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## **Quality of life of probation officers Feeling the quality of life and chosen determinants - inspection of examinations**

**Abstract:** The article is concentrating on the subject matter of the quality of life of probation officers with particular reference to the analyses of meaning of chosen factors shaping her. Besides analysis of literature connected with satisfaction from living as the essential condition of the welfare and characteristics of the work of the probation officer, findings were also presented own.

They conducted research in teams of the probative court service by regional courts in the area of the jurisdiction of Circuit Court in Gdańsk. Choice of the court circle was intentional and 73 KSS officers took part in them.

Diagnosing the quality of life of officers of the Probative Court Service as well as verifying was the subject of the research relations between variables sociodemographic and organizational and with level of practical satisfaction. Examinations showed that above all social relations and their quality, the sense of security, character of the performed work as well as a lifestyle and the level of practical aspiration influenced the quality of life of probation officers.

Probation officers are happier from the whole of Poles, in spite of carrying peculiar professional obligations out by them. They aren't diversifying the level of satisfaction from the life into the significant way predyktory socjodemograficzne and organizational. Findings are showing among others that probation officers which more often work in the environment of charges, are de facto more satisfied than, the ones which perform their duties mainly in the seat of the court.

**Key words:** quality of life, probation officers, sense of happiness, organization and working conditions of the probation officer

In literature three main attempts at the measurement of the quality of life were distinguished: economic, statistical and psychological (Ostasiewicz, 2004, for 11-47 Sr). The economical climb is using measures called indicators (a consumption of goods is a base of the prosperity). The statistical attempt is based on indicators of the economic or social-economic development, however psychological attempt is analysing the subjective perception of the quality of life as the whole or individual his dimensions.

World Health Organization Quality of Life definings the quality of life through the prism of the subjective evaluation of the stage of living in the context culturally - standard and is associating her with purposes declared by the individual, expectations, or standards.

Quality of life determining all physical health and psychological, social interactions, feeling the autonomy, connections with the surrounding environment (Mróz, 2011, p. 21). A. Campbell's classical works tying satisfying the life in individual spheres from: the marriage, the family, the health, acquaintances, the career, the domicile, spending the leisure time, the education or also the standard of living (Campbell, 1976, 1981). However Derbis perceives feeling the quality of life as the widest spectrum of psychological processes than alone quality of life (Derbis, 2000). The quality of life is determined also in literature as the welfare, the prosperity, satisfaction from the life and the health (Rostowska, 2008) and M. Seligman uses notions happiness and the welfare interchangeably (Czapiński, 1992). The quality of life at the psychology department comprehend "emotional balance, in addition the majority of positive emotions means the highest quality of life" (Dziurawicz-Kozłowska, 2002). Mróz is emphasizing that positive psychology stresses strong points of the individual what the special translation into the occupational activity has. It includes evoking positive emotions, forming of such manners of the labour organization of the institution which will be contributing to the individual development. This kind of activity causes progression of the employee effectiveness and senses of satisfaction (Mróz, 2011, p. 30). In many studies on the sense of happiness, is proves that one of the most important roles in its genesis is played by the professional environment.

The work of probation officers is specific and may lead to various kinds of health disorders caused by experienced stress or professional burnout syndrome. Researches on the group of probation officers allowed to distinguishing primary sources of the professional stress in this profession, i.e. contacts with charges, sense dissatisfaction, the way of ordering, organizational loads and the cooperation with the court. The most stressful for probation officers are contacts with the pupils, the quality of management of this formation and organizational burdens resulting from the nature of the work of the surveyed professional group (Wirkus 2015a, Wirkus 2015b).

Positive psychology has a huge role in the management process, because in the areas of human activity, work efficiency, motivation in making the effort, it is possible to identify the initiation of actions towards a better effect of the work performed.

It is worth to study M. Csikszentmihalyi's researches (1996) who, recapitulating his own analyzes, stated that one of the most important features of creative units is in itself the ability to enjoy the process and creative activity that is being undertaken in relation to it.

Janusz Czapiński is an author of onion's conception of happiness. His most famous contribution to Polish psychology is to take up the topic of positive valuation and especially one of its factors – happiness.

