
Selection, Recruitment and Training of Correctional Officers in Germany

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- II. Aspects of personnel selection
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I. Formal Prerequisites

- Justice and corrections are issues of the jurisdiction of each particular federal land. This bears a high risk of heterogeneity and a lack of comparability.
- Though, concerning prison staff formation, the formal prerequisites, the rules of personnel selection, the training of the candidates, and the rules of examination are largely comparable between the federal laender.
- Important might be the regular and continuous exchange among the heads of the Departments of Corrections and the heads of the Academies for Prison Officers.
- It has to be considered that the special rules of the German civil service law apply to the position of prison officers.

I. Formal Prerequisites cont'd

Formation at the Academies for Prison Officers is provided for the candidates in the middle grade of the civil service and comprises three different careers:

- penal executive service (“Vollzugsdienst”): work on prison floors, gates, prisoner transportation, etc. – largest group 80 %
- workshop service (“Werkdienst”): supervision of prison labor and vocational training of inmates - 14%
- administration service (“Verwaltungsdienst”): prison administration - 6%; formation offer is very limited, often administration employees are receiving the status of a civil servant after years of work in a prison facility.

I. Formal Prerequisites cont'd

Formal Criteria

Age: differences between the Laender, at least 18 yo (20 – 23 yo), max. 35 - 40 yo

School/vocational education: secondary modern school 9 years (“Hauptschule”) and additional professional education or junior high school 10 years (“Realschule”) or higher

For workshop service officers: vocational degree as master craftsman or technician

Nationality: German or other state of European Union (some few Laender require German nationality only)

Physical fitness: Eligibility based on the comparable police regulation (PDV 300) concerning body height, BMI, seeing and hearing capabilities, pre-existing medical conditions, etc.

