

The aims of the proposed study concentrate on the rules and procedures for assessing the probability of committing a prohibited act in clinical and prison population, as well as on the accuracy and reliability of these assessments. Such aims stem from the need to provide the court experts who assess the risk of criminal violence with a solid basis, supported by scientific evidence, for forming opinions on the need for applying treatment and security measures, or on decisions about the mode of executing custodial sentences which take into account predictions about social and criminological outcomes. More precisely, the role of risk and protective factors in assessing and monitoring the probability of committing criminal offences by offenders detained for treatment and by offenders serving prison sentences will be analysed. The more specific research problems, stemming from the overall direction of the study, are as follows:

- a) Establishing the most significant protective factors for the prediction and risk management in adults in clinical and prison context.
- b) Establishing the relationships between protective factors, violence risk, and personality variables (level of psychopathy, impulsivity, and criminal thinking style) as well as the level of self-regulation.
- c) Developing a model procedure for assessment, monitoring, and management of violence risk in Polish forensic psychiatric wards and prisons based on the results obtained from conducted research (in form of guidelines and diagnostic standards).
- d) Investigating the inter-rater reliability of the HCR-20 v3 and SAPROF scales (including validation).

The reasons for addressing the research problem come from the analysis of Polish literature on the circumstances of violence and crime, which reveals a clear need for developing and implementing effective, objective, and accurate procedures for assessing the probability of risk and violence. Experts in criminal law also point to the current gap between the expectations of the legislators and the possibilities of diagnosticians, limited by the unavailability on the Polish market of advanced instruments for accurate violence risk assessment. Such predictions are at the core of the 2013 Act on procedures for dealing with persons with mental disorders who pose a threat to the lives, health or sexual freedom of other persons, which ties the choice of treatment and security measures, preventive surveillance, or isolating the offender at the National Centre for the Prevention of Antisocial Behaviour to the value of this probability.

A review of international literature on the subject confirms that the risk factors identified in the thirty years of application of instruments based on the SPJ model (notably the HCR-20) have significantly improved procedures of violence risk assessment. They have also allowed for early medical and psychological interventions aimed at halting the progress of the process of increasing social disadaptation of offenders. They point to the areas, factors, and circumstances which must be considered in any diagnosis and predictions about treatment and future offences. Knowledge of those factors is also useful for court experts in psychology, psychiatry and sexology, as well as the court, who undoubtedly should have insight into the mental processes behind violence, and into factors which facilitate reoffending.