The author perceives it as the basic condition for well-being in the life of an individual and helps to indicate the conditions that help a person to be happy. Czapiński discovers new variables, which include the joy of life, passion, meaning of life, a sense of happiness or satisfaction with life. According to this author, there is a possibility to combine hedonistic vision (mood, emotional experience, sense of satisfaction) and eudaimonistic (sense of life, needs, hierarchy of values, life goals). Such an approach is also advantageous from for seeking conditioning of satisfaction from the work (Czapiński 1985, 1992, 2004 ah, 2004 b). It is possible to attempt to state that feeling happiness can dully be determined with level of the job satisfaction. And satisfaction on-the-job is analysed through the prism of social literature, tied with the possibility of carrying out by the unit its needs, purposes, value and beliefs (Bartkowiak 2009, p. 116). Among others individual factors affect the level of satisfaction what in its examinations R. Piccolo pays attention to and the others (2005, pages 965-984), pointing at the particular role of self-esteem, self-assessment, effectiveness, locus of control and neuroticism. Reports from other researchers (Judge, Heller, Watson 2002, pages 815-818) were tied with noticing meaning of the optimism and the emotionalism as determinants satisfaction of the employee. Also Barbara's Mróz works (2008, 2010, 2011) mutual correlations between deriving satisfaction from the work and involving in for making stressing.

The aim of this text is not to examine these dependencies, nor measure the sense of professional satisfaction, but to diagnose selected scales associated with the quality of life and to indicate selected sociodemographic and organizational predictors of a sense of life satisfaction among probation officers.

The analysis of the literature shows that its important impetus may be the specificity of the employment relationship that connects the employee and the organization, and the consequences of not being satisfied with its performance are negative for both

the organization and the individual. Research on the employees' sense of satisfaction with work confirms that low satisfaction with its performance promotes low engagement. The degree of job satisfaction experienced by an employee is related to his quality of life and physical well-being (Brief, Weiss, 2002; Fisher, 2000; Heslop i in., 2002; Locke, 1976). Researches and analysis have encouraged a broader analysis of the sense of quality of life in the court probation group. Understanding the quality of life of probation officers in the presented research includes their functioning in various spheres, and subjective assessments result from measurable quality of life parameters.

### **Legal and organizational conditioning of work of the probation officer**

However presented findings of conducted examinations will become it, one should examine legal and organizational conditioning concerning the work of the probation officer which will matter greatly in functioning of the probation officer in the workplace. In modern human resources management theories emphasize that human capital in the functioning of every organization is of strategic importance, because properly used knowledge of the employee, his experience, skills, abilities, allow the organization to gain an advantage over others (Król, Ludwicyński, 2014, p. 11) . At the same time, from the point of view of the organization, it is extremely important to support employees in maintaining a balance between work and personal life (Ludwicyński, Trochimiuk, 2005). Therefore, it is necessary to avoid situations in which professional work will have an excessive impact on the employee and his/her life.

The work of the probation officer is peculiar, because at the execution of tasks official he/she must combine the performance of activities in the environment of charges and activities office, performed in general in the building of the court. They require the interdisciplinary nature from the probation officer, because at his/her work he/she uses the pedagogic, psychological, sociological and legal knowledge. The professional probation officer must also fulfil high moral requirements (Jedynak, Stasiak, 2014, p. 63; Stasiak, 2016, pages 122-123), what in the Act on probation officers (Act on probation officers) was determined through the requirement of having by him the attribute of irreproachable character (Act, 2001, § 5.1).

Court professional probation officers aren't a large occupational group. At present, in Poland, there are about 5 200 of professional probation officers which are composed of two specializations: of probation officers for adults (about 3 000) and of family probation officers (about 2 000). They are assisted by over 22 thousand social probation officers (Statistics, 2017, p. 8).

Discussing organizational and legal conditioning in which the court professional probation officers functions is a task much being outside the scope of the present article, therefore in it will be introduced only chosen issues. Their choice was determined with it, what step they influence in (positively or negatively) to the workplace of the probation officer. Therefore the presented following issues will remain: the organization and working conditions, a workload, the remuneration and other benefits from the employment, inspection of the work, professional promotion.

Talking about the organization and working conditions one should notice that the court professional probation officer is an employee of the court employed based on the act of the nomination. In addition before this act was treated or exclusively in categories of the administrative act be activities of the labour law. At present such coming is being criticised, because different pragmaticses are a base of his reference, and hence various reasons of applying the that kind of act creating labour relations are appearing (Kuczyński, 2000, pages 26-27).

A great availability of the employee is a distinctive feature of the employment this way formed (in case of the probation officer it is being taken back among others to sentence working hours, possibilities of the transfer operation of the probation officer to other team or other court), at the simultaneous bigger guarantee of the permanence of the employment (closed and narrowed catalogue of reasons for terminating the employment with the probation officer).

Probation officers are working at regional courts in teams. There are a team carrying statements out in criminal matters and a team carrying statements out in matrimonial causes and juveniles at every regional court. However, when appointing two teams (or of substantial amount) it won't be justified, the chairman of the circuit court can appoint it one team carrying all mentioned above court decisions out. The team is managing by the manager.

At the circuit court however a circuit probation officer which can have also his deputies is working (maximum two). The circuit probation officer is responsible for functioning of the probative court service in the circle before the chairman of the circuit court and taking or initiating crucial probation officers concerning a decision belongs to it.

