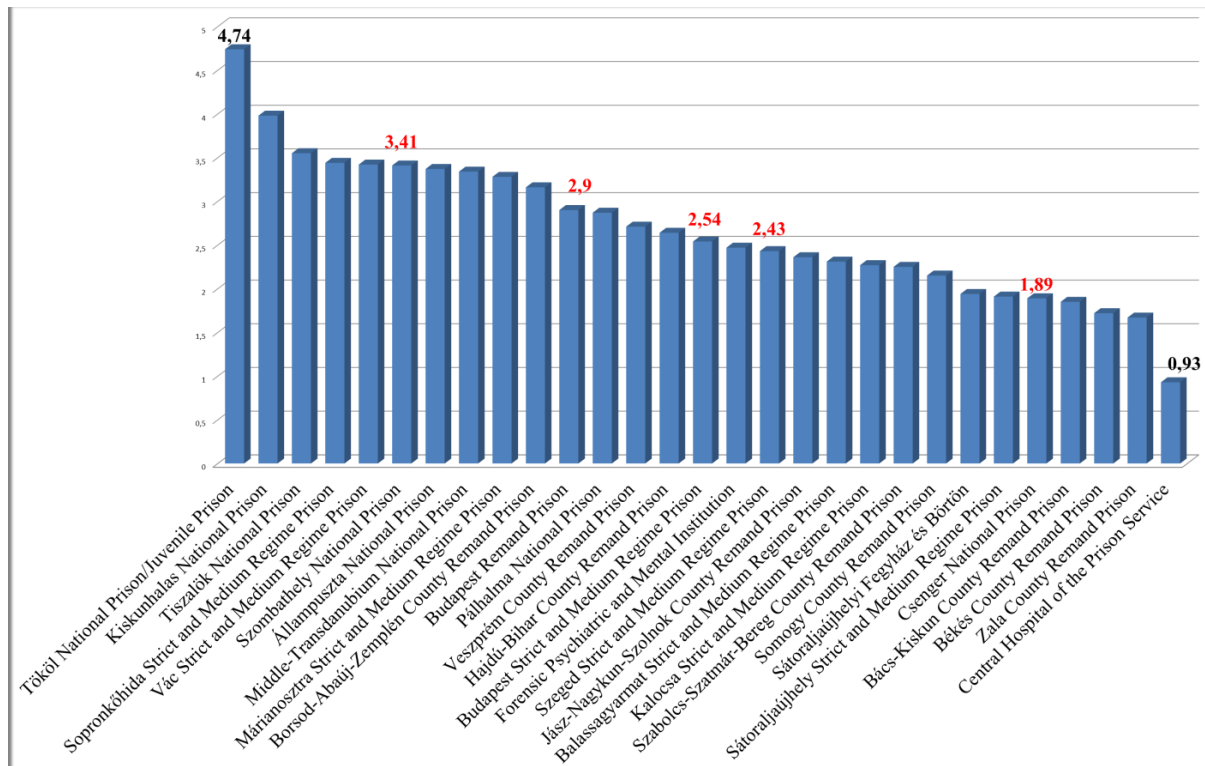
Reducing prison overcrowding remains a continuous and priority objective of the prison service.

As of 10 September 2025, taking into account persons temporarily admitted, the prison population amounted to 19.857, while the overall capacity of prison institutions was 18.154. Based on these figures, the current occupancy rate stands at 109%. Excluding temporarily admitted persons, the registered prison population was 19.424 on the same date, corresponding to an occupancy rate of 106%.

Between August and September 2024, the prison service staff numbers rose significantly, mainly due to recruitment for the Csenger National Prison. After an eight-month period of decline – partly resulting from the closure at the end of 2024 and beginning of 2025 of three county-level prisons (Győr-Moson-Sopron, Tolna and Heves), the trend has again been increasing since May 2025.



The 5th Agglomeration Centre (Csenger National Prison) commenced its operation on 28 April 2025. At this prison, the ratio between prisoners and professional staff members employed under service relationship (1,89) is - as expected and thanks to the use of smart technologies - considerably more favourable than at large-capacity prison institutions (2,43 – 3,1). Accordingly, there are fewer than two prisoners per one staff member. The ratio as of 1 September 2025 is illustrated in the diagram below.



The Hungarian Prison Service Headquarters (BVOP) has established contact with the National Office for the Judiciary and the Office of the Prosecutor General, as the activities of these bodies have an impact on the number of persons in detention.

„17. The CPT would like to receive the Hungarian authorities’ observations as to their initial experience with the practical operation of the new classification system.”

One of the most significant elements of the amendments to the Punishment Enforcement Act (Act CCXL of 2013) which entered into force on 1 March 2024 is the introduction of a category and credit system, replacing the former execution regimes, regime rules and security risk classifications. The classification of convicted persons is now based on a five-level system, with Category I being the most lenient and Category V the most stringent. The classification is determined by the gravity and nature of the offence committed, the criminological characteristics of the convicted persons, and - unlike before, when it was only considered to a limited extent - their behaviour in the prison institution. The more lenient categories also entail more favourable accommodation conditions and entitlements. All convicted persons have the opportunity to progress to more lenient categories.

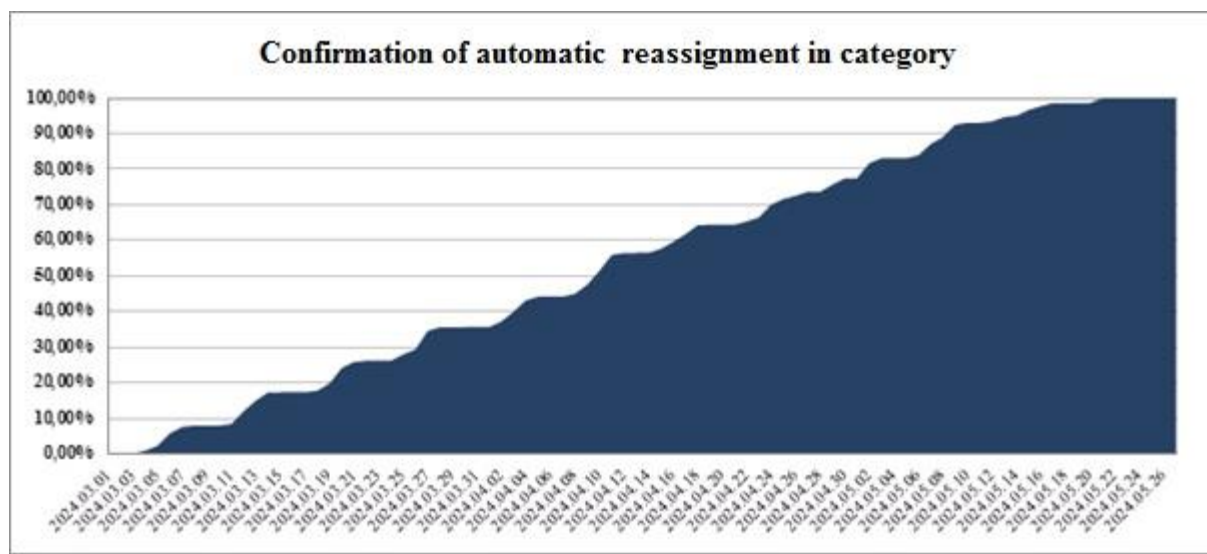
Movement between categories is ensured by the credit system, which allows convicted persons to earn credits through participation in reintegration activities offered to them and by demonstrating willingness to cooperate. Upon acquiring the required number of credits, determined on the basis of the length of sentence, they may progress to a more favourable category, while disciplinary offences may result in the loss of credits and/or reclassification to a stricter category.

The introduction and application of the new legal institutions and the modified system of tasks took place in several phases. These included familiarising the entire prison service staff with the system, establishing working groups, developing the necessary procedures, holding task-setting meetings, and implementing the related IT developments. These processes have been carried out continuously and remain ongoing, particularly in the light of experience gained and the processing of individual cases.

As a first step, pursuant to Section 436/B (2) of the Punishment Enforcement Act, the category reclassification of convicted persons who were already serving a final sentence as of 1 March 2024 had to be completed within 90 days, i.e. by 29 May 2024 at the latest. The Act defined this reclassification in a prescriptive manner, based on their previous execution regime and regime assignment.

The competent organisational elements of the Hungarian Prison Service monitored on a daily basis the scheduled implementation of the automatic reclassifications made by the prison institutions, their even distribution over time, and continuously consulted with the bodies to ensure that the task was carried out in accordance with the legal requirements and professional needs. By 27 May 2024, 100% of the convicted prison population (14,540 persons) had been reclassified to the appropriate category.

The evolution of the confirmation of automatic reclassifications over time is shown in the graph below:



The primary importance of carrying out the reclassifications at the appropriate pace was to ensure an optimal distribution of the credit accumulation dates at the end of the first 6-month assessment period, from 1 September, which was essential to rationalise the workload of the preparatory departments and the decision-making Admission and Detention Committees. In addition, the scheduling was also necessary to ensure the continued compliance with the new rules on the segregation of prisoners, in order to ensure the feasibility of the transfers required.

In parallel with the categorisation of prisoners already in custody, the categorisation of prisoners who started serving their final sentences after 1 March 2024 has also started.

To date, no significant number of complaints from detainees have been received regarding the category classification, and no signals have been received from the prosecutor's office and the courts supervising the legality of the classification.

An examination of the initial category data for the country shows a more balanced curve compared to the previous regime. Even before the effects of the career system, the use of categories is seen to serve the need for the prison service to have a tool to respond to the behaviour and cooperation of the prisoner, while at the same time being able to build on the prisoner's experience of serving previous prison sentences.

Based on the experience gained so far, the prison institutions apply the possibility of transferring between the different categories in a lawful manner, and so far they have awarded an average of 5 credits out of the maximum 6 credits per semester to the convicted persons concerned, including those who have not earned any credits or who may have only been subject to credit deduction, as well as those who have earned additional credits beyond the 6 credits specified by law.

It can be said that the prison service places a strong emphasis on providing reintegration programmes for prisoners, with 9326 prisoners enrolled as of 10/09/2025.

Following the introduction of the legal instrument, the Commission for Admission and Detention carried out 25,456 credit consolidations for the prison organisation, with 4,218 cases of reclassification.

Chapter II
Prison establishments
2/a III treatment- ill-treatment by staff

25. The CPT would like to receive updated information on the state of the investigation into the incident which occurred on 25 September 2023 at Tiszalök Prison, including the number of convictions and an account of any criminal/disciplinary sanctions imposed and/or any other measures taken.

The Tiszalök National Prison on 25/09/2023, the following measures were taken to prevent similar incidents from occurring:

- 1) the deputy governor in charge of specialised management implemented the introduction and processing of the incident (suspected criminal assault in official proceedings) in all prisons institutions under the jurisdiction of the 5th Agglomeration Center.,
- 2) deputy governors are instructed to brief staff on the importance of avoiding the crime of assault in official proceedings at each rotation and to explain to staff the criminal and disciplinary sanctions for breaches of the law and other regulations relating to the performance of duty, the rules of service and the conduct of the service. A further task was to monitor the general morale of staff and to ensure that managers were present to support and reinforce their colleagues on duty,
- 3) management staff are also instructed to pay particular attention to the mood of staff, communication and treatment of detainees during their inspections and on-call duty, in addition to their checks,
- 4) in connection with the offence of assault in official proceedings on 25/09/2023, the Deputy Director General for Security and Incarceration ordered the training of all executive personnel on the prevention of similar offences. On 12/10/2023, an extra-judicial training was held in the prison by the members of the Operations Department of the Central Support Department of the Hungarian Prison Service, Central Support Department, Operations Unit (hereinafter referred to as "BVOP KMO"). The training was also attended by the persons delegated by the prison institutions, who gave the briefing locally based on the information given during the training,
 - a. the Tiszalök National Prison, the Sátoraljaújhely Prison, and the Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County Remand Prison and Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County Remand Prison the training was carried out by designated members of the BVOP KMO;
 - b. in the Hajdú-Bihar County Remand Prison, the Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County Remand Prison and the Central Hospital of the Prison Service, the training was conducted by colleagues delegated by the prisons - with the appropriate competence - using the training aid compiled by the Hungarian Prison Service;
- 5) the Head of the Detention Affairs Unit was instructed to hold an extracurricular training for the reintegration officers on the recording of detainee sessions and their relevant data content, which was held on 03/10/2023,
- 6) within the framework of the annual training - from 09/10/2023 to 12/10/2023 - the participating staff were informed about the experiences, mistakes and shortcomings of the incident and the possible consequences of committing an incident in the official procedure,
- 7) the disciplinary and investigative officer - also in the framework of the 2023 training - gave a detailed case study of the incident for the staff, which included a presentation of the procedures related to the abuse, military, official and corruption offences, as well as disciplinary offences and their possible consequences and sanctions,
- 8) in October 2023, a rotation of the entire prison's chief inspector staff was implemented, after which they will serve in other sections on a monthly basis, with different numbers of times, and staff members who are more frequently called to the forefront in connection with the

commission of incidents of abuse in official proceedings were assigned to other duties on an out-of-service basis,