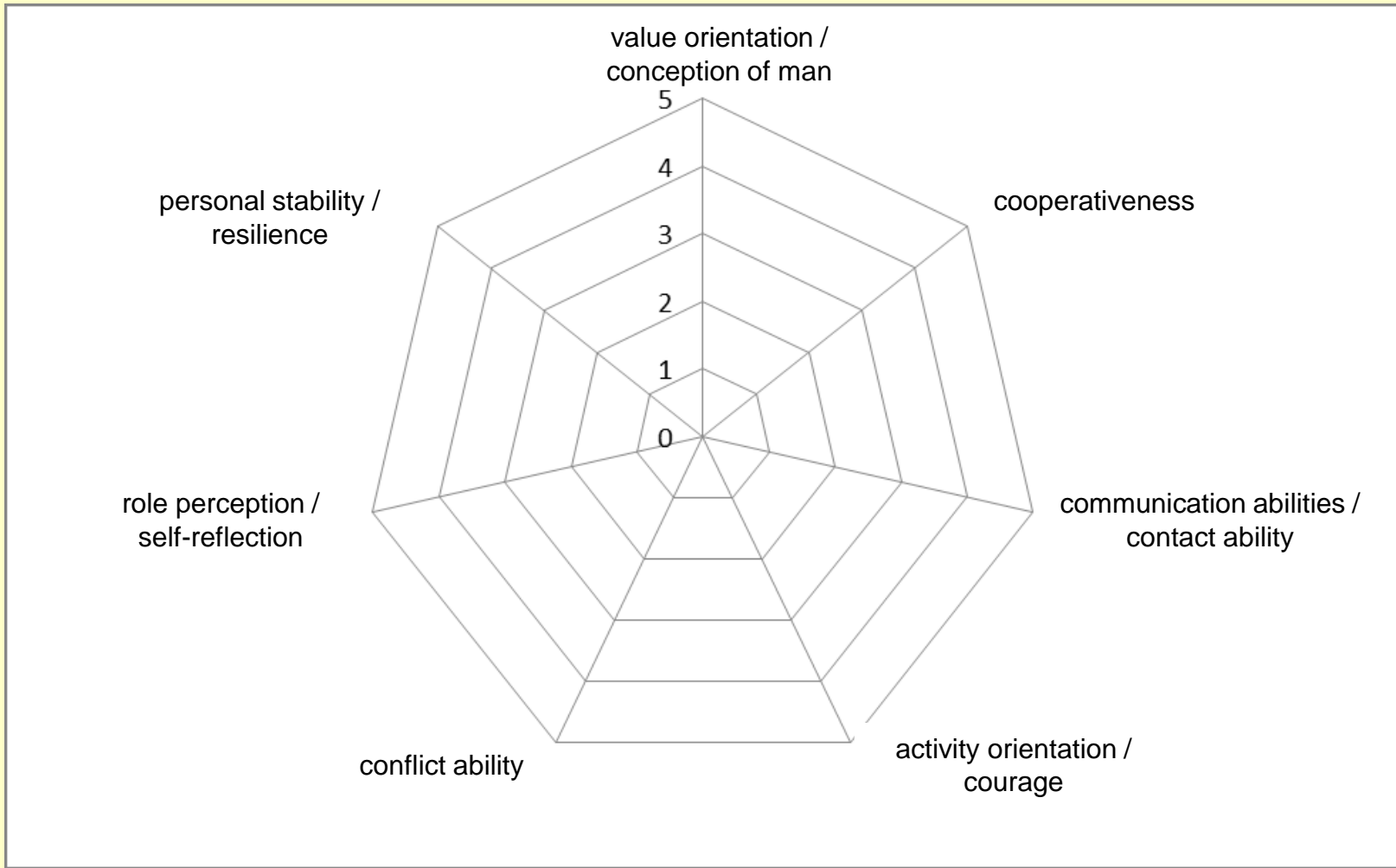
II. Personnel Selection

Personnel Preconditions

- communication and conflict abilities
- self-confidence
- capacity for teamwork
- empathy
- reflectivity
- responsibility
- loading capacity
- mental balance
- good general education
- preparedness to work shifts

II. Personnel Selection

Profile of Requirements – Results of an Expert Committee Baden-Wuerttemberg



II. Personnel Selection

Methods

Differences between the federal laender concerning the application for the formation:

- centralized application and personnel selection either at the Academies or the Department of Corrections – most frequent method
- decentralized application and personnel selection at the particular prison facilities
- combination of central and decentral procedures

II. Personnel Selection

Process of Personnel Selection

- language test (German): writing of an essay
- intelligence test: general education, retentiveness, reasoning, speech comprehension
- vocational aptitude test
- personnel interview by selection committee (warden, administrative director, psychologist)
- assessment center methods: group discussion, role plays
- tour of prison facility with behavior observation of the candidates
- internship
- testing of physical abilities

highly comparable among the federal laender, particular tests may differ

III. Training of Correctional Officers

Time Course of the Training

Duration: 2 years penal executive service officers (Bavaria 18 months)
18 months workshop service officers

Change between theoretical and practical phases, most often
practice – theory – practice – theory

Duration of practical phases: 7 – 12 months (depending on federal land)

Duration of theoretical phases: 11 – 18 months

Phases of the training (Baden-Wuerttemberg):

initial phase of getting familiar in the facility	1 month
introductory theoretical course at the academy	3 months
practical training in the prison facility (minimum 2 months execution of prison sentence and pre-trial custody and minimum 6 weeks youth custody)	15 months
main theoretical course at the academy	5 months

III. Training of Correctional Officers

Contents Introductory Theoretical Course Baden-Wuerttemberg in Hours

1. Correctional studies and organization	70
penitentiary law	26
correctional practice	30
others (organization, security in prisons, role of workshop service officers)	14
2. Penal law	16
3. Obligations and rights of officers (civil service law, disciplinary law)	14
4. Social studies (ethics, social work, crisis intervention, intercultural competence)	16
5. Extremism (right-wing extremism, islamism)	6
6. Administration (prison office, economic administration, prison work, prisoners' money, computing, data security)	44