The head of the team has the biggest impact. A team manager determines the scope of responsibilities of professional probation officers of the team, allots the area of the work to probation officers, assigns matters to the running, establishes principles of the circulation of correspondence, coordinates the office service of the team, gives his/her opinion on dates and the duration of duty of probation officers at the court. He appoints the team manager and a chairman of the court at the request of the circuit probation officer.

It is the responsibility of the district court authorities to provide professional curators with working conditions appropriate to the tasks they perform. The standard does not set a standard defining the working conditions of a professional guardian. As a consequence, there are significant disproportions in the conditions in which the probation officers operate. Sometimes this is due to the possibilities that a district court has in this area (in particular, it is a housing base, funds for material expenses, which affects the quality of employees' equipment with work support equipment). Sometimes, however, the court's kindness or lack of it has an impact. As a result, there are differences in the conditions in which probation officers work between district courts. This applies to the number and size of occupied spaces; their equipment and provide curators with tools to facilitate work, e.g. computers; provide office curators with curator teams (in this area there is a problem for decades and in the vast majority of cases, teams do not have sufficient office services provided) (Jedynak, Stasiak, 2014, pages 229-232).

Talking about workload, we generally identify it with the number of tasks that probation officers have to perform. Certainly this is an important differentiation criterion, however, the feeling that there is a lot of work, that it is hard and requires a lot of effort, are also affected by such circumstances as the stability of regulations and the complexity of the tasks performed. In both cases, especially during the last few years, there have been many negative changes, which was influenced by the frequency of changes in regulations (for example in 2015 The Executive Penal Code was changed 7 times, and in 2017 8 times). Growing requirements towards the work of the probation officer. In particular they concern the extensiveness drafted by probation officers of documentation, what one should devote more and more time to. Moreover court professional probation officers are being burdened with the duty of performing new tasks, because from 2015 they are carrying penal measures out and safety made in the system of the electronic supervision, whereas from 2018 professional probation officers family are carrying new categories of community interviews out.

The amount of remuneration of the employee and the way of establishing him are crucial factors influencing his motivation to the work. The remuneration how, we can observe from literature, should fulfil the following functions: to induce people to taking up work (that is for applying for the employment in business data); to induce for continuing the employment; to prompt to achieve high effects of the work; to prompt employees to the development of one's competence - a business progress and chances of getting by her better effects of activity are also indicating it (Borkowska, 2014, p. 358).

Is the remuneration of the probation officer fulfilling such roles? Not all. There is a fulfilled function of prompting to achieve it high effects of work and prompting the employee

to the development in the worst grade of competence. The remuneration of the probation officer this way was constructed, that there were in it no element which at least to some extent would be dependent on effects achieved by him of the work or also raising professional competence. The remuneration of the probation officer consists of the base salary which on equivalent official stairs is equal, of seniority bonus (starting from 6 of year of the work) and of addition for the field work.

The only component of the salary, which is a mobile one, is a special supplement, which may be granted up to 40% of the basic salary plus the amount of the functional supplement (the team leader, the deputy district superintendent and the regional superintendent receives the function supplement). However, this supplement is not universal, as it is generally received by probation officers working in probation centers and those who have increased responsibilities due to the need to replace another curator who is absent for long periods of time, for example due to sickleave.

This way the formed way of rewarding the probation officer is giving him the great stability, but simultaneously it isn't creating positive incentives to the performance of work in the timely and effective way. And so the results from the Act on probation officers structure, that very work on the position of the professional probation officer and the remuneration received from this title should be sufficient motivators to correct of for its making. However if the work of the probation officer doesn't fulfil such requirements (when its is made in the wrong way), it according to article 52 is subject to Act on probation officers its of disciplinary responsibility, and for offences of lesser importance, of ordinal responsibility.

Certainly the elements of the probation officer's relationship, which have a significant impact on his motivation to work, are prizes and professional promotion. As it follows from art. 18 of Act on probation officers, the president of the district court, after consulting the district guardian and the president of the district court, may award the prize for special achievements at work. Therefore, it is not obligatory and the condition to determine it is to show that the probation officer has obtained "special achievements at work". There are also no separate resources for this purpose and they generally come from savings in the wage fund. It is true that there is a possibility to include funds for prizes in the district court financial plan, however, due to restrictions on budgetary resources for employees' remuneration, in general, courts do not receive funds for this purpose.

According to Art. 8 of Act on probation officers, the chairman of the circuit court at the request of the circuit probation officer can grant the official top stair the professional probation officer after 3 years of the work standing out, from the day before of the promotion (there are three official steps: the professional probation officer, the more senior professional probation officer and the probation

officer specialist). Unfortunately this way the formed norm doesn't predict the automatism, that is after fulfilling statutory premises of sending the official top stair. In practice getting the promotion, apart from fulfilling above conditions, will depend from the court, in which the probation officer works, centres on of financial repercussions associated with it. In case of the Gdańsk circle, in which examinations described in the present article were conducted, promotions in general are being given successively and there are in this respect no long delays however what isn't a general practice in Poland.