- 9) the Head of the Detention Unit is instructed to monitor the mood, treatment and tone against detainees and to report immediately on any negative experiences. Monitoring of prisoner morale is ongoing and has been supplemented by a review of the composition of the cell groups,
- 10) From 20 to 23 November 2023 and on 27 November 2023, the Operations Unit of the prison held a tactical training course for all personnel. During the action training, a detailed reconstruction of the incident was carried out and adequate action procedures were presented in order to ensure the legal and professional elimination of similar incidents,
- 11) bi-monthly training in tactical measures for the staff of the Security Unit and bi-annual training for all professional staff,
- 12) the Head of the Security Unit has been instructed to direct all coercive measures in person or, if he is prevented from doing so, by his designated deputy (sub-deputy),
- 13) the governor of the prison has instructed the psychology department to pay special attention to the mood of the staff, to plan small group sessions focusing on aggression management. The session took place on 13/10/2024 and was aimed at developing self-awareness, psychological sensitivity and self-reflection, thus preventing possible future incidents,
- 14) the Agglomeration Centre V. Inspection Unit inspected the implementation of the tasks related to the prevention of prisoner abuse in all the prison institutions in 5th Agglomeration Center during the period 14-29 November 2023. No errors or shortcomings were found during the inspections,
- 15) a professional case study of the incident was prepared and sent to all the police institutes in the 5th Agglomeration Center and to the management staff in order to be processed by the management and then presented to all the staff concerned in their subordination, in order to ensure more efficient service provision and work, and to create the conditions for professional implementation using the information on the incident,
- 16) The Hungarian Prison Service Security Service's professional evening report on the event was presented to both management and executive staff in order to ensure lawful and efficient service delivery,
- 17) reports on incidents in other prison institutions, case studies are presented and processed on an ongoing basis in the interests of prevention,
- 18) On 08/11/2024, the Tiszalök National Prison the main topic of the meeting was the legal and professional treatment of prisoners, with special regard to the prevention of cases of abuse and its criminal and labour law sanctions,
- 19) at the annual training in 2025 (17-25 March 2025), the staff of the National Protection Service gave a briefing to staff members on the commission of offences in the administration and their consequences,
- 20) in the prison institution, as in all prison institutions, the sensitisation of staff includes the - documented - presentation and processing of anonymised convictions sent by the Disciplinary Unit of the Human Services.

The effectiveness of the measures taken is demonstrated by the reduction in the number of offences committed in the formal procedure (4 prosecutions in 2024 and 2 in 2025).

The Tiszalök National Prison was led by:

- 1) *from 01 September 2022 until 14 November 2023* Colonel [A],
- 2) *from 15 November 2023 to 31 October 2024* Colonel [B],
- 3) *from 01 November 2024* Colonel [C].

Following the extraordinary event of 25 September 2023, on 28 September 2023, the Debrecen Regional Investigating Prosecutor's Office (hereinafter: Prosecutor's Office) informed the governor of the prison that in the pending criminal case of group assault and other offences, it had ordered the arrest of 4 members of the staff of the prison institute (sergeant major [D], sergeant [F], sergeant [G] and sergeant [H]) and questioned them as suspects for the commission of an offence as an accomplice, in accordance with the Criminal Code of 2012. C. of 2012 (hereinafter referred to as "the Criminal Code"), in an official proceeding, in violation of Article 301(1) and (2), and the offence of assault committed as a group, and the offence of assault committed as a co-conspirator, in

violation of Article 301(1) and (2) assault in a group, in violation of Article 164(1) and in violation of Article 164(8) of the Criminal Code.

Sergeant [G] was released on 25 October 2023 and Sergeant [H] on 24 January 2024 from the Heves County Remand Prison. Sergeant major [D] and sergeant major [F] were released from the Békés County Remand Prison.

The employment of sergeant major [D] was terminated by resignation at his own request pursuant to Article 80 (2) (b) of Act XLII of 2015 on the Act XLII of 2015 on the service relationship of the professional personnel of organs performing law enforcement duties (hereinafter: the Law Enforcement Service Act) with effect from 24 January 2024, and the employment of sergeant major [F] was terminated by resignation at his request with effect from 13 April 2025 pursuant to Article 80 (2) (b) of the Law Enforcement Service Act.

According to the information received by the Prosecutor's Office on 11 April 2024, the 2 members of the staff of the prison (sergeant [I], social assistant and lieutenant [J], acting chief reintegration officer) were dismissed in on 21 March 2024, for the offence of conspiracy to commit an offence as an accomplice, contrary to Section 282(1)(a) of the Criminal Code and in breach of the official duty of an official, as defined in Section 282(3)(d).

On 6 May 2024, the Prosecutor's Office continued the interrogation of sergeant major [I] and lieutenant [J] as suspects. The facts of the accusation and the legal classification of the offence were amended as follows: sergeant major [I] and lieutenant [J] are suspected of being accessories to an offence under 301(1) of the Criminal Code and as an accomplice in an official proceeding, which is a group offence under paragraph (2).

On 3 March 2025, the Prosecutor's Office interrogated major [K] as a suspect for the crime of conspiracy to commit an offence in the course of official proceedings of an official in breach of Section 282 (1) (b) of the Criminal Code and qualifying as an official under Section 282 (3) (d).

On March 3, 2025, the Prosecutor's Office questioned lieutenant [L] as a suspect in the crime of assault committed in an official procedure in violation of Section 301 (1) of the Criminal Code and in violation of Section 164 (1) of the Criminal Code and the crime of attempted grievous bodily harm causing permanent disability committed against a person incapable of defending themselves, as defined in Section 164(1) and (6)(b) and (d) of the Criminal Code.

In connection with the incident, disciplinary proceedings were ordered against 15 members of staff, listed below, which were suspended pending the outcome of the criminal proceedings:

- 1) Sergeant [G]
- 2) Sergeant [H]
- 3) Company first ensign [E]
- 4) Sergeant major [F]
- 5) First lieutenant [J]
- 6) Sergeant major [I]
- 7) Company first ensign [M]
- 8) First ensign [N]
- 9) First ensign [O]
- 10) Sergeant major [P]
- 11) Sergeant major [Q]
- 12) Lieutenant [L]
- 13) Company first ensign [R]
- 14) Captain [S]
- 15) Major [T]

The disciplinary proceedings against sergeant [H] and sergeant [G], which were initiated on 25 September 2023 and simultaneously suspended, shall be terminated on the basis of the second round of Article 210 (1) (e) of the Criminal Code, On 3 October 2023, the commanding officer in charge of the staff terminated the service of Sergeant [H] and Sergeant [G], in view of the fact that their service status was terminated, at their request, with effect from 2 October 2023, in accordance with the provisions of the Law Enforcement Service Act pursuant to § 80 (2) (b).

On 24 January 2024, the deputy chief of staff terminated the disciplinary proceedings against company first ensign [E], which had been initiated on 27 September 2023 and suspended at the same time, pursuant to the second turn of Article 210 (1) (e) of the Law Enforcement Service Act, taking into account that the service status of company first ensign [E].

On 14 April 2025, the deputy chief of staff terminated the disciplinary proceedings of sergeant major [F], which had started on 27 September 2023 and was simultaneously suspended, on the basis of the second turn of Article 210 (1) (e) of the Law Enforcement Service Act, because the service status of the staff member - upon his request - was terminated with effect from 13 April 2025.

Company first ensign [R]'s service relationship was terminated — at his own request — with effect from January 31, 2025, by mutual agreement, based on point a) of paragraph (2) of Section 80 of the Law Enforcement Service Act by the commander of the Tiszalök National Prison. Therefore, the disciplinary procedure ordered on September 27, 2023, and simultaneously suspended, was terminated on February 3, 2025, pursuant to the second clause of point e) of paragraph (1) of Section 210 of the Law Enforcement Service Act.

The following staff members are currently subject to suspended disciplinary proceedings in the prison:

- 1) Sergeant major [I]
- 2) First lieutenant [J]
- 3) Company first ensign [M]
- 4) First ensign [N]
- 5) First ensign [O]
- 6) Sergeant major [P]
- 7) Sergeant major [Q]
- 8) Major [T]

Transferred to other prisons, subject to suspended disciplinary proceedings:

- 1) Lieutenant [L]
- 2) Captain [S]
- 3) Major [K]

Lieutenant [L] was transferred to the Budapest Remand Prison by 1 March 2025.

Captain [S] was transferred to the staff of the 5th Agglomeration Centre (Csenger National Prison) with effect from 1 October 2024.

Major [K] with effect from 1 December 2023 to the Middle-Transdanubium National Prison.

26. The CPT recommends that the Hungarian authorities build on the recent promising developments at Tiszalök Prison and provide full support to the management of the establishment in their efforts to eradicate ill-treatment of prisoners by staff. Management and senior staff should remain vigilant to any signs of ill-treatment and take appropriate action to ensure that such instances are reported to the relevant investigative authorities without undue delay (see also paragraphs 31 and foll.).

Further, the Committee reiterates its recommendation that all staff at Tiszalök Prison continue to regularly receive a firm message that all forms of ill-treatment, including verbal abuse, of persons deprived of their liberty are unprofessional, unacceptable and unlawful and will be punished accordingly.

In addition, steps should be taken to ensure that prisoners do not suffer from discriminatory practices.

Non-violent treatment of prisoners is a national priority for the Hungarian Prison Service.

In addition to the measures listed in point 25, general expectations to communicate with all prisoners in a formal tone of voice during the execution of a sentence or coercive measure, regardless of the

seriousness of the offence committed by the prisoner, his/her skin colour, religious beliefs, nationality or sexual orientation, are regularly defined in staff meetings and briefings. Final convictions for offences of misconduct in the line of duty and assault in official proceedings will also be presented to staff in a documented manner as a negative example. Documented on-the-spot presentation and processing of anonymised convictions sent by the Disciplinary Unit of the Hungarian Prison Service Headquarters' Human Service have been and will continue to be part of the staff sensitisation measures.

27. The CPT recommends that staff at Szombathely Prison receive a clear message that all forms of ill-treatment are unprofessional, unacceptable and unlawful and will be punished accordingly. Further, it should be reiterated to staff that they must treat prisoners in their custody with respect and that any form of verbal abuse and/or disrespectful behaviour is unacceptable.

Further, the Committee would like to receive updated information on the investigations into the two aforementioned complaints of ill-treatment by staff lodged at Szombathely Prison in 2024 and 2025, including the number of convictions and an account of criminal/disciplinary sanctions imposed and/or any other measures taken.

The prison service totally rejects all forms of ill-treatment.

On 6 August 2025, the Security Department of the Szombathely Prison issued an information document on the absolute prohibition of the ill-treatment of prisoners, which was also delivered as training to the staff concerned. Within the prison, during the pre-shift security officer briefings given prior to starting service, the attention of staff directly dealing with prisoners is drawn to the lawful means of treatment of prisoners. In any case where suspicion arises in connection with ill-treatment perpetrated by a staff member, a detailed investigation is carried out without exception. Should the act also give rise to suspicion of a criminal offence of ill-treatment committed in official proceedings, a report to the competent authority is made *ex officio*.

In 2024, in relation to a complaint submitted to the competent military prosecutor's office on suspicion of ill-treatment committed in official proceedings by a staff member of the prison, the institution carried out a 24-hour investigation into the incident. The examination of the CCTV recordings established that the security check complained about had been carried out in accordance with the rules. The head of the Detention Affairs Department ordered that the fellow cellmates of the prisoner concerned be interviewed, and the relevant staff members were also summoned to submit their statements. The hearing of the inmates involved in the incident, which was recorded in the minutes, confirmed the victim's statement in one case. No such findings were made with regard to the other inmates, the ward supervisors' report did not contain any indication thereof, and the medical examination did not confirm the inmate's allegations. Nevertheless, on the basis of the testimony given during the hearings of the victim and one of his cellmates, suspicions arose concerning the responsibility of the staff members who denied having committed the criminal offence of ill-treatment in official proceedings. The governor of the prison filed a criminal complaint with the competent investigative prosecution service against an unknown perpetrator on suspicion of the criminal offence of ill-treatment in official proceedings. Disciplinary proceedings were also ordered against the implicated staff members, which were suspended until the final conclusion of the criminal proceedings. At the competent investigative prosecution service, the case is still at the investigation stage of the criminal proceedings against the said staff members, and consequently, the competent investigating prosecutor's office cannot provide further information or data on the grounds of investigative interests. To date, no request or summons has been received by the prison institution.

In 2025, in connection with a complaint submitted to the military prosecutor's office on suspicion of ill-treatment committed in official proceedings by a staff member of the prison, the 24-hour investigation into the incident was carried out. After receiving primary medical treatment, the injured prisoner was transported to the emergency department of the regionally competent medical institution. The inmates concerned were interviewed separately with minutes drawn up. During the interview, a cellmate stated that the injured inmate had been assaulted by the ward supervisor on duty. Following the order for a supervisory investigation, analysis of the relevant CCTV footage established that the ward supervisor on duty had physically assaulted the prisoner following a prior conflict. The governor of the prison therefore ordered the immediate removal from duty of the members of staff involved in the incident, and also ordered the summoning of the security officer, chief security supervisor and ward supervisor who were on duty on the day of the incident and

instructed them to submit written reports. During the hearing, the ward supervisor concerned admitted to having failed to report the assault and the use of coercive measures. The governor of the prison filed a criminal complaint against an unknown perpetrator with the competent investigative prosecution service on suspicion of the criminal offence of ill-treatment in official proceedings. A final judgment was handed down in the criminal proceedings (fine). Disciplinary proceedings were also carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Law Enforcement Service Act, as a result of which the colleague was reprimanded in accordance with the first-instance decision imposing disciplinary punishment dated 29 August 2025.