III. Training of Correctional Officers

Contents of Introductory Theoretical Course Baden-Wuerttemberg cont'd in Hours

7. Psychology and criminology	24
psychology and social competence	16
criminology	8
8. Healthcare (medical emergencies, infectious diseases)	24
9. Self-protection and self-defense	24
10. Security in prison	30
use of helmet and shield	8
use of pepper spray	4
others (drugs in prison, behavior in case of hostage-taking, security in workshops, transportation of prisoners)	18
11. Use of firearms	46
theory	6
practice	40
12. Introduction and final discussion	4
Total	318

III. Training of Correctional Officers

Contents of Main Theoretical Course Baden-Wuerttemberg in Hours

1. Correctional studies and organization	158
penitentiary law	70
correctional practice	60
training of standard and critical situations in prisons	16
others (search, talk with personal officer)	12
2. Penal law	42
3. Obligations and rights of officers	8
4. General knowledge, civics, constitutional law	48
5. Psychology, social competence	72
6. Criminology	26

III. Training of Correctional Officers

Contents Main Theoretical Course Baden-Wuerttemberg cont'd in Hours

7. Penitentiary administration	104
prison office	32
prison work	18
economic administration	18
prisoners' money	16
others (budgetary law, computing)	20
8. Social studies (social work)	8
9. Self-protection, self-defense, firearms	24
self-protection and self-defense	40
use of firearms, theory and practice	52
10. Others (introduction, exam information, victim protection, probationary services)	8
11. Excursion (security task force Baden-Wuerttemberg)	6
Total	504

III. Training of Correctional Officers

Practical Training Baden-Wuerttemberg in Weeks

1. Leadership of executional service, shift scheduling	1
2. Infirmary	1
3. Prison workshops	1
4. Storage of prisoners' belongings	2
5. Gate guard	3
6. Visitor unit	2
7. Prison floor service	10
8. Prisoner office	2
9. Economic administration, housekeeping, kitchen	1
10. Prisoners' money and purchase by prisoners	1
11. Escorted leave of prisoners	3
12. Social, psychological, educational, clerical service	1
13. Day release imprisonment	1
Total	29

III. Training of Correctional Officers

Examination

Combination of written, practical and oral examination

Example Baden-Wuerttemberg:

Written examination (four 3-hours exams)

- psychology, criminology, social competence
- penitentiary law and organization of the prison system
- general knowledge, constitutional law
- penal law

Practical examination

- tasks of the correctional officer, escorted leave of prisoners, visitation, captivation
- reporting obligation, self-defense, use of firearms, use of force by officer
- search, metallic probe, professional obligations
- control of prison cell

Oral examination

- psychology, criminology, social competence
- penitentiary law
- administration

IV. Skill Enhancement and Professional Development

Perspectives after Examination

during training phase: officer on revocation (status ends with passing the final oral exams), salary 1.100 – 1.900 € (depending on age and family status)

after exam career start

- “Obersekretär”, salary group A7, gross salary approx. 2,800 € (in the first instance on probation for 3 years)

possible promotions

- “Hauptsekretär”, salary group A8, gross salary approx. 3,200 €
- “Amtsinspektor”, salary group A9, gross salary approx. 3,800 €

IV. Skill Enhancement and Professional Development

All federal laender offer annual training programs

A. Internal programs within the particular prison facility

Issues:

- use of firearms
- self-defense
- fire protection
- extremisms
- etc.

B. Centralized program offered by the Academies for Correctional Officers

Issues:

- *training for specific professional groups*: e.g. psychologists, social workers, security officers, nurses, administration officers, social therapy, etc.
- *human resource development*: e.g. training for future leading officers, planning of internal training, etc.
- *security, health care, personal abilities*: e.g. young prisoners, psychological abnormal prisoners, extremism, violence in prisons, crisis intervention, de-escalation, personal health, etc.
- *prison workshop officers*: e.g. business administration, acquisition, SAP, training of particular workshop officers (bakery, printing works, construction), etc.

Thank you for your attention.

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