Another important issue from the point of view of the employee, affecting his well-being and comfort of work is the control and evaluation of his work. In the literature, it is pointed out that the control and evaluation of work meets different goals. A. Poczowski distinguished the administrative purpose - its results are used for personal purposes; information - supervisors get knowledge of how the employee performs the tasks assigned to him, but also the employee obtains knowledge about the expectations of the management towards him and about his weaknesses and strengths; motivational - the employee gets knowledge about the effects of their work and desired behaviors (Poczowski, 2003, pages 161-162). The control and evaluation of the employee's work should also be carried out according to specific rules, which can be briefly presented as: purposefulness, transparency, regularity (Ludwiczynski, 2014, pages 283-284).

In the case of professional probation officers, all the rules for conducting the inspection and assessment of employees were closed in one sentence: the scope of tasks of the district superintendent includes control and evaluation of probation officers, probation officers and conducting visits and inspections (Act, 2001, Article 33 paragraph 2 point 5 ). Therefore, it is only known that the control and evaluation of the work should be carried out. However, even with great indulgence, this regulation can not be considered sufficient. This in turn may cause that the assessment made or the way it is carried out will be felt as unfair.

## **Own research**

In order to identify selected parameters of the sense of quality and the level of satisfaction with the life of the officers of the Probation Service of the Judiciary Service, we conducted surveys in 2017. In the study, we adopted the onion's theory of Czapiński as the basis.

The subject of the research was to diagnose the quality of life of the officers of the Probative Court Service and to verify the relationship between sociodemographic and organizational variables and the level of life satisfaction.

We appointed two main research problems:

1. what quality of life of officers of the Probative Court Service is?
2. what link between variables is socjodemograficznymi and organizational and with level of practical satisfaction?

In order to get an answer to the first research question, we used the scale of satisfaction from particular areas and aspects of life, the scale of the will to live, the scale of happiness and the scale of assessing life as a whole. In order to get answers to the second research question, we used the Life Satisfaction Scale (SWLS).

In the study, we used the following tools: - Life Satisfaction Scale (SWLS) of E. Diener, R. Emmons, R. Larsen and S. Griffin in the Polish adaptation of Z. Juczyński. The Satisfaction with Life Scale consists of 5 items, for which the examined person chooses one of seven possible answers (from 1 - I totally disagree, up to 7 - I agree completely). The obtained raw results are converted into a standardized scale - sten (10-point). The range of raw results obtained ranges from 5 to 35 points - the higher the score, the greater the sense of life satisfaction of the surveyed people. During the interpretation of the result, the sten scale was taken into account, where the results between 1-4 sten values were low, 5-6 sten is the average, and 7-10 sten are high scores (Juczyński, 2001).

- The scale of satisfaction with particular subjects and aspects of life - is used in research on the quality of life (Derbis, Bańska, 1998). The subjects assessed on a scale from 1 to 6 the degree of satisfaction with a given sphere of their life. Court curators indicated on a scale from 1 to 6, to what extent they are satisfied with particular areas of their lives. The number 1 meant very satisfied (and) the number 6 was very unhappy (-a);

- The scale of the will to live by J. Czapiński, which consists of one test item. The examined person determined one of the values on a scale from 0 to 9, in which 0 means a total lack of thirst for life (I do not want to live at all) and 9 the strongest desire to live (I really want to live);

- The scale of happiness written by J. Czapiński, in which the subjects determined the level of felt happiness by marking one of the answers: very happy, quite happy, not too happy, unhappy;

- The scale of assessment of life as a whole by J. Czapiński, on which probation officers assessed their life as a whole, choosing one of the options: wonderful, successful, quite good, neither good nor bad, not very successful, unhappy, horrible.

The selection of research tools made it possible to compare the level of satisfaction and the quality of life of probation officers with the results of research on a general sample (Czapiński, Panek, 2015) and Andrzej Piotrowski's research carried out on the Prison Service officers (Piotrowski, 2012, pp. 107-138). SPSS 17.0 was used for statistical analysis. The main statistical methods used in the study are: comparison of means, correlation method, analysis of variance. The research tools were accompanied by a reference sheet in which items containing questions about sex, education, marital status, children's possession, religious practice, place of residence, degree of study, curator specialty, type of team, indication of working time in the field / court were found, seniority and financial situation.