Prior to every service shift, during the security officer briefings, the attention of staff members directly dealing with prisoners is drawn to the lawful means of treating prisoners. In any case where suspicion arises that a staff member has committed ill-treatment, a detailed investigation into the incident is ordered without exception. Should the act give rise to suspicion of the commission of the criminal offence of ill-treatment, a report is made *ex officio* to the competent authority.

30. The CPT reiterates its recommendation that prison officers receive the clear message that any kind of threats, intimidating action or reprisals against a prisoner who has complained of ill-treatment (or who wishes to do so), or any attempts to prevent complaints or requests from reaching the relevant supervisory or complaints bodies, or investigative authorities, will not be tolerated and will be punished accordingly. Disciplinary procedures (or a threat to initiate them) should under no circumstances be used to intimidate prisoners or to punish them for having complained.

Further, steps should be taken to ensure that the confidential nature of complaints lodged by prisoners with the relevant supervisory or complaints bodies, or investigative authorities, and the subsequent communication between prisoners and these bodies and authorities is respected.

The prison service and the management of institutions expect staff to handle complaints in an effective, professional, and lawful manner.

No complaints have been received regarding the treatment of staff at the Department for Detention Affairs of the Szombathely Prison. Official letters issued by prisoners to the authorities and international organizations are, in all cases, duly dispatched with full documentation; their forwarding route is traceable, and their delivery can be verified. Letters addressed to authorities and international organizations are forwarded without any prior screening, with security checks only being carried out in justified cases and recorded in an official report. Even in such cases, the staff member carrying out the check does not learn of the content of the correspondence.

As of 1 April 2025, the governor of 1st Agglomeration Center introduced a so-called “complaint map” in the subordinate prison institutions. In this register, each prison records complaints according to their subject matter at the time of submission, regardless of whether they have been investigated or whether they were found to be well-founded or dismissed. As a result, after an evaluative and analytical assessment, the reasons for frequently occurring complaints can be identified, thereby enabling the development of appropriate measures for their prevention and elimination.

In 2024, disciplinary proceedings were initiated against prisoners in 1,330 cases, of which 328 were discontinued, 55 were refused by the competent authority, and 7 were overturned. Complaints against disciplinary punishments as well as requests for judicial review were, in all cases, forwarded by the prison institution to ensure the right to legal remedy of the prisoners concerned and to enable second-instance proceedings. In 2025, disciplinary proceedings were initiated in 959 cases, of which 184 were discontinued and in 191 cases the initiation of proceedings was refused by the competent disciplinary authority.

Overall, it can be concluded that the right of prisoners to lodge complaints is upheld at the Szombathely Prison. All complaints are thoroughly examined, no retaliation against complainants has been detected, and every form of retaliation is strictly prohibited. Complaints submitted by prisoners regarding the conditions of their detention are forwarded to the authorities as a matter of priority, and their follow-up is ensured. Any form of obstruction of their forwarding to the authorities is prohibited and not tolerated. Staff members working directly with prisoners – reintegration officers and unit supervisors – are regularly reminded of this.

In the case of the Tiszalök Prison, a further guarantee for the safe delivery of prisoners' complaints is that they have the option to request a hearing with the prosecutor through the KIOSZK system, which submissions cannot be modified or deleted. After submitting such requests, prisoners can present their grievances and complaints in person to the prosecutor responsible for supervision of the legality of penitentiary proceedings and for the protection of rights. Furthermore, letters sent by prisoners to the authorities are issued in sealed envelopes, and staff members are not permitted to check their contents. Documented training was held for the entire staff of the Department for Detention Affairs on final criminal convictions of staff members for offences committed in service. Final judgments, which included convictions for duty-related offences (e.g., failure to forward requests, failure to process cases) and for ill-treatment in official proceedings, were presented in a documented manner as negative case examples.

During pre-service briefings, personnel working directly with prisoners are reminded of the lawful means of treatment of detainees. In the event of suspicion of verbal intimidation or physical abuse by a member of staff, a detailed investigation of the case is ordered in each instance. If the act in question constitutes harassment or ill-treatment that may also constitute a criminal offense in official proceedings, the competent authorities are notified *ex officio* for the purpose of initiating criminal proceedings.

Chapter II

Prison establishments

2/b Ill-treatment - investigation of allegations of ill-treatment

35. The CPT recommends that the Hungarian authorities take the necessary steps to ensure that investigations into allegations of ill-treatment of prisoners by staff are carried out effectively and, in particular, comply with the requirements of thoroughness, comprehensiveness, promptness and expeditiousness. In particular, this will imply timely gathering of the necessary evidence, including medical evidence, CCTV and body-worn cameras footage, and witnesses statements.

Further, the Committee would like to receive updated information on the investigations into allegations of ill-treatment of prisoners by staff at Tiszalök Prison initiated between 2018 and 2025 which were pending at the time of the 2025 visit, including the number of convictions, an account of criminal/disciplinary sanctions imposed and/or any other measures taken.

According to Point 14 of the reporting procedure set out in Annex 1 to the BVOP Instruction 18/2022. (VII. 13.) *on the duty service activities and the reporting order of the penitentiary organization, as well as the procedural rules relating to prisoners requiring special attention*, in the event of a well-founded suspicion of a criminal offense committed by a member of the staff (crimes against life, physical integrity and health, crimes endangering health, crimes against human freedom, crimes against sexual freedom and sexual morality, crimes against the state, corruption crimes, violent crimes against property), a detailed command investigation must be conducted within 24 hours, including the findings and measures taken (including minutes of hearings, reports and summaries of CCTV recordings). In the event of suspected crimes committed by staff against a detainee, the governor of the prison concerned shall initiate steps to file a criminal complaint.

In order to facilitate the investigation of extraordinary events, a new interface for the registration and processing of hearing minutes has been introduced in the prisoner register, which ensures that the recorded minutes can be retrieved immediately at any later stage. Following this development, the recorded minutes become instantly accessible in the prisoner register, and once finalized, cannot be modified.

According to Section 376 (2) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, the governor of the prison is obliged *ex officio* to file a criminal complaint in all cases where a detainee reports ill-treatment or any other unlawful act committed against him or her.

If, at the time of the report or on the basis of the prisoner's complaint, the identity of the staff member who committed the violation can be clearly established, or information pointing at the perpetrator can be determined, the governor of the institution shall, under Section 181 (1) of the Law Enforcement

Service Act, initiate disciplinary proceedings *ex officio*, which under Section 198 (2) (c) shall be suspended until the completion of the criminal proceedings.

According to Section 199 (1) of the Law Enforcement Service Act, if the severity or nature of the disciplinary offense requires the temporary removal of the person subject to the proceedings from their place of work, they may be suspended from their position until the proceedings are concluded, but for no longer than two months.

Under paragraph (3), if the disciplinary proceedings have been suspended in view of pending criminal proceedings under Section 198 (2) (c), the suspension from service under paragraphs (1) and (2) may be extended for the duration of such proceedings. The duration of the suspension from service may not, however, exceed eighteen months.

These legal provisions place the application of the legal institution of suspension from service within the discretion of the person exercising disciplinary authority. If a detainee lodges a complaint of ill-treatment, this does not automatically result in the suspension from service of the staff member concerned; this may only occur in particularly justified cases, after thorough consideration of all facts and circumstances.

The legal principle of the presumption of innocence under Section 1 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, which also applies to members of the staff, must also be taken into account here.

The mere fact that a detainee files a complaint against a staff member cannot, in itself, result in the automatic suspension of the person concerned. Based on complaints filed by detainees concerning ill-treatment and abuse of office in recent years, it can be concluded that some of the complaints were made out of revenge, or with the aim of discrediting a given officer. This conclusion is supported by the fact that the vast majority of investigations into alleged ill-treatment were terminated by the investigating authority after 1-2 years due to lack of evidence or absence of a criminal offense.

If a governor were to apply suspension from service automatically in all cases of detainee complaints alleging ill-treatment, the staff available for duty would be “exhausted” within a short time, there would be no supervisors available for duty, and the remaining staff would also refrain from taking lawful measures against detainees even when they are legally obliged to do so.

The frequent application of suspension from service could also carry the risk that detainees would submit such complaints in a campaign-like manner, which could effectively paralyze the lawful and legitimate operation of the institution concerned.

It is also within the governor’s discretion to temporarily reassign staff members who are the subject of complaints of ill-treatment to other duty stations or assign them to different service tasks.

The current status of proceedings launched between 2018 and 2025 in respect of allegations of ill-treatment by staff in Tiszalök Prison is as follows:

Of the 47 proceedings, 18 investigations were terminated on the basis of Section 398 (1) (c) of the Code of Criminal Procedure (no evidence was available, or based on the evidence provided, no criminal offence could be established), in one case, the investigating authority decided to dismiss the complaint under Section 381 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, and in one further case, no criminal proceedings were initiated. In 22 cases, the investigating authority is still conducting investigations, no witnesses have been heard and no charges have been brought.

In a case launched in 2020, five staff members were charged and disciplinary proceedings were also ordered against them, which were suspended until the end of the criminal proceedings.

In one of the criminal proceedings initiated in 2022, the investigation is still ongoing, and disciplinary proceedings were ordered against three staff members, who have been suspended until the conclusion of the criminal proceedings. In the meantime, the service relationship of one staff member has been terminated (and the disciplinary proceedings against him have also been terminated). The prosecution has not yet issued charges in this case.

In another criminal case launched in 2022, the investigation is still ongoing. Eight staff members were charged in the case, all of whom were also subjected to disciplinary proceedings which were suspended until the end of the criminal case. In the meantime, the service relationship of three staff

members has ended. For four staff members, the prosecution terminated the proceedings due to lack of objective elements of a criminal offence (in their case the disciplinary proceedings were also terminated). At present, disciplinary proceedings are still pending against one staff member. In this case, a verdict has been reached in the case of one officer, who was convicted by the Regional Court of the offence of ill-treatment committed in official proceedings as an accomplice, and sentenced to two years' imprisonment, suspended for four years' probation.

In one of the criminal proceedings initiated in 2023, the investigation is still ongoing. Disciplinary proceedings were ordered against four members of staff, and they were suspended at the same time. Two of them were suspended from their positions, which expired on 6 November 2024, following which the governor ordered their re-assignment to service. No charges have yet been brought.

In another criminal case launched in 2023, the investigation is still ongoing. Disciplinary proceedings were ordered against two staff members and suspended until the completion of the criminal trial.

II. chapter Prison establishments

2/c Ill-treatment – the importance of medical examinations in the context of combating impunity

36. The Committee recommends that the Hungarian authorities take steps to ensure that a dedicated register is established and properly maintained at Tiszalök and Szombathely Prisons and, where relevant, in all other prisons in Hungary, in which all injuries observed during any medical examination, whether displayed by prisoners upon admission, following a violent episode in prison, or on any other occasion, are duly recorded.

The prison establishments pay special attention to accurately recording the findings and the date of the examination.

With regard to the processing of health data within the prison system, the regulations applicable to civilian healthcare are decisive, which define the scope of the data processed, the rules and procedures for the handling, storage, transfer, destruction and archiving of health documentation, and regulate access to health data in order to ensure its protection and the conditions necessary to preserve the integrity of health data.

Based on the rules of procedure for providing basic, outpatient, and inpatient healthcare to prisoners in prison establishments, the method of recording medical reports does not differ from general practice, but the frequency and situations that require the recording of medical reports differ from those customary in civil practice.

If a positive medical report is made about a prisoner, a photograph of the injury is also taken using the Mobile Health Application system, which is uploaded to the Phoenix Health Digital Register Almodul (hereinafter: FEDRA) system. In order to reduce the possibility of mistakes, the BVOP's health department has developed a program development proposal for the further development of the FEDRA system and the implementation of data recording – the incorporation of guarantee elements – with development expected to be completed by 31 December 2025.

39. The CPT recommends that the Hungarian authorities take the necessary steps to ensure that these precepts are effectively implemented in practice. In particular, whenever allegations of ill-treatment by staff are made by prisoners, or whenever prisoners display injuries which are indicative of ill treatment, they should be promptly and thoroughly medically examined, and the injuries systematically recorded and reported to the relevant authorities.

The institutions concerned always pay particular attention to the accurate recording of the medical report and its date.

The BVOP Health Department confirmed the professional requirements for recording medical reports in its technical guidance letter No. 30500-9/390-1/2025.eü. The aforementioned guidance letter details the cases in which a medical report is required and the precise documentation procedure.

The content of medical reports and opinions is specified in Annex 2 to ESzCsM Decree 47/2004. (V. 11.) on certain organizational issues of the continuous operation of healthcare services.

When recording the medical report, it is essential to provide an exact description of the location of the injuries and to accurately determine the shape and size of the injuries.

Methodological Letter No. 16 of the National Institute of Forensic Medicine provides assistance in characterizing the above and developing the general criteria necessary for assessing the duration of treatment. In the meantime, Methodological Letter No. 1/2025 (on the forensic medical expert opinion on bodily injury and health impairment in criminal proceedings).

Activities related to medical examinations in Hungary are regulated by the following legislation:

- Act CCXL of 2013 *on the enforcement of penalties, measures, certain coercive measures and detention for misdemeanours* (hereinafter: Punishment Enforcement Act),
- Decree No. 56/2014 (XII. 5.) of the Minister of Interior *on the procedures in police detention facilities*,
- Decree No. 47/2004. (V. 11.) of the Minister of Health, Social and Family Affairs *on certain organizational issues of the continuous operation of health care* and its Annex 2, which specifies the content of medical reports and opinions,
- Government Decree 284/1997 (XII. 23.) *on usage fees of certain healthcare services subject to usage fee*,
- Decree No. 8/2014 (XII. 12.) of the Minister of Justice *on the medical care of convicted prisoners and other prisoners held in prison institutions*,
- Decree No. 16/2014. (XII. 19.) of the Minister of Justice *on the detailed rules of confinement replacing prison sentencing, confinement, pre-trial detention and disciplinary fines* (hereinafter: IM Decree),
- BVOP Instruction No. 64/2020. (XII. 12.) *on the provision of health care of convicted prisoners and other prisoners held in prison institutions*,
- BVOP Instruction No.72/2020 (XII.23.) *on the security regulations of the penitentiary organisation* (hereinafter: Security Regulations),
- BVOP Instruction No 18/2022 (VII. 13.) *on the on-call activities and reporting procedures of the prison service and on the procedures for prisoner requiring special attention*,
- Methodological letter No. 16 of the National Institute of Forensic Medicine on forensic medical expert opinions on physical injuries and damage to health.
- Methodological letter No. 1/2025 of the Hungarian Chamber of Forensic Experts (on forensic medical expert opinions on physical injuries and health damage in criminal proceedings).

In other respects, the provisions summarised in point 36 shall prevail in relation to medical reports.

„40. The CPT recommends that the Hungarian authorities take the necessary steps to ensure that these precepts are effectively implemented in practice. In particular, as a general rule, all medical examinations of prisoners should be conducted out of the sight and hearing of prison officers, under conditions fully guaranteeing medical confidentiality unless, exceptionally, the healthcare professional concerned expressly requests otherwise in a given case.”

The presence of the prison organisation's personnel and the use of restraints prevent violent acts against officials or persons performing public duties, thereby protecting the lives and physical integrity of healthcare staff. For this reason, the security measure is highly justified.

Pursuant to Section 150(4) of the Punishment Enforcement Act the electronic surveillance devices may not be used to monitor medical offices, medical diagnostic facilities, and—with the exceptions specified in this law—other healthcare facilities, restrooms, and bathing facilities. Electronic surveillance devices may be installed in the infirmary and sickroom of a prison in order to monitor

prisoners who have previously attempted suicide or committed acts against their own or others' physical integrity, while taking care not to directly affect prisoners who are not subject to surveillance.

Pursuant to Section 6 of BVOP Instruction No. 64/2020 (XII. 12.) on the provision of health care of convicted prisoners and other prisoners held in prison establishments, *"During the medical examination, the prison doctor and healthcare staff (including non-prison staff) shall be present." In justified cases, a person of the same sex as the prisoner who performs security tasks may also be present during the examination, who shall not disclose any health data that comes to their knowledge. Where justified, a person of the same sex as the detainee who performs security tasks may also be present during the examination, who is obliged to treat the health data that comes to their knowledge as medical secrets in accordance with the provisions of Act XLVII of 1997 on the processing and protection of health and related personal data."*

The above shall only apply in cases where the current condition (aggressive behavior, outbursts of anger) of the prisoner receiving medical care justifies it in the interests of the safety of the caregivers and the detention facility, i.e., the use of physical restraints and the presence of security staff cannot be considered a general measure.

II. chapter

Prison establishments

2/d III-treatment - the use of body worn-cameras

41. The CPT would like to receive updated information on the number of body-worn cameras issued to staff at Tiszalök Prison and at other prisons in Hungary. Further, it would like to receive information on whether the Hungarian authorities plan to extend the use of body-worn cameras in the prison system. In addition, the Committee would like to receive detailed information on the rules applicable to the use of body-worn cameras, in particular as regards the obligation to wear and turn on the cameras, the time period for which recordings of incidents are stored and measures taken to ensure that the recording cannot be altered or erased.

There are currently 50 body-worn cameras available. Of these, 12 were issued to the BVOP KMO 16 to the Tiszalök National Prison, 16 to the Szombathely National Prison, and 6 to the Budapest Prison. An additional 100 devices are currently being procured (in the evaluation phase). A further 100 devices are currently in the process of being procured (in the evaluation phase).

Section 150/A of the Punishment Enforcement Act details the cases in which body-worn cameras may be used and also regulates the storage and deletion deadlines for recorded images and sound recordings. According to this, a member of the prison in a professional service relationship may, in connection with his or her actions or duties, identify a person or object, to verify the legality of the measure taken, and to exercise the rights of the person concerned, may use body cameras to make image and sound recordings of the convicted person affected by the measure, their environment, and circumstances and objects relevant to the measure.

The recordings are stored in a closed system and their handling is subject to authorization settings. Any intervention by authorized persons, regardless of their level, is recorded by the system, thus ensuring that responsibility can be determined. The deadline for deleting the recordings is ten days.

Body-worn cameras *may be* used in the event of an emergency; when opening cell doors; when placing inmates in disciplinary or security isolation; if the use of coercive measures is foreseeable inside or outside the prison; when conducting security checks; when supervising the activities of a group of more than ten inmates, if the supervision is carried out by a member of the staff; during patrols within the prison; when distributing packages, if a suspicious package is detected in advance; when carrying out scheduled or unscheduled headcounts; when checking the implementation of the scheduled wake-up call; when bringing in or transporting prisoners, or when escorting prisoners inside or outside the prison.

The use of body cameras is *mandatory* if a member of the prison staff in a professional service relationship has been equipped with one, and it must be operated continuously during the measure

or the performance of the service task. The recording made by the electronic surveillance device and the personal data contained therein in proceedings initiated due to a criminal offense or misdemeanor committed at the place of use of the device; in disciplinary proceedings initiated due to an offense committed by a convicted person or a member of the prison staff at the location where the device is used, and in proceedings aimed at determining the legality of the actions of a member of the prison staff at the location where the device is used.

II. chapter
Prison establishments
2/e III-treatment - inter-prisoner violence

42. The CPT recommends that staff at Szombathely and Tiszalök Prisons remain vigilant to any signs of inter-prisoner violence and intimidation, and intervene immediately and proportionately when such incidents occur. Further, measures to ensure that all prisoners can benefit safely from their entitlements, including access to outdoor exercise, should be systematically implemented.

If staff notice injuries on a prisoner, the relevant procedure is applied on the basis of suspected abuse until it can be excluded. The prevention of violent acts (violent, harassing, or intimidating behavior among prisoners) is one of the most important tasks of prison establishments, as these acts can seriously violate the human dignity and physical integrity of prisoners and hinder their successful reintegration. In prison establishments, the prevention of such acts is mainly achieved through dynamic security measures, e.g. examination of the inmates' criminal record, psychological state, criminal offense, and network of relationships; multi-faceted risk assessment following admission; regular but unpredictable checks by ward supervisors; training of the relevant staff in conflict management; personality development, aggression management, and conflict management reintegration programs. Use of other preventive measures, whether direct or static (e.g., electronic surveillance devices); emergency signals and alarms enabling immediate response; change of placement or isolation; disciplinary proceedings, issuance of individual security instructions (hereinafter: EBE).

Based on the individual activity data of the Szombathely National Prison, with particular regard to the effectiveness of activities aimed at preventing acts committed against each other, it can be established that in 2024, 2695 (6.1% of all activities) and by 5 August 2025, 1,297 (4.0% of all recorded sessions) sessions aimed at preventing acts committed against each other were held for prisoners. In addition to these, individual conversations are also a means of prevention, as during face-to-face conversations conducted by reintegration officers, prisoners have the opportunity to share their problems and provide information about any conflicts that may arise in the prison community. Closely linking individual conversations and preventive sessions can help to manage conflicts more effectively. In prison establishments, communication between the psychological, security, and detention departments is particularly effective, and the problems shared by inmates are dealt with appropriately between the departments, with the necessary sensitivity. Reintegration officer inspections, shift handovers, and scheduled body surface checks effectively help prevent and detect otherwise latent acts.

The Tiszalök National Prison treats the safety of inmates as a priority and actively works to prevent violent and abusive acts. In the event of any detected or reported incident, staff members dealing with inmates immediately take the necessary measures, which include a medical examination of the inmate concerned and a detailed investigation of the case. Following the investigations, the conclusions drawn during the case processing are implemented and incorporated into practice with a view to taking preventive measures. In 2025, three training sessions were held for the prison guards on the topic of recognizing acts committed by prisoners against each other, and this topic is discussed daily during briefings. The reintegration officers of the prison hold individual sessions for newly admitted inmates to inform them about the possible criminal and disciplinary consequences of acts committed against each other. Reintegration officers are also required to look for signs of abuse during reintegration officer inspections and to check on the natural movements of inmates by changing their location. Reintegration officers at the institution deal with acts committed against each other in group sessions with all prisoners. The sessions cover background information and draw attention to the possible consequences of violent acts committed against each other. Violent and

high-risk inmates are kept separate from each other in the prison, mostly by using the facilities provided by special units. Disciplinary proceedings have been initiated in all cases of acts committed against each other.

The prison establishment has the appropriate facilities, equipment, and legal conditions to ensure that inmates can engage in outdoor physical activity. Thanks to their previous design and recent developments, the walking and sports areas are suitable for sports and recreation. In case of unfavorable weather conditions, the rain shelter ensures that inmates can still spend time outdoors.

II. chapter

Prison establishments

3. Use of padded cells, hand- and ankle-cuffing of prisoners to fixed objects

46. The CPT recommends that the Hungarian authorities take urgent steps to ensure that these precepts are effectively implemented in practice. The relevant regulations should be amended accordingly and measures should be taken to ensure that staff are duly informed of the new procedures and requirements. Further, prison officers should be trained in verbal de-escalation techniques, and proportionate manual control and restraint techniques.

The staff of the prison service shall apply this type of segregation only in the cases, to the extent, and for the duration specified by law.

Pursuant to Section 146(6) of the Punishment Enforcement Act: *“A prisoner exhibiting behavior that poses a danger to themselves or others shall be placed in a room designed for this purpose – for this purpose, means of restraint may be used against them – and immediate measures shall be taken to have them examined by a doctor or, in the absence of a prison doctor, by a specialist nurse. In the latter case, measures shall be taken to ensure that the prisoner is examined by the prison doctor within two hours, with the involvement of a psychologist if necessary. Isolation may last for a maximum of eight hours and its necessity must be reviewed every two hours. After eight hours, if the prisoner’s condition has not improved, arrangements must be made for a psychiatric examination.”*

According to Section 147 of the Security Regulations, *“The decision on the continued detention of prisoners who exhibit behavior that poses a danger to themselves or others shall be made by the governor of the prison or a person appointed by him during working hours, and by the security officer on duty outside working hours.”* In addition to the provisions of the Security Regulations, point 1 of the Technical Protocol *on the implementation of certain security measures applicable to prisoners* (30500-16/354-1/2024.bizt.) details certain criteria relating to the design of the room under consideration and the placement of prisoners.

In 2022, the National Prison Service Headquarters Security Service investigated the availability of cells for the accommodation of convicted persons exhibiting self-endangering or dangerous behavior as defined in Sections 123 and 125 of the Ministry of Justice Decree and found that such cells had not been established in all facilities of all prison authorities.

The use of cells for the accommodation of prisoners exhibiting self-harming or dangerous behavior was implemented in 138 cases between 2023 and the first quarter of 2025 in certain agglomerations.

Typically, in 120 cases, handcuffs, handcuff belts, and leg irons were used together to restrain prisoners. In 10 cases, only handcuffs were used, and in 8 cases, handcuffs and leg irons were used. The use of restraints did not cause injury in any case. The restraints were ordered due to self-harming and dangerous behavior, as well as suicidal intent, and were accompanied by a medical examination. In most cases – 126 cases – the detainees were restrained in light clothing (underwear) in order to prevent the possibility of self-strangulation. The duration of the placements mostly did not exceed the 8 hours provided for by law, which suggests that the measure was effective and achieved the desired goal in most cases.

In order to ensure uniform interpretation and application of the legislation, the security department prepared a professional protocol by 30 June 2025, which includes all the guarantee elements and detailed rules that will provide significant assistance in the decision-making process for ordering security measures and in the homogeneous implementation procedure. Following the CPT visit, the

security department developed a concept for sensitivity training related to the provision of services by personnel. The exact schedule of sensitivity training, the assessment of the number of participants, and their division into groups will be developed in cooperation with the Human Resources Department, based on professional guidelines for training, from the fourth quarter of 2025.