### **Examined persons**

They conducted research in teams of the probative court service by regional courts in the area of the jurisdiction of Circuit Court in Gdańsk. Choice of the court circle was intentional, since his structure in the scope concerning the workplace of probation officers is characteristic of many courts in Poland. The Gdańsk circuit isn't a typical judgement acting in city area, and the considerable part of regional courts is spreading through urban and country areas what allows for comparing official functioning of probation officers with activity of similar teams in the country.

The research was carried out in 2017 and 73 KSS officers (16 men and 57 women) representing two court guardian specialties took part, which constitutes 30% of all professional probation officers in the Gdańsk district. The research covered both curatorial specialties, ie curators for adults (67%) and family probation officers (33%).

### **The results of own research**

The first stage of our analysis was to compare the results in the Czapiński Happiness Scale obtained by probation officers with the percentages of the nationwide population. We asked the curators a question regarding the assessment of the feeling of happiness in the past days. The answers were classified on a scale: very happy, quite happy, not too happy, unhappy. The obtained results are included in the table No. 1.

**Table 1. Percentage distribution of responses in the nationwide sample surveyed and among probation officers**

Answers	A nationwide test (%)	Probation officers (%)
Very happy	11,9	15,1
Enough happy	71,7	79,5
not very happy	15,2	5,5
unhappy	1,3	0

Source: own study and on the base: Czapiński J., Panek, T. (ed.), Social Diagnosis. Conditions and the quality of life of Poles, Advice of the Public Monitoring, Warsaw 2015, p. 187, <http://www.diagnoza.com/>

Achieved results show that probation officers are happier from the whole of Poles, in spite of carrying peculiar professional obligations out by them. Data included in the table is No. 1 optimistic society luckier for probation officers which appear as persons than Polish. More from them it emphasized the option of the reply "very happy" and "quite happy" compared with the all-Polish attempt. Simultaneously of probation officers which emphasized the reply "not very happy" it is almost three times of fewer than examined Poles. Essential and information is a positive signal, that none of probation officers emphasized the evaluation "unhappy". The table is introducing the percentage disintegration and the mean No. 2 skalową answers to a question how you are assessing (one's i) the current life as the whole?

**Table 2. Summary of court curators' answers and participants of the nationwide survey**

Answers	A nationwide test (%)	Probation officers (%)
Great	5,3	2,7
Successful	42,3	42,5
Quite good	33,9	41,1
Neither good nor bad	13,7	12,3
Not very successful	4,0	1,4
unhappy	0,6	0
horrible	0,2	0

Source: own study and on the base: Czapiński J., Panek, T. (ed.), Social Diagnosis. Conditions and the quality of life of Poles, Advice of the Public Monitoring, Warsaw 2015, p. 184, <http://www.diagnoza.com/>

Analysis of the percentage distribution of the answer to the question question How do you evaluate your current life as a whole? Indicates that curators are less likely to describe their lives as a great match with the nationwide test, but more often characterize them as successful and quite good compared to the entire population. The average scale value concerning the assessment of life as a whole is slightly lower in the group of probation officers (2.72) from the average nationwide sample (2.67) (Czapiński, Panek, 2015, p. 184).

In the CBOS survey at the end of 2016, just over three-quarters of adult Poles declared their overall satisfaction with their whole life (76%) (CBOS 2017). In Table 3, we present the percentage distribution of answers given to the question: How strong are your thirst for life these days?

**Table 3. Summary of the answers of probation officers and participants of the nationwide survey**

Answers	A nationwide test (%)	Probation officers (%)
0 I do not want to live at all	0,4	0
1	0,4	0
2	0,7	0
3	1,1	0
4	4,3	4,1
5	5,2	4,1
6	9,2	11
7	17,6	30,1
8	17,6	37
9 I want to live very much	43,5	13,7

Source: own study and on the base: Czapiński J., Panek, T. (ed.), Social Diagnosis. Conditions and the quality of life of Poles, Advice of the Public Monitoring, Warsaw 2015, p. 186, <http://www.diagnoza.com/>

The Scale exploited in this examination of the will of the life included comparing the expressed evaluation of desire for the life of probation officers and the all-Polish population. The degree of expressing desire for the life of examined persons in the all-Polish attempt and amongst probation officers was reflected in the scale from 0 to 9, where about means "generally speaking doesn't want for me oneself to live" and 9 is expressing the state "very much firmly I feel like living". Persons which are signalling the much reduced will of the life didn't turn up at the examined group, but also there are very little persons declaring the highest level of the will of the life (13.7%) in comparison with the all-Polish attempt (43.5%). The mean scale of the reply of probation officers (7.33) was lower than all-Polish (8.59) (Czapiński, Panek, 2015, p. 186) as well as from SW officers (7.63) (Piotrowski 2012, p. 126).