47. However, as a matter of principle, the persons concerned should never be shackled to a bed or any other fixed object. Instead, they should be kept under close supervision in an appropriate setting. In the event of agitation brought about by the state of health of a prisoner, prison officers should request medical assistance and follow the instructions of the healthcare professional (including, where necessary, transfer to an appropriate healthcare setting). The CPT recommends that the Hungarian authorities take urgent steps to ensure that these precepts are effectively implemented in practice. The relevant regulations should be amended accordingly and measures should be taken to ensure that staff are duly informed of the new procedures and requirements.

Following the CPT visit, the security department conducted an investigation into the subject of restraint as a preventive measure to restrict movement. In terms of justification, the investigation found that the institutions applying the security measure had restrained the detainees in accordance with their legal authority, without exceeding its provisions. In most cases, staff used this method because of self-harming behavior or threats of self-harm, and to a lesser extent because of violent behavior or unpredictable and disturbed behavior.

The detailed development and standardization of the process for has begun. Based on international examples, a prototype bed designed for being shackled to a fixed object has been completed, and team testing of the device is currently underway.

In most of the cases examined, the security measure was applied to prevent self-harm, but in cases where the detainee exhibits other behavior that violates or threatens the order of the prison, restraint may be used to stop or eliminate such behavior, and prison staff have the option of using this measure to ensure its effective completion. Restraint for the purpose of preventing self-harm may only be carried out in a single-person isolation cell equipped with electronic surveillance devices, on a device designed for this purpose, in a supine position, with the limbs restrained and a device to protect the head in place. The duration of this measure shall not exceed two hours continuously. If the risk of self-harm persists after two hours, the restraint shall be discontinued and the detainee shall be placed in a room designed for the accommodation of detainees exhibiting self-harming or dangerous behavior.

The Security Regulations regulate restraint in points 169–175, according to which it is permissible, among other things, if it is necessary to prevent further self-harm, attack, or escape by the detainee, breaking resistance, or ensuring the effective completion of the measure cannot be ensured in any other way, and the prisoner's condition does not justify placement in a room intended for prisoners exhibiting behavior that is dangerous to themselves or others. The opinion of a doctor or other medical personnel is also decisive in assessing the justification.

The legal provision contained in the previous paragraph includes all the guarantee elements which, if consistently and accurately complied with, enable the objective of the measure to be achieved in a manner that excludes inhuman or degrading treatment. The room equipped with electronic surveillance equipment is justified for the purpose of continuous surveillance, single-person isolation ensures that the person subject to the measure is not exposed to other detainees, the supine position excludes the possibility of suffocation, and the device protecting the head prevents further self-harming behavior, which is the only possible behavior during the measure. By placing prisoners who exhibit self-harming or dangerous behavior after two hours in a cell, the regulation emphasizes graduality. Restraint may be ordered by the head of the relevant department designated by the head of the prison service, or by the security officer on duty outside office hours. Restraint to objects was used in 72 cases nationwide during the period under review.

There is no uniform system of beds in prison institutions that would ensure a homogeneous procedure for taking measures, yet the method of shackling was basically the same in all cases, which meant that the hands and feet were secured independently of each other to the four corners of the bed. There are correctional institutions where the security measure is differentiated according

to the reason for its application; if the degree of violent behavior did not justify the restraint of all four limbs, only the two hands were restrained to the upper two corners of the bed.

In terms of time intervals, it can be established that in 55 cases, staff used the room for up to two hours or close to that, and in no case during the period under review was the room used to accommodate a detainee who exhibited self-endangering or dangerous behavior for longer than the specified two hours.

A methodological guideline was issued on 4 July 2025 (30500-16/444-3/2025.bizt.) regarding the use of cells for the accommodation of prisoners exhibiting self-harming and dangerous behaviour so that prison institutions can adapt the current provisions on restraint in accordance with a uniform procedure.

II. Chapter Prison establishments

4/a Conditions of detention of the general prison population – material conditions

50. The CPT encourages the Hungarian authorities to ensure that cells on the third floor of building A1 at Szombathely Prison with only limited outside view are used for their intended purpose, that is short-term segregation, rather than for long-term placement of prisoners. Further, steps should be taken to ensure that all cells are properly ventilated.

The ventilation of the cells on the third floor of Building A1 is ensured from a technical point of view. The cells are naturally ventilated through the windows. The ancillary rooms are equipped with mechanical extraction, which is partially supplemented by a gravity system, so that ventilation continues to function even in the event of a mechanical failure. The entire ventilation system of the facility has been installed in accordance with the relevant technical specifications and is continuously maintained during operation. If any component is found to be faulty, it is repaired immediately.

In order to ensure that the cells on the third floor of Building A1 of the Szombathely Prison Penitentiary Institute, which have limited outside view, serve as isolation cells, 15 female prisoners were transferred to another institution in consultation with the National Prison Service Headquarters Registration and Logistics Department. During the week of 1 September 2025, 15 female prisoners were transferred to the Veszprém County Remand Prison. On 1 September 2025, 13 female prisoners were moved to other cells. Subsequently, cells with restricted views are designated for security or disciplinary isolation, private confinement, or confinement for a period not exceeding 10 days. Furthermore, inmates who require electronic surveillance will be placed in these cells for the duration of the admission procedure, for a maximum of 15 days.

51 The CPT recommends that the Hungarian authorities take steps to ensure that there is a sufficient quantity of hot water for prisoners to maintain personal hygiene. Further, all showers should be maintained in working order.

If a malfunction is detected, it is repaired immediately. In buildings A1, A3, and A4, the cold and hot water supply is monitored and controlled by a computer system, while in building A2, the pipes are controlled by magnetic switches located on each floor. From 1 March 2025, there were 38 faults affecting the hot water supply, which have been repaired. In the case of cells controlled by the “Franke” system, the duration of hot water supply has been increased from 3 minutes to 4 minutes per inmate. In practice, this means that the shower time for each inmate has been extended by 1 minute, allowing for more comfortable and thorough personal hygiene. The aim of the change is to ensure that the time available is actually sufficient for inmates and to improve the quality of care.

52. Given the cramped conditions observed during the visit, the Committee considers that double-occupancy cells at Tiszalök Prison should be used for their intended occupancy.

On the day of the inspection, 28 August 2025, there were 39 cells at the Tiszalök Prison where overcrowding had developed, and cells designed to accommodate two people had been made suitable for three people by adding an extra bed.

In order to eliminate overcrowding in two-person cells, 27 inmates were transferred on 1 September 2025. Based on an analysis of the data, a further 15 inmates need to be transferred, which will take place in September 2025 following consultation with the head of the Registration and Logistics Department.

In order to eliminate the circumstances referred to, with the involvement of Sátorajáújhely Strict and Medium Regime Prison, and with the optimal placement of prisoners who can be placed in living quarters, the conversion of cells to accommodate two people has begun, which will continue from 2 September 2025, the competent department of the National Prison Service Headquarters will check the prisoner register every working day at the start of office hours, simultaneously informing the deputy commander responsible for professional management and the commander of the institution.

53. Moreover, in several cells, thin bed boards were broken and electrical lights were damaged. The CPT recommends that these deficiencies be remedied.

Damaged mattresses were inspected, and a total of 51 broken mattresses were replaced with slatted beds. The institute took the necessary measures to repair the electric lights. Currently, there are no cells without lighting.

54. The CPT recommends that the Hungarian authorities take steps to ensure that outdoor exercise yards at Tiszalök and Szombathely Prisons are equipped with a means of rest, a shelter from inclement weather and some sports equipment. Further, steps should be taken to ensure that prisoners can use the sports equipment in the yards.

Despite not being required to do so by law, prison institutions strive to equip exercise yards with equipment suitable for outdoor recreation and sports, and the National Prison Service Headquarters plans to roll out this initiative nationwide in the future.

Thirteen rain shelters were installed in the exercise yards of the Szombathely Prison. In addition to the above, the prison ordered eight basketballs and eight soccer balls, which inmates will be able to use during sports activities.

At the Tiszalök Prison, 10 small and 6 large rain shelters were installed as part of the development of the exercise yards. In addition, one large rain shelter was installed in each of the four exercise yards of the light-weight detention facility. As part of the investment, outdoor sports equipment and benches were also installed for the inmates.

„55. The CPT recommends that the Hungarian authorities take steps to ensure that the quantity and quality of food provided to prisoners at Szombathely Prison is reviewed. All prisoners should be provided with three adequately nutritious and sufficiently calorific meals a day, at least one of which is hot.”

The national menus (basic and special medical diets) were and are compiled by food managers appointed by the agglomeration governors, and then approved by the commanders of the correctional institutions and health care specialists. At the Szombathely Prison, a standardized prisoner menu (hereinafter: menu) was also introduced on 1 September 2024. The reason for introducing the menu was to standardize prisoner food supplies in terms of basic and special medical diets. With the introduction of the menu, the raw material requirements for meals were also standardized.

The menu has been developed in accordance with the following legislation:

Ministry of Justice Decree 16/2014 (XII. 19.) on the detailed rules for the enforcement of imprisonment, detention, pre-trial detention and detention replacing administrative fines. Annex 6 to the Decree specifies the daily calorie intake to be provided to prisoners.

Ministry of Interior Decree 13/2022 (IV. 29.) on the professional and nutritional health requirements for the provision of food to prisoners and other detainees in prison institutions (hereinafter: MoI Decree). Annex 1 to the MoI Decree stipulates that, in addition to raw meat and bread, vegetables and fruit must be included on a weekly basis, alongside the provision of raw meat and bread.

Prior to food distribution, the health department of the correctional facility inspects not only the meals prepared in the kitchen, but also the food items that make up breakfast, dinner, and snacks. The results of the inspection are recorded in a so-called tasting book. If a health care professional classifies a given food item as "unfit for consumption," it may not be distributed to inmates and must be replaced. In 2025, no food items were classified as "unfit for consumption" in the tasting book.

The standard menu provides one hot meal per day in the form of lunch. If the operation of the main kitchen is threatened by unavoidable circumstances, the prison may provide cold meals to inmates for three days, while complying with the daily calorie requirements and any special medical diet requirements.

The cold dinner criticized by the CPT, "a small fatty piece of cold meat" is not included in the menu. Cold dinners typically consist of 100-130 g of canned food, baked goods, smoked bacon, smoked sausage, and vegetables/fruit. In addition to the cold dinners on the menu, the daily calorie requirement specified in the Ministry of Justice Decree regulation is also met. The menu is reviewed twice a year by designated food managers, based on information provided by the correctional institutions, in order to maintain consistency.

II. Chapter Prison establishments 4/b Conditions of detention of the general prison population – regime

62. The CPT recommends that the Hungarian authorities continue their efforts and further develop the programme of activities offered to prisoners at Szombathely and Tiszalök Prisons and, where relevant, in all other prisons in Hungary, with a view to ensuring that they have a genuine opportunity to progress through the classification system. Particular attention should be paid to the situation of categories IV and V prisoners, female prisoners and to prisoners placed in the therapeutic unit at Szombathely Prison. The aim should be to ensure that all persons held in prison spend a reasonable part of the day (that is, eight hours or more) outside their cells, engaged in purposeful activities of a varied nature: work (preferably paid work with vocational value); education; sport; recreation/association, with a view to preparing them for release and reintegration in the community. In addition, a range of non-gender-stereotyped purposeful activities should be available to female prisoners.

Further, staff should continue their efforts to motivate prisoners to participate in various activities.

Following the CPT visit, the BVOP conducted a nationwide review of the involvement of prisoners classified in categories IV and V in reintegration activities. According to data from the prisoner register as of 10 September 2025, the total number of prisoners classified in categories IV and V was 4,976. There were 3,849 prisoners classified as category IV and 1,127 classified as category V. During the period under review, a total of 1,386 (27.85%) of prisoners classified as categories IV and V were working. Of the prisoners classified in category IV, 536 (13.92%), and of those classified in category V, 33 (2.92%), only participated in work. The discrimination criticized by the CPT does not appear in the employment of prisoners classified in categories IV and V, as correctional institutions widely provide employment for prisoners. Nationwide, 75.48% of prisoners classified in categories IV and V participate in work or reintegration programs, while 75.50% of those classified in categories I-II-III do so.

At the Szombathely National Prison, 34 credit-earning reintegration programs are available to inmates, which they can learn about through the KIOSZK system and bulletin boards. Based on their written applications, they are guaranteed admission to the programs. According to data from 10 September 2025, 117 inmates are currently enrolled in the programs and in 2025, 982 inmates successfully participated in these programs, which serve to advance their progress in the

classification system. The activities provided consist primarily of training courses of education, self-awareness, competence development, preparation for release, employment rehabilitation, aggression management, and the prevention of addiction or promotion of cessation, in which the field of psychology is actively involved and provides significant support.

At the Szombathely National Prison, male and female inmates classified as Category V will also have the opportunity to apply for schooling in the 2025/26 academic year. Based on the applications processed so far, 35 male inmates classified as category V have indicated their intention to participate in primary or secondary education, and 8 female inmates are expected to participate in primary education. A social care and nursing course will be launched for 25 female inmates. The number of semi-skilled jobs for women has been increased by 10, creating a total of 25 jobs. Three food distributors, one cleaner, and one hairdresser are already employed in the women's section. Eleven female inmates are participating in the BVOP's "Embracing Hands and Pure Heart Scents" reintegration program, during which they make handmade products.

At the time of the CPT inspection, neither Category V prisoners nor female prisoners were pursuing primary or secondary education, and female employment was limited to hairdressing, food distribution, and semi-skilled labour. The employment of prisoners classified as category IV, their participation in courses, and their enrolment in primary and secondary education have been ensured to date. Currently, 58 prisoners classified as Category IV are attending primary school, 71 are attending secondary school, 11 are participating in vocational training, and 95 are employed.

There are currently 18 different reintegration programs running at the Tiszalök National Prison, with a total of 933 inmates participating. There are currently 1,150 inmates serving their sentences at the institute, of whom 81.13% are participating in some form of reintegration program. In addition to providing reintegration programs, the correctional institution also offers opportunities to participate in other reintegration activities. In addition to religious and denominational activities and prayer sessions, inmates can also pursue elementary and secondary school studies as well as vocational training.

The current number of convicts affected by the category system who are not included in the reintegration program is 117, of which

- 35 are classified in category IV,
- 29 are classified in category V,
- and 6 are female convicts.

Based on consultations with the Pannon Education Centre, the initial vocational training courses and the number of students to be enrolled were agreed upon in order to ensure the successful implementation of the next academic year. Compared to the 210 students enrolled for the 2024/2025 academic year, the number of students planned for the 2025/2026 academic year is expected to increase significantly, starting with 445 students. The number of prisoners who can be employed is 260. The current number of employees is 246. The Reception and Detention Committee fulfills the maximum number of job placements, taking into account the submitted labour demand. In addition to intellectual and community activities, sports activities are also provided at the institution, which are ensured in accordance with applicable legislation using two outdoor sports courts, a gym, and sports equipment located in the walking yards. As part of their leisure activities, inmates are also allowed to visit the library and use the fitness room.

The prison provides employment opportunities for 29 inmates classified as category V. Within the Long-Term Special Unit (hereinafter: HSR), three ceramic painters and one food distributor are employed. Additionally, Annamajori Kereskedelmi és Mezőgazdasági Kft. (Hereinafter: Kft.) operates a branch bakery on the premises of the institution, employing 25 people. At the request of the Kft., employment will be provided for 31 people from September 1, 2025. In connection with these employment opportunities, discussions are underway to assess the possibilities for vocational training in baking at the institution. The prison also provides employment for 15 female inmates: 8 work as workshop-cleaners, 6 work in the workshop-laundry, and 1 works as a cleaner in the healthcare area.

63. The CPT recommends that the Hungarian authorities take steps to ensure that prisoners are not asked to pay for participation in meaningful activities (including indoor sports facilities such as gyms). As already stated in the recommendation in paragraph 62, sport should form an integral part of a regime of purposeful activities provided to prisoners. The relevant regulations should be amended accordingly.

As an incentive and motivational tool, prisoners classified in category V are not allowed to use the prison gym at all, while prisoners classified in categories I and II can use it free of charge. Prisoners who are unable to use the facility free of charge or, depending on their category, are unable to use it at all, can participate in sports activities organized by the correctional institutions or can engage in sporting activities in the outdoor courtyard designed for outdoor recreation.

One of the elements of the former incentive system is that prisoners can be rewarded with free access to the fitness room, which is granted depending on their behaviour. The physical and mental development of prisoners is ensured even without the use of additional services and is available within the framework of the incentive system, which is one of the cornerstones of the reintegration process. For the above reasons, based on the professional opinion of the BVOP, there is no justification for changing the regulations.

II. Chapter Prison establishments

5. The situation of prisoners held in the HSR unit at Tiszalök Prison

66. The CPT reiterates its recommendation that the opaque panes fitted to the cell windows be removed in the HSR unit at Tiszalök Prison and, where appropriate, in any other prison establishment in the country.

Furthermore, the Committee again invites the authorities to consider removing the plastic panels mounted to the inner bars in the cells.

The "throw-out barriers" installed on the windows of the cells are considered a security feature. The reason for installing them is to prevent prisoners from communicating with each other and to minimize the possibility of throwing trash out of the windows. No complaints have been received by the prison in this regard. The windows of the cells at the HSR are fitted with opaque plexiglass. They provide a kind of protective function for prisoners due to the orientation of the building, protecting them from strong sunlight and creating a calmer environment for them by reducing visual stimuli. They are also considered a security feature, as they prevent prisoners from communicating with each other and from bringing in prohibited items.

The HSR houses prisoners serving life sentences or sentences of at least fifteen years, whose behaviour, willingness to cooperate during the execution of their sentences, their attitude towards the order and security of the prison, and their individual security risk assessment.

Recently, there have been several cases of violence against staff and disciplinary proceedings for disrespectful behaviour. There is also a growing trend at the national level in the number of suicides and other acts of self-harm, which prisoners often carry out using the bars on the cell windows or other static elements inside the cell (e.g., by tying themselves to the bars). For the reasons above, installing plexiglass on the bars of the partitioned section within the cell serves the interests of secure detention. For inspection purposes, it remains justified in order to ensure the safe performance of duties and to protect the life and physical integrity of persons entering the detainee's cell.

67. The CPT reiterates its recommendation that the Hungarian authorities end the blanket use of CCTV cameras within cells in the HSR unit at Tiszalök Prison and in any other prison establishment in the country. If continuous supervision of a prisoner is considered necessary on the basis of an individual risk assessment, the person concerned should be preferably placed in a dedicated observation room.

According to Section 150 (2) of the Punishment Enforcement Act, electronic monitoring devices may be placed on HSR in order to ensure the orderly execution of sentences and to prevent crimes, offenses, disciplinary offenses, or other violations of the law.

68. The CPT recommends that the Hungarian authorities enlarge the outdoor exercise yards in the HSR unit at Tiszalök Prison and equip them with some basic sports equipment and means of rest. Consideration could also be given to offering prisoners placed in the HSR unit access to the spacious ground-level outdoor yards used by the mainstream prison population, if necessary, during separate time slots.

A gym equipped with sports equipment has been set up in the accommodation section for prisoners held at the HSR. Different detention rules apply to prisoners held at the HSR, so they are not allowed to use the ground-floor exercise yards. The section houses prisoners serving life sentences or sentences of at least fifteen years, whose behaviour, willingness to cooperate during the execution of their sentences, their attitude towards the order and security of the prison, and their individual security risk assessment, warrant special treatment and therefore need to be separated from other prisoners.

69. The CPT reiterates its recommendation that the Hungarian authorities take steps to ensure that prisoners in the HSR unit at Tiszalök Prison and, where relevant, in any other prison establishment in the country, are able to spend as many hours as possible each day outside their cells and to participate in regular, purposeful and varied activities tailored to their individual needs, with the objective of (re)integrating them into the mainstream prison population.

It is a legal requirement to provide reintegration programs that are eligible for credit points. According to Section 105(4) of the Punishment Enforcement Act, when HSR is applied, the convicted person may pursue self-education, but may only take advantage of the institution's group cultural, sports, and leisure activities within the department or with the special permission of the commander.

Within the HSR, and directly accessible from it, there are separate recreation rooms, a walking yard, and a kitchen, which is not generally provided even to the vast majority of prisoners classified in the lower categories. Based on the above, the agenda items and individual programmes are designed with a view to ensuring a balanced sentence, taking into account the sentence data and detention risks of those placed in the HSR, which in many cases are even more favourable than in normal sections.

Currently, in addition to employment and outdoor recreation, the following leisure activities are provided in the HSR section of the institute:

- use of electronic game consoles,
- sports hall activities,
- library book exchange,
- gastronomy activities.

70. The Committee reiterates its recommendation that the Hungarian authorities ensure that prisoners placed in the HSR unit are not systematically handcuffed whenever they leave their cell. The decision to apply handcuffs should be based on an individual risk assessment.

Further, the practice of routinely handcuffing HSR prisoners during medical consultations/examinations should be discontinued.

In the case of prisoners placed in HSR, special treatment rules – including their movement and search – are implemented on the basis of EBE, which is issued after an individual risk assessment has been carried out. Therefore, any restriction of movement is not imposed based on placement in the HSR in general, but on the basis of an individual assessment of each prisoner. Restrictive devices are removed during outdoor recreation, sports activities, use of the recreation room, gym, Xbox, and Teams chat. In cases where handcuffs need to be removed for a medical examination, staff members will remove the handcuffs at the doctor's request.

II. Chapter Prison establishments

6. Healthcare services

72. The CPT encourages the Hungarian authorities to continue their efforts to fill the vacant posts of medical doctors and nurses at Szombathely Prison. The Committee would like to receive confirmation that a medical doctor was recruited in this establishment in May 2025. Further, it invites the authorities to consider increasing the presence of dentists in the establishment to the equivalent of a full-time post and the presence of a psychiatrist for one day per week.

The prison institutions continue to treat filling vacant positions as a high priority.

According to the staffing table of the Health Department of the Szombathely National Prison lists 19 nurse positions with one vacancy on September 1. Following the CPT visit, two specialist nurses were recruited on professional status on 23 April 2025 and 10 June 2025, but one of them resigned on 31 August 2025. Of the 18 appointed specialist nurses, two perform other tasks in the Health Department (head nurse, deputy head of department) on a temporary basis, one performs the duties of a section assistant in the Psychology Department, and one performs the duties of a senior lecturer in the Personnel and Social Department. Their positions can be filled by law enforcement administrative employees on a fixed-term basis. The prison does not have any contract nurses. Vacancies are continuously advertised on the prison's Facebook recruitment page. Two specialist nurses are currently being recruited as law enforcement administrative employees.

There were no applicants for the specialist positions. The positions were advertised on the Facebook recruitment page of the prison (Bv Toborzás Szombathely) and previously in a paid advertisement in the "Orvosi Hetilap" medical journal, but there were no interested applicants due to the salary and job opportunities in Austria.

Psychiatric care within the framework of the penal system is provided on the basis of an appointment through Telemedicine care, as well as on an emergency basis in urgent cases. Care is provided by specialists from the Forensic Psychiatric and Mental Institution (IMEI), but other prisons also have contracted psychiatrists.

73. The CPT reiterates its recommendation that the Hungarian authorities continue their efforts to fill the vacant posts of a medical doctor at Tiszalök Prison. Further, the Committee recommends that efforts be continued to fill the vacant nursing posts in this establishment.

The prison service continues to treat filling vacant positions as a high priority.

Two of the three specialist positions in the Health Department have been filled, but only one doctor is actually working at the institute. The staff member appointed to the other specialist position was reassigned to the Central Hospital of the Prison Service on 15 April 2024, to perform the duties of nursing director. Recruitment for the vacant specialist position is ongoing in cooperation with the recruitment team of the 5th Agglomeration Center. This year, the recruitment process was initiated for two specialists, but in both cases, the recruitment had to be suspended due to objectionable lifestyles. According to the staffing table of the correctional facility, there are two head nurse positions, one of which is filled by appointment and the other by contract, effective on 1 July 2025. The prison has entered into contracts with Alexis99 Bt., Mediuno Egészségügyi Szolgáltató Kft., and Corpus Sanus Egészségügyi Alapellátó Bt. for the provision of patient care and health care services until 31 December 2025.

76. The CPT recommends that the Hungarian authorities take steps to ensure that whenever an autopsy is performed following the death of a prisoner, the content of the autopsy report is shared with the establishment concerned, with a view to ensuring that the management and healthcare staff are able to ascertain whether there are lessons to be learned as regards operating procedures in respect of future similar episodes, as well as for learning and professional development purposes.

In Hungary, the scope of accessibility of health data, the rules governing its processing, and the legal entities involved have been defined at the legislative level. The above strictly limit the possibility of processing certain health data, including data related to mortality, clearly excluding the penal organization. The preparation and management of patient documentation during the provision of basic care and specialist outpatient and inpatient care to prisoners, and their content are governed by the provisions of Act CLIV of 1997 on healthcare and Act XLVII of 1997 on the processing and protection of healthcare and related personal data, professional guidelines, and the provisions of BVOP instructions and methodological guidelines issued on the subject. Section 24(11) of Act CLIV of 1997 on healthcare and Section 7(7) of Act XLVII of 1997 on the processing and protection of healthcare and related personal data are clear on this issue: *"In the event of the death of the data subject, his or her legal representative, close relative, and heir shall be entitled, upon written request, to access health data related to or connected with the cause of death and to the medical treatment preceding the death, to inspect the health documentation, and to obtain copies thereof at their own expense."*

Pursuant to Government Decree 351/2013 (X.4.) on the examination of dead bodies and procedures relating to the deceased the investigating authority shall notify the relevant prison of the contents of its decision on the preliminary examination pursuant to Section 15(1) and of the findings of the investigation into the death of the prisoner pursuant to Section 25(3) in a decision. However, the above regulation does not provide a legal basis for the issuance of the autopsy report.

Chapter II
Prison establishments
7/a Other Issues – Prison Staff

77. According to the information provided by the authorities, as of 1 March 2025, of a total of 11 373 posts of various categories of staff working in the prison system, 9 886 were filled (some 90%) and approximately 10% remained vacant.

78. At Szombathely Prison, the security department had 162 posts of prison officer deployed within the prison (including heads and deputy heads of departments and prison officers of various categories); at the time of the visit, 37 of these posts were vacant (23%).