According to the onion's theory recalled already earlier of happiness a dimension is layer, in which the man is making appropriate assessments from the satisfaction of fragmentary, i.e. individual aspects of its life. The scale exploited in this examination of the assessment of the degree of satisfaction taken from individual fields and aspects of life from social Diagnosis 2015 included 16 parameters of activities spreading through areas and interests of the average man. In the table a percentage disintegration of satisfaction from individual fields and aspects of life of persons was introduced to No. 4 in the all-Polish attempt and amongst probation officers

(the interpretation of results was limited to scales 1 - very pleased, 2-pleased, with omitting 3-7 scales).

**Table 4. Degree of satisfaction with particular areas and aspects of life**

Satisfaction with:	A nationwide test (%)	Probation officers (%)
Relations in the family	73,1	76,7
Relationships with friends	59,2	69,9
Marriages	80,8	58,9
Children	86,1	75,3
Family financial situation	33,4	27,4
Housing conditions	55,3	56,2
Life achievements	40,8	46,6
Perspectives for the future	24,8	26
Education	46,1	76,7
Performed work	46	49,3
Medical condition	47	45,2
Organization of rest	44,2	43,8
Sexual life	52	52,1
Situation in the country	8,2	8,2
Location of residence	58,3	63
Security status in place of order	55,8	54,8

Source: own study and based on: Czapiński J., Panek, T. (ed.), Social Diagnosis. Conditions and quality of life of Poles, Social Monitoring Council, Warsaw 2015, pp. 188-189, <http://www.diagnoza.com/>

In the nationwide sample in 2014-2015, satisfaction with the future prospects, the situation in the country, sex life, work, place of residence and relations with colleagues decreased the most. On the other hand, satisfaction with relations with relatives in the family has not changed (although satisfaction with children and marriage has decreased), own education, housing conditions and financial situation of own family (Czapiński, Panek 2015, p. 190). Probation officers are more satisfied with relationships with colleagues (69.9% of probation officers vs. 59.2% of adult Poles) and relations in the family (76.7% of probation officers vs. 73.1% of adult Poles), but what is puzzling is for most of their satisfaction with the marriage (58.9% of probation officers vs. 80.8% of adult Poles) and children (75.3% of probation officers vs. 86.1% of adult Poles) was much less satisfactory than the general number of Poles.

Probation officers also more low assessed their satisfaction from the financial standing of the family (27.4%) what is favouring them negatively relating to the tendency characteristic of the whole of Poles (33.4%). Probation officers are more pleased with practical achievements, the had education as well as the performed work. Unfortunately worse relating to the declaration pleasures of the medical condition are falling out (45.2%) in the face of the all-Polish trial (47%). Examination CBOS-u, is announcing that adult Poles most often declare satisfaction from its friends

and close acquaintances (84% pleased) (CBOS 2017). Examinations from which it results that keeping close friendships is connected with feeling happiness and the subjective welfare are appearing in the literature on the subject (Argyle 2001, 2000).

In from. Juczyński's textbook there is an information that the average score in SWLS calculated he the basis of the conducted research he and group of 555 adult Poles is  $M = 20.37$  ( $SD = 5.32$ ) (Juczyński 2001, pt. 136). Probation officers obtained in 2017 an average life satisfaction score of 21.11, which is the upper limit of 5 of Sten gun. For comparison, officers of the Prison Service obtained in 2010 and slightly higher average result, ace at 21.60 (Piotrowski 2012, pt. 124).

**Table 5. Average results in the Life satisfaction scale (SWLS) and sociodemographic predictors**

					% scores	
		N	MD	SD	Low (1-4 sten)	High (7-10 sten)
sex	women	57	23	4,122	17,5	43,9
	men	14	20	6,383	35,7	21,4
education	higher - bachelor's degree	2	23,5	0,707	0	50
	higher - master's degree	70	22	5,128	22,9	38,6
marital status	married	53	22	5,328	20,8	37,7
	divorced	10	19,5	3,808	40	20
	in an informel relationship	3	27	3,786	0	66,7
	free	6	23,5	4,491	16,7	50
children	No	10	21	4,473	20	30
	one	23	21	5,365	26,1	43,5
	two	32	22,5	4,591	21,9	34,4
	three	8	23,5	6,990	12,5	50
religious practices	deeply believing	6	24	7,563	16,7	50
	believers	55	22	5,022	23,6	40
	rather, non-believers	7	22	3,910	14,3	14,3
	unbelieving	4	22	4,082	0	50
place of residence	city over 400,000 and more	10	25	7,168	30	60
	city 200 - 400 thousand	24	20,5	4,949	20,8	29,2
	city 100 - 200 thousand	3	24	3,512	0	66,7
	city 20 - 100 thousand	25	20	5,346	32	40
	country	11	23	2,256	0	27,3

Source: own studies.

The analysis of the results of Satisfactions get in the Scale from the Life showed that it had get the 21.9% of respondents results within the limits of 1-4 of Sten gun (harsh result 5-17 of pt), meaning low sense of satisfaction. Results attesting to the average of satisfaction from the life (5-6 Sten gun,

harsh result 18-23 of pt) got the 39.7% of respondents, however results within the limits of 7-10 of Sten gun (harsh result 24-35 of pt) attesting to great satisfaction probation officers at the 38.4% examined were stated.

Analysis of the average results obtained in the Satisfaction with Life Scale indicates that women are characterized by a higher satisfaction with life in relation to men. The obtained result is optimistic, because research devoted to the phenomenon of stress in the work of a probation officer (Wirkus 2017) indicates that they are the most stressed and at risk of occupational burnout. This is also important information for another reason, because life satisfaction turns out to be important factor protecting against the effects of negative work experience. Aspinwall and his colleagues noticed that happy people remember more positive events from their lives, they are better at making important life decisions because they use strategies to obtain information that protects their health more effectively (Aspinwall and others 2002). Therefore, knowledge about conditions that increase the individual's sense of happiness may be an important condition for making informed and deliberate decisions, both on private and professional grounds.

The analysis of the obtained data shows that probation officers married did not achieve higher results on the scale of life satisfaction than those who are singles, but having children (two or more) can be an important determinant of a high level of well-being. Research by Diener and his colleagues prove the relationship between marital life and happiness (Diener et al. 1999). Religious activity may also contribute to a more satisfying life of the probation officers under investigation. Myers' research, on the other hand, confirms the moderate relationship between happiness and involvement in religious activity (Myers 2000).

**Table 6. Average results in the Life satisfaction scale (SWLS) and organizational predictors**

					% results	
		N	MD	SD	Low (1-4 sten)	High (7-10 sten)
<b>Administration degree</b>	professional probation officer	10	19	4,905	10	20
	more senior probation officer	10	20,5	5,276	40	40
	probation officer specialist	52	23	5,139	21,2	40,4
<b>division of the supervision</b>	for adults	49	22	5,498	26,5	36,7
	family and for juveniles	24	22,5	3,895	12,5	41,7
<b>team</b>	criminal cases	48	21,5	5,519	27,1	35,4
	matrimonial causes and juveniles	23	23	3,676	8,7	43,5
<b>working hours in the field (in the month)</b>	0-25 h	13	21	5,780	30,8	23,1
	26-50 h	28	22	4,328	14,3	32,1
	51-75 h	25	24	5,523	28	52
	76-100 h	7	20	4,276	14,3	42,9
<b>working hours in the team (in the month)</b>	0-25 h	31	20	5,263	29	32,3
	26-50 h	33	23	3,893	12,1	42,4
	51-75 h	9	20	7,446	33,3	44,4
<b>work experience in the supervision</b>	to one year	2	22,5	2,121	0	50
	1-5 years	9	19	5,408	22,2	22,2
	6-10 years	13	24	5,294	23,1	53,8
	11-20 years	17	23	4,678	29,4	41,2
	more than 20 years	32	22	5,336	18,8	34,4
<b>total work experience</b>	6-10 years	5	21	5,020	0	40
	11-20 years	24	23	5,198	29,2	45,8
	More than 20 years	43	22	5,077	20,9	34,9
<b>Material situation</b>	neither good, nor evil	13	18	5,266	46,2	7,7
	rather good	29	21	4,899	31	27,6
	good	29	25	3,629	3,4	62,1
	very good	2	25,5	3,536	0	50

Source: own studies.

Our analysis show that selected organizational predictors determine a high level of life satisfaction. An important organizational problem is the issue of unequal professional promotions in individual judicial districts.

According to the analysis of the average results obtained in the Satisfaction with Life Scale, it is the highest level of service and what is connected with it - better financial situation, significantly affect the level of perceived well-being. The Ministry of Justice in a letter dated 28/12/2012

(DB-III-311-272 / 12/4) noticed the lack of precise legal solutions regarding professional promotion, which resulted in various practices and problems on the national scale. Interesting information is provided by the analysis of a sense of satisfaction in the context of field work time and time spent in court, which indicates that probation officers who perform more activities in the environment of charges are more satisfied with life.

High results in this group of respondents may indicate an important context of the specifics of probation officers' work, which in some studies as a threatening factor (Wojtera, Hołyst 2013) and causing stress, may have a positive impact on the welfare of the surveyed professional group. Probation officers in the first years of service - the youngest internship, obtained the lowest results in the scale of life satisfaction. Such a situation is probably conditioned by low earnings against the current tendencies of increasing the level of remuneration in the labor market in professions that do not require specialized preparation as opposed to working as a probation officer. The basic remuneration of professional probation officers on equal service levels is equal and constitutes, according to the rank of the official grade, a multiple of the base amount, which in 2017 amounted to PLN 1873.84 (Budget Act, 2016).