Since the CPT visit, the staffing situation of the prison institution has improved. The staff headcount under employment law, which stood at 9,886 on 1 March 2025, had increased by 119 persons to 10,005 by 1 September 2025, while the number of established posts (11,373) remained unchanged. This resulted in a 1.0% increase in the staffing ratio.

The findings of the CPT report concerning the staffing situation of the Szombathely National Prison – including those recorded in the footnote – *require clarification*, as of 1 April 2025, 87 of the 148 officer posts were filled by appointment (with 61 vacant). The number of *"prison guard posts responsible for unit security and escort duties"* – if this is understood to cover exclusively the posts of block (chief) supervisors and security supervisors within the Security Sub-Departments – was 255, as opposed to the *"107 posts"* indicated in the report.

	Number of Established Posts	Staff Headcount under Employment Law as of 28 March 2025	Staff Headcount under Employment Law as of 1 April 2025
Officer	148	84	87
Warrant Officer	481	336	336
Law Enforcement Employee	37	43	43
Employee/Armed Security Guard	12	44	44
In total	678	507	510

The staffing situation at the Szombathely National Prison has remained virtually unchanged since the CPT visit. As of 1 September 2025, 167 posts were vacant, corresponding to a 75.3% staffing rate.

	Number of Established Posts	Staff Headcount under Employment Law as of 1 September 2025
Officer	148	89
Warrant Officer	481	341
Officers in total	629	430
Law Enforcement Employee	36	38
Employee	12	40
Armed Security Guard	-	2
In total	677	510

Since the CPT visit, a total of 45 appointments have been realized in the following positions/roles:

- | | |
|--|-------------|
| 1) Security warden | 5 persons, |
| 2) Ward supervisor | 18 persons, |
| 3) Reintegration officer | 2 persons, |
| 4) Psychologist | 3 persons, |
| 5) Registered nurse | 2 persons, |
| 6) Other Positions/Roles
(Cleaner, Senior Clerk, Clerk) | 15 persons. |

As of 1 September 2025, 39 posts within the Security Department, created specifically to carry out core prison service duties (32 ward supervisors and 7 security supervisors) were vacant.

As of 1 September 2025, a total of 4 posts in the Department of Custodial Affairs (2 probation supervisors and 2 clerks) were vacant.

The recruitment process has been initiated for 1 clerk and 1 probation supervisor.

In the reintegration specialty area, 1 security supervisor obtained a higher education degree from the Ludovika University of Public Service and, following their first officer appointment, was assigned to a reintegration officer position. Additionally, 1 block supervisor and 2 law enforcement administrative employees were recruited and assigned to ward supervisor positions; under a special mandate, they perform reintegration officer duties.

On 14 July 2025, 2 psychologists were recruited to the Psychology Department, and an additional psychologist is scheduled for recruitment on 15 September 2025. The Head of Department position has still not been filled. The authorized staffing level of the Szombathely National Prison – previously increased by nearly 100 posts on 1 April 2022 due to additional duties assigned to the institution – has, alongside stagnation in the staff headcount under employment law, resulted in a significant decline in the staffing ratio. However, due to labour market conditions characteristic of Western Hungary, the actual staff numbers have not been able to increase despite intensified recruitment efforts.

To address human resource shortages, the recruitment team of the Szombathely National Prison has promoted, and continues to promote, careers in the prison service at public events, during group briefings held in the Employment Department, and through career orientation activities (institution and school visits). Interested parties are informed about vacant positions, and recruitment advertisements are also continuously posted on Facebook.

79. The staff complement at Tiszalök Prison included 166 prison officer posts deployed within the prison (including heads and deputy heads of departments and prison officers of various categories); 25 of these posts were vacant (15 %).

The establishment also employed four senior reintegration officers, 28 reintegration officers (one additional post was vacant), 14 social workers and three probation officers. The team also included seven psychologists.

The findings of the CPT report regarding the staffing situation at the Tiszalök National Prison – including those recorded in the footnote – *require clarification**, as of 1 April 2025

- 1) Of the 454 posts, 370 were filled (84 vacant posts, corresponding to an 81.5% staffing rate).
- 2) Of the 91 officer posts, 82 were filled (90%), [at the time of the visit: 83 of 91 posts filled (91%)]**,
- 3) the number of “*prison guard posts responsible for unit security and escort duties*” – if understood to cover exclusively the posts of ward (chief) supervisors and security supervisors within the Security Sub-Departments – was 195, as opposed to the 70 posts indicated in the report,
- 4) at the time of the visit, the prison employed not 7, but 8 psychologists/specialist psychologists.

As of 1 September 2025, at the Tiszalök National Prison

- 1) 74 posts were vacant, corresponding to an 83.7% staffing rate,
- 2) the number of officer posts – including the 10 leadership positions – was 91, of which 90 were filled (98.9%)**, with one vacant specialist physician post.

	Number of Established Posts	Staff Headcount under Employment Law
Officer	91	71
Warrant Officer	339	271
Officers in total	430	342
Law Enforcement Employee	21	25
Employee	3	9
Armed Security Guard	-	4
In total	454	380

The Department of Custodial Affairs has 54 posts [1 Head of Department, 2 Deputy Heads, 4 senior reintegration officers, 28 reintegration officers, 14 social assistant clerks, 3 probation supervisors, and 2 clerks (Law Enforcement Employees)], of which 53 are filled (staffing rate: 98%). As of 1 September 2025, only one clerk post remains vacant.

* The so-called classification summary provided to the CPT had not yet been updated by the prison at the time of the inspection, and therefore contained data from 2023 (as an agglomeration center, the listing still included the satellite units, such as the Agglomeration Department or the Operations Department). Including the satellite units, there were 172 officer posts in the staff table of the agglomeration center, of which 166 can be considered as indicated by them, excluding the 6 direct leadership staff members.

**including the warrant officer appointments as well

The Psychology sub-department has 9 posts (1 Deputy Head, 5 specialist Psychologists, 2 psychologists, and 1 specialist assistant). The sub-department is fully staffed.

80. The high number of vacant posts in both establishments visited is a matter of concern to the Committee. The CPT recommends that the Hungarian authorities take the necessary steps to ensure that the vacant posts of all categories of staff at Szombathely and Tiszalök Prisons are filled.

The prison service continuously treats the filling of vacant positions as a high priority.

As a result of the reorganization, the Recruitment Team, integrated into the staff of the 5th Agglomeration Center at the Csenger National Prison, has been responsible, since 1 October 2024,

for the recruitment-related tasks of the institutions and for agglomeration-level data reporting. Both the Recruitment Team prior to the reorganization and the expanded team with new members carry out targeted recruitment activities regarding the positions indicated by the institutions. One senior clerk from the Recruitment Team is stationed at the Tiszalök National Prison.

The prison is active in social media presence, with posts regarding job advertisements referring to vacant positions (ward supervisor, security supervisor). In order to raise awareness of the prison and the prison service, participation in events and posting about activities is conducted on a regular basis.

During presentations organized by the Employment Departments – for individuals registered as job seekers – recruitment colleagues provide information in all cases regarding job vacancies at the institutions belonging to the Agglomeration Center.

In the case of Tiszalök, 320 CVs were received in 2025. The number of recruitments was 21. As of 1 September 2025, 3 persons were transferred from the Csenger National Prison, and an additional 1 person was recruited from the civilian workforce. On 15 September 2025, the prison also plans to recruit 11 more persons from the civilian workforce.

The prison provides visitation opportunities for high school groups, aiming to raise awareness among young people about to make career choices regarding employment opportunities offered by the law enforcement agency, as well as the benefits of dual training programs. Among others, students participating in law enforcement training at Kisvárda Vocational School, Kandó Kálmán Technical School, and Nyíregyháza Vocational School, Teleki Blanka Vocational School and Dormitory, also gained insight into the daily operations of the prison.

To ensure effective workforce planning and replenishment, five agglomeration-level recruitment teams operate nationwide under the coordination, professional supervision, and direct management of the Human Resources Service of the BVOP, comprising a total of 15 personnel. The exclusive recruitment activities of these teams include promoting the penitentiary system and organizing and conducting events involving personal presence. Additionally, their key responsibilities include maintaining contact with territorially competent local governments and Employment Departments, managing social media platforms, and carrying out career orientation activities in relation to schools participating in sectoral training programs.

In addition to workforce replenishment, the teams place strong emphasis on retaining and supporting staff members with several years of service. In 2025, team members provided opportunities for pre-employment personal interviews to 685 individuals in the two relevant agglomerations (1st and 5th Agglomerations).

Among social media platforms, the prison service has maintained a presence on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and LinkedIn. The objectives are to build professional networks, develop career planning processes and recruitment strategies, share professional content, showcase the daily operations of the organization and successful career paths, and strengthen societal dialogue.

To ensure the planned, deliberate, and continuous replenishment of the prison service's personnel, starting from the 2024/2025 academic year, the Csenger National Prison and the Szombathely National Prison have also participated as dual training sites in the law enforcement technical training programs conducted by schools offering vocational law enforcement education. This provides an additional opportunity to fill vacant positions.

The Recruitment Team operating at the Szombathely National Prison is also responsible for the recruitment-related tasks of prison establishments located in the counties of Zala, Vas, and Veszprém. The team maintains continuous cooperation and contact with local municipalities and the Employment Departments of municipality offices in the agglomeration areas (e.g., Zalaegerszeg, Szombathely, Veszprém, Pápa, Körmend, Sárvár, Celldömölk, Kapuvár, Szentgotthárd, Jánosháza), as well as with educational institutions participating in vocational law enforcement training programs. In 2025, the team has conducted career orientation briefings for active job seekers at a total of 74 Employment Departments, and 29 graduating high school students (12th grade) participated in institution visits, during which they became acquainted with work processes and available positions. On multiple occasions (26 events) – to stimulate interest among job seekers – the team also

participated in large-scale public events in the region's towns and cities (Open Days, Job Fairs, May Day, international music festival SopronFest, Air Show, Defense Day, Family Day, Children's Day). The team uses social media platforms and county-level regional portals (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, veol.hu, nyugat.hu, zaol.hu) to publish job advertisements. In 2025, a total of 841 CVs have been received by the Szombathely National Prison, resulting in 91 recruitments, while the recruitment process is currently ongoing for 22 additional candidates.

Regarding the conditions for workforce replenishment, it should be noted that the geographical location of the Szombathely National Prison complicates the filling of vacant positions. Despite online and in-person outreach and active recruitment efforts, difficulties are encountered in recruiting candidates belonging to the target group (men under 55 with vocational qualifications or a high school maturity degree). Due to the proximity of the national border (the first Austrian settlement is 15 km away by car), the higher wages and better working conditions in Austria are more attractive for skilled workers.

The team operating within the 5th Agglomeration Center is responsible for the recruitment-related tasks of the prison institutions within the agglomeration. The team maintains regular and continuous cooperation and contact with local municipalities, Employment Departments of municipality offices in the agglomeration (e.g., Csenger, Tiszalök, Mátészalka, Kisvárda, Fehérgyarmat, Sárospatak, Debrecen, Nyíregyháza), and educational institutions participating in vocational law enforcement training programs. In 2025, the team has conducted career orientation briefings for active job seekers at 13 municipalities and Employment Departments, and students of 4 graduating high schools (12th grade) participated in institution visits, during which they became acquainted with work processes and available positions. The team also participated on multiple occasions (27 events) in public events (Open Days, Job Fairs, May Day, Law Enforcement Competitions, Law Enforcement Days, city events, village festivals). The team also uses social media platforms and regional job search portals (Facebook – 62 different closed job advertisement groups, Instagram – 42 in TikTok – agglomeration-level) to publish job advertisements. As a result, in 2025, the prison has received 324 CVs, resulting in 46 recruitments, while the recruitment process is currently ongoing for 13 additional candidates.

Chapter II

Prison establishments

7/b Other Issues – Security-Related Issues

81. The CPT reiterates its recommendation that the Hungarian authorities take steps to ensure that prison officers at Szombathely and Tiszalök Prisons and, where relevant, in all other prisons in Hungary, do not routinely carry pepper spray, handcuffs and batons in detention areas.

A member of the prison service in relation to their professional service is entitled and obliged to use coercive means as defined in Act CVII of 1995 on the Prison Service Organization in the lawful performance of their duties.

To enforce this, it is necessary that the authorized member of the personnel carry the standardized coercive means with them during the performance of certain professional tasks and in the departments. In addition to the previous ones, the provision of certain means is a guaranteed element of the safe performance of tasks, given to the protection of the physical integrity of the member of the personnel (e.g. handcuffing an angry convict).

82. The CPT reiterates its recommendation that the Hungarian authorities ensure that these precepts are effectively implemented in practice at Szombathely and Tiszalök Prisons and, where relevant, in all other prisons in Hungary. If necessary, the relevant regulations should be changed accordingly. Further, the Committee encourages the Hungarian authorities to develop and use appropriate alternatives to strip-searches, such as body scanners.

The purpose of the security measure implemented using strip search method is to prevent the entry or circulation of prohibited objects that are dangerous to security and capable of committing and extraordinary incident into a prison institution, based on Section 151 of the Punishment Enforcement

Act. The aforementioned legal reference specifies that the search may not be carried out in a humiliating or indecent manner.

The elements of the strip search do not include squatting or coughing. The security department regularly reviews the search methodologies and, within the framework of professional guidance, sets tasks for the prison institutions for their professional guidance. The widest possible application of body scanners is among the objectives, because of which they have already been installed in two prison institutions (Budapest Strict and Medium Regime Prison and the Csengeri National Prison).

Chapter II. Prison establishments

7/c Other Issues – Disciplinary Private Confinement and Segregation of Prisoners

*85. As underlined in previous visit reports, given the potentially very damaging effects of solitary confinement, the CPT considers that the maximum period of its use for disciplinary purposes should be no more than 14 days for a given offence, and preferably lower, irrespective of the security regime to which a prisoner is subjected. **The CPT reiterates its recommendation that the relevant legislation and practice be amended accordingly.***

Pursuant to Section 168 (1) f) of the Punishment Enforcement Act, it is possible to impose private confinement as a form of disciplinary punishment. According to Section 169 (1) f) of the Punishment Enforcement Act, private confinement may last for a maximum of 25 days. The prisoner's participation in employment has an impact on the imposition of private confinement, given that the maximum period of private confinement that can be imposed for a prisoner classified in categories IV and V is 25 days, and the maximum period of private confinement can be 20 days if it concerns an employed prisoner. The same applies to the other categories, in the case of an employed convict classified in category III the period may be a maximum of 15 days, and in the case of an employed convict classified in categories I and II the period may be a maximum of 5 days.

Considering the disciplinary punishments imposed with final effect in 2024, it can be stated that the most frequently applied type of punishment continues to be reprimand (51.14%), followed by private confinement (21.09%), followed by reduction of the amount that can be spent on personal needs (16.49%), ban from prison programs and events (9.86%), restriction of participation in cultural, leisure and sports programs at the prison (0.75%), restriction of the range of objects that can be kept with you (0.45%) and withdrawal of additional services (0.18%).

Considering the disciplinary punishments imposed with final effect until 10 September 2025, it can be stated that the most frequently applied type of punishment continues to be reprimand (50.38%), followed by private confinement (22.35%), followed by prison ban from institutional programs and events (13.38%), reduction of the amount that can be spent on personal needs (12.55%), restriction of participation in cultural, leisure and sports programs at the prison institution (0.78%), restriction of the range of objects that can be kept with you (0.44%) and withdrawal of additional services (0.08%).

Regarding the length of private confinement imposed in 2024, it can be stated that in 68.56% of cases, private confinements between 1-5 days, in 23.33% 6-10 days, in 5.54% 11-15 days, in 1.67% 16-20 days, and in 0.88% 21-25 days were imposed. In more than 93.66% of private confinements, the duration of private confinement is shorter than the maximum duration of 14 days recommended by the CPT.

Regarding the length of private confinements imposed until 10 September 2025, it can be said that in 71.18% of cases, private confinements were imposed for 1-5 days, in 19.78% for 6-10 days, in 5.60% for 11-15 days, in 2.17% for 16-20 days, and in 1.25% for 21-25 days.

Based on the professional position of the BVOP, changing the regulation is not justified, since in more than 95.59% of private confinements, the duration of private confinement is shorter than the maximum duration of 14 days recommended by the CPT.

86. The CPT reiterates its recommendation that the Hungarian authorities take steps, including by amending the relevant legislation, to ensure that:

- ***prisoners undergoing disciplinary solitary confinement are permitted a range of reading materials, not limited to religious works, and are systematically offered at least one hour of daily outdoor exercise;***
- ***mattresses are not removed from disciplinary solitary confinement cells during the day;***
- ***disciplinary punishment of prisoners does not include a total prohibition of family contact⁷² and that any restrictions on family contact as a form of punishment should be used only where the offence relates to such contact.***

Private confinement and the sanctions related to it are part of the incentive system and are important in preventing disciplinary actions. One hour of outdoor time per day is always guaranteed, during which the prisoner can exercise.

The purpose of disciplinary punishments is to deter the offender and other prisoners from committing another disciplinary violation, to restore order and security in the prison, and to encourage the offender to cooperate. Prisoners serving disciplinary punishment in solitary confinement are also guaranteed access to fresh air.

Private confinement is the most severe form of punishment, against which the Punishment Enforcement Act provides for a judicial review for prisoners, based on which the competent prison judge acts in the second instance, not the prison organization.

The former legal institution ensures its prudent and appropriate application and appropriate external control.

In addition to the above, Punishment Enforcement Act provides the possibility that visits missed due to the implementation of private confinement can be made up after the implementation of the disciplinary punishment.

Based on the BVOP's professional opinion and taking the above into account, there is no justification for amending the legal institution of solitary confinement as a disciplinary measure, as it is necessary and justified for maintaining order and security in the prison system.

87. the prisoners concerned were not systematically provided a written disciplinary decision. This deficiency should be remedied. 88. The CPT reiterates its recommendation that segregation pending the outcome of disciplinary proceedings be included in the total time in disciplinary solitary confinement of no more than 14 days, or that any subsequent sanction of disciplinary solitary confinement be implemented only after an interruption of several days in ordinary conditions of detention.

No prosecutorial notice or notification was received in this regard by the relevant prisons and the BVOP.

Pursuant to Section 13 (1) of Ministry of Justice Decree 14/2014. (XII. 17.) on the disciplinary liability of convicted persons detained in prisons and detainees on other legal grounds, the separation of a prisoner subject to proceedings in a disciplinary case may be ordered if it is justified in the interests of a successful investigation. According to Paragraph (2), the rights specified in the Punishment Enforcement Act may not be restricted, with the exception of the range of objects that may be kept with the prisoner.

The purpose of disciplinary segregation is not to establish the legal consequence of a disciplinary act committed by a prisoner, but a preventive measure necessary for the successful investigation of disciplinary proceedings. The former ensures that the prisoner being prosecuted cannot influence other witnesses or the prisoner being prosecuted. The legal instrument of disciplinary segregation does not overlap with the legal instrument of solitary confinement, so the purpose of disciplinary segregation is not the same as the purpose of disciplinary sanction of solitary confinement. While the purpose of disciplinary segregation is to ensure the smooth conduct of disciplinary proceedings, the purpose of solitary confinement is to deter the offender from committing further offences. Security segregation is clearly intended to maintain the security and order of the prison service, but its legal nature and the impact of its application on prisoners are not the same as that of solitary confinement.

The basic expectation for disciplinary sanctions is that they should provide immediate feedback to prisoners, so it is appropriate to implement the disciplinary sanctions imposed as soon as possible, which also provides predictability for prisoners.

We are of the opinion that the days of disciplinary sanction of solitary confinement cannot be counted in the days of disciplinary sanction of a final sentence, and we do not consider it justified to amend the legislation on this issue.

The failure to hand over decisions cannot be investigated without specific data. Based on the regulations and practice, prisoners receive the decision on the decision in addition to signing the minutes at the disciplinary hearing, which is recorded in the prisoner register at the same time as the documentation of the disciplinary hearing. In the event of a complaint regarding this, the BVOP will take the necessary measures.

89. The CPT once again calls upon the Hungarian authorities to review the role of healthcare staff in relation to disciplinary matters in light of the above remarks and to amend the relevant legal provisions accordingly. In so doing, regard should be had to the European Prison Rules (in particular, Rule 43.2) and the comments made by the CPT in its 21st General Report (see paragraphs 62 and 63 of CPT/Inf (2011) 28).

The health service professionals, doctors, nurses, and psychologists, fulfil their legal obligations and perform their duties in connection with security isolation and private confinement, which are determined for them by Sections 146 (5)-(6) and 169 (6) of Punishment Enforcement Act., as well as Point 25 of the Prison Service Instruction 64/2020. (XII. 12.) on the health care of convicts and detainees detained in prison institutions and under other legal titles.

Based on the professional opinion of the BVOP, there is no justification for changing the regulations, and they consider it reasonable to maintain the examinations specified by law. The medical and psychological examinations are not related to disciplinary matters, but are carried out for the purpose of isolation, which cannot be performed by representatives of other fields due to a lack of qualifications.

“90. The CPT recommends that the Hungarian authorities take steps to ensure that these precepts are implemented in practice at Szombathely Prison and, where relevant, in all other prisons in Hungary. In particular, persons presenting a risk of self-harm or suicide should not be isolated but should be afforded regular human contact and a regime of meaningful activities, tailored to their specific needs.”

The fundamental rights specified in Punishment Enforcement Act are fully guaranteed to prisoners. The mood of the affected prisoners is monitored and as specified in the regulations, their involvement is examined, removed from the list or reviewed within the deadline. The prison institution continuously examines the possibility of placement in the community with the involvement of a psychologist.

The condition monitoring of prisoners with a high suicide risk takes place in strict compliance with the applicable laws and professional protocols. The prison institution treats the safety of persons posing an increased risk as a primary priority, and to this end, the affected prisoner is placed alone in a cell equipped with a camera, considering their psychological state and the extent of their self-endangering behaviour. The specialist areas strive to ensure that, if it is safely feasible, a non-endangered cellmate with a stable psychological state is placed next to the endangered person. This helps to maintain social relationships and can reduce the psychological burden of isolation. However, there are cases where the prisoner poses a danger not only to themselves, but also to others. In such circumstances, sharing with other prisoners would not be compatible with the conditions of safe detention, and therefore placement in a separate cell is justified. This form of placement is professionally sound and justified from a security perspective. Its aim is to ensure that the prisoner's behaviour can be continuously monitored and that potential crisis situations – such as self-harm or suicide attempts – can be immediately detected and prevented.

There are currently 4 prisoners at high risk of suicide in the Szombathely National Prison, of which 1 is a female prisoner. The female prisoner does not have a cellmate, as her behaviour is unpredictable and abusive, so her solitary confinement cannot be changed to protect the physical integrity of other prisoners. All prisoners at high risk of suicide are placed in cells monitored by

cameras. Of the currently affected prisoners, 3 have an EBE, which provides for the method of receiving visitors based on the relevant regulations. The involvement of 2 people in education has been authorized.

In addition to security measures, regular physical checks are carried out by ward inspectors at specified intervals. The prison institute's psychologist and reintegration officers conduct personal check-ups daily or several times a week, depending on the risk classification, with the aim of monitoring the mental state, early recognition of psychological crises and, if necessary, ensuring immediate psychological intervention. When providing psychological care, special attention is paid to ensuring that the prisoners concerned receive individual treatment, and structured psychological sessions are also organized where possible. Each cell is equipped with a television set. The prisoners placed here are also provided with the opportunity to borrow library books, and they can submit their request for this on a request form for the books included in the list recorded on the closed-circuit television network.

Chapter II.

Prison establishments

7/d Other Issues – contact with the outside world

92. The CPT notes positively the possibility for prisoners to make free of charge video-calls and would like to be informed what solution will be put in place by the Hungarian authorities once the Skype application has been discontinued, as recently announced.

The BVOP's detention and IT departments worked together to develop a method for providing video calls in the period following the replacement of the Skype application. As a result, the prison institutions currently use the Microsoft TEAMS application to make video calls since the discontinuation of Skype. Prior to its introduction, both prisoners and contact persons received detailed information about the transition.

93. The CPT once again calls upon the Hungarian authorities to increase the visit entitlement for prisoners, in light of these remarks.

The number of visits per month varies depending on the prisoner's enforcement level and classification into a category or regime category, and any placement in a special unit. By implementing the individualized detention program plan and earning credits, prisoners can achieve classification in more favourable categories, which gives them the opportunity to make greater use of forms of contact. Maintaining this goal keeps inmates motivated, encouraging them to cooperate and achieve their reintegration goals.

In addition to the above, during the coronavirus epidemic, the possibility of video calling for prisoners was expanded nationwide, which has since become a form of contact stipulated in law. Prisoners prefer to use video calling because of its cost-effectiveness, and it also saves significant time for contact persons in terms of travel.

The minimum frequency of visits is determined by Section 177 (1) of the Punishment Enforcement Act which stipulates that once a month is mandatory. The Ministry of Justice Decree determines the frequency and the rules for the length of the visit by category (minimum once a month, 60 minutes, maximum 3 times a month and an additional one time per quarter, up to 90 minutes).

The amendment to the Punishment Enforcement Act that entered into force on 01/03/2025 has greatly transformed the order and implementation of visitor receptions, because of which a new form of visit was introduced in the form of informal visitor reception, thus increasing the number of available options.

94. The CPT recommends that the Hungarian authorities build on these positive developments and take further steps to ensure that, as a general rule, all prisoners are allowed to receive visits under open conditions, that is, without plexiglass partitioning. The imposition of closed visits should be an exception based on an individual risk assessment.

The forms of receiving visitors also take into account individual risk assessments based on the definitions of the current legal environment, and the permissibility of certain forms of visiting is also subject to the existence of certain conditions, in addition, disciplinary actions committed during the visit or the rule-breaking behaviour of the contact person also influence the way the visit is carried out.

The amendment to the Punishment Enforcement Act that entered into force on 01/03/2025 established the institution of receiving visitors without a dividing element, so that receiving visitors without a dividing element is no longer provided only to detained parents, but to all detainees who meet certain conditions. The 50 cm separation used during group visiting prevents the possible transfer of prohibited objects or makes them visible, so their access to the accommodation departments is greatly hindered. In the latter case, it protects the life and physical integrity of the prisoner.