### **Conclusions from research**

In the study we conducted, we obtained answers to formulated research questions. Review of various examinations above determinants of feeling happiness conducted through Carr's, shows that the luck is increasing the activity, the productivity and the longevity (Carr, 2009, p. 36).

The results of our research indicate that probation officers are happier than all Poles, despite their specific professional duties. They are optimistic for probation officers, who appear on their background as more happy people than respondents taking part in a nationwide survey. However, the average scale value regarding the assessment of respondents' lives as a whole is already slightly lower in the court probation group than the national average sample. Similarly, the average scale value of the answers of probation officers in Skala, the will of life, which was also lower than that obtained in the study by Czapiński and Panek.

The analysis of satisfaction with particular areas and aspects of life has shown that probation officers are more satisfied with relationships with colleagues and relationships in the family than respondents in the nationwide survey. However, our surprise caused data, which shows that for the majority of them satisfaction from marriage and children was much less satisfying than all Poles. Carr, like in Polish studies on probation officers or those conducted on a nationwide trial, distinguishes a number of conditions for a sense of satisfaction and happiness. Among them indicates,

among others for: functioning in a relationship, maintaining good relationships with loved ones, having a small circle of proven friends, operating in a safe environment, undertaking physical activity, or achieving your own life goals (Carr, 2009, p. 40).

The average result of satisfaction from the life took examined probation officers out 21.11 and exceeds the average result a little bit in examining adult Poles. They aren't diversifying the level of satisfaction from the life in essential statistically it is impossible the sex, the education, having children, religious observances or the domicile. Analysis of average results get in the Scale of Satisfaction from the Life show that women are characterized by higher satisfaction from living towards men. Information from which he results is an interesting conclusion from examinations that probation officers being functional in the matrimony aren't displaying the highest level of practical satisfaction into juxtaposing with singles, but already having children (two and more) can be an essential determinant of the felt welfare.

Organizational predictors (official step, division of the supervision, kind of the team, working hours in the field, time of the teamwork, work experience in the supervision, total working hours, financial circumstances) aren't also diversifying the level of satisfaction from the life of examined probation officers into the significant way statistically. Respondents with the official top stair examined are characterized by a Scale of Satisfaction from the Life with the highest level of the welfare what the definitely more better financial standing and the achievement are probably supporting definite, of stable position in the process of the professional promotion.

The analysis of the sense of satisfaction in the context of time spent in the field and time spent in court also surprised us, because it turns out that probation officers who spend more time in the environment are more satisfied, despite real exposure to various stressful situations. In the context of the conclusions drawn from our research, it is worth considering the warning by H. Sęk and Ł. Kaczmarek taken from the Introduction to the issue of Polish Positive Psychology by Alan Carr, that (...) attempts to fight for happiness in the workplace can lead to growing frustration, which may reduce the quality of life much more than the possible benefits that could be derived after the implementation of the postulates "(Carr, 2009, p. 14).

### **Abstrakt: Jakość życia kuratorów sądowych**

Artykuł koncentruje się na tematyce jakości życia kuratorów sądowych ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem analizy znaczenia wybranych czynników ją kształtujących. Obok analizy literatury związanej z satysfakcją z życia jako podstawowym warunkiem dobrostanu i charakterystyki pracy kuratora sądowego, przedstawione zostały również wyniki badań własnych. Badania

przeprowadzono w zespołach kuratorskiej służby sądowej przy sądach rejonowych w obszarze właściwości Sądu Okręgowego w Gdańsku. Wybór okręgu sądowego był celowy i wzięło w nich udział 73 funkcjonariuszy KSS. Przedmiotem badań było zdiagnozowanie jakości życia funkcjonariuszy Kuratorskiej Służby Sądowej a także zweryfikowanie zależności pomiędzy zmiennymi socjodemograficznymi i organizacyjnymi a poziomem satysfakcji życiowej. Badania wskazały, że na jakość życia kuratorów sądowych wpływają przede wszystkim relacje społeczne i ich jakość, poczucie bezpieczeństwa, charakter wykonywanej pracy a także styl życia i poziom aspiracji życiowych. Kuratorzy sądowi są szczęśliwsi od ogółu Polaków, pomimo wykonywania przez nich specyficznych obowiązków zawodowych. Poziomu satysfakcji z życia nie różnicują w istotny sposób predyktory socjodemograficzne i organizacyjne. Wyniki badań pokazują między innymi, że kuratorzy sądowi, którzy częściej pracują w środowisku podopiecznych, są *de facto* bardziej usatysfakcjonowani, niż ci którzy wykonują swoje obowiązki głównie w siedzibie sądu.

**Słowa kluczowe:** jakość życia, kuratorzy sądowi, poczucie szczęścia, organizacja i warunki pracy kuratora

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