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Living and Material Support for Convicts: Legal and Economic Analysis

NINA M. TOMINAAcademy of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia, Ryazan, Russia, nineliya@list.ru <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1020-603X>

Abstract

Introduction: the article considers various legal and financial aspects of living and material support for convicts, analyzes normative legal acts regulating support activities of institutions of the penal system. One of the *purposes* of the study is to determine the society's possibilities to ensure detention in conditions that comply with the norms, without violating the rights and interests of convicts established by law in order to achieve the goals of criminal punishment. *Methods:* descriptive, comparative, as well as the method of appercipation. The *conclusions* of the article are aimed at developing the theoretical foundations of providing convicts with material benefits within the limits established by law, stipulated by punishments for crimes against society, and within the framework of financial potential in the form of budgetary allocations supplemented by the institutions' own resource capabilities.

Keywords: living and material support for convicts; rights and legitimate interests; needs and requirements; support activities; budget allocations.

5.1.2. Public law (state law) sciences.

5.1.4. Criminal law sciences.

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Introduction

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations in 1955 establishes that everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being, including food, clothing, housing, in order to maintain their health and well-being (Article 25). Any civilized and democratic state should adhere to the basic ideas outlined in the declaration and ensure their national legislative consolidation, establishing an appropriate procedure for their implementation in relation of law-abiding citizens and those who have violated the law and ended up in prison. The provi-

sions of Article 25 were further developed in the 2015 United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules) that included rules for the detention of prisoners in terms of accommodation (rules 12–17), clothing and bedding (rules 19–21), food supply (rule 22). The minimum requirements are only threshold ones for each state to expand and fix them in its regulations (preliminary observation 2).

The Russian Federation, sharing the principles laid down in these documents, has fixed the provision of material and household services to detainees, areas and ways to implement

them in the Penal Code of the Russian Federation. The modern Russian penitentiary system has been creating objective prerequisites for achieving the goals of correction, social adaptation and re-socialization, which, despite huge financial investments in the penitentiary system and the existing risks, is one of the directions for improving human capital and reintegrating law-abiding citizens into society.

Discussion and results

Living and material support for convicts: legal framework

The Special Part of the Penal Code of the Russian Federation is devoted to the provision of the living and material support for those sentenced to imprisonment. At the same time, as the researchers note [1, p. 59; 2, p. 400], the term “living and material support for convicts” is not legally fixed.

In accordance with the Penal Code of the Russian Federation, living and material support is aimed at creating necessary housing and communal living conditions, providing food, and providing prisoners with personal belongings. O.A. Zarubina and I.E. Kon'yakova note the importance of this area for the activities of the entire penitentiary system [3, p. 63].

E.S. Men'shchikov and L.I. Gamanenko understand living and material support for convicts as “the institution of penal law, which regulates relations to create conditions for the normal functioning of convicts in institutions of the penal system aimed at preserving the life, health and human dignity of convicts, their correction and re-socialization” [4, p. 277]. They propose to consolidate the term in question and systematize the norms of material and household provision within a separate chapter of the Penal Code of the Russian Federation.

A.N. Yusupova emphasizes that “living and material support for convicts creates material and living conditions for the use of means of correction of convicts” [2, p. 402]. T.I. Isakova suggests that living and material support should be understood as “a set of conditions of detention for convicts designed to meet their minimum needs for food, clothing, accommodation, implementation of correctional and preventive measures” [5, p. 245].

Indeed, taking into account the regime of serving a sentence, living and material support is of particular importance for convicts,

they perceive it as ensuring civil rights. As A.Ya. Grishko and V.V. Rybakov emphasize, “having the same structure as the rights of all citizens, the range of ... rights of convicts is significantly narrower in scope. This is explained by the fact that those sentenced to imprisonment, while remaining subjects of civil law, fall within the scope of penal legislation, which establishes a number of restrictions in the sphere of property relations” [6, p. 69]. In our opinion, the restrictions are quite fair. It should be borne in mind that those serving sentences often knowingly, albeit for various reasons, have committed crimes against individuals and society, which, forcibly and fully bears all the costs of their maintenance. Victims often live in conditions no better than convicts and experience moral and material losses.

Human rights defenders perceive thousands of complaints from convicts about shortcomings in the provision of the established norm of living space, clothing or food as violations of the rights and legitimate interests [2, p. 401]. At the All-Russian Coordinating Council of Human Rights Commissioners “Protection of human rights in places of forced detention” (Moscow, September 23, 2025) it was mentioned that for the past two and a half years, the Commissioner for Human Rights in the Russian Federation had received more than 74,000 complaints from citizens in places of detention. Most of them concern ensuring the right to health and medical care, conditions of detention, and transfer to a facility closer to the place of residence of relatives, release from serving a sentence due to illness and parole [7].

Convicts are concerned about increasing the number of visits, parcels, telephone conversations, sending and receiving e-mails, availability of televisions and refrigerators, creating an accessible environment for the disabled, visitors to institutions of the penal system, etc., which significantly expands the content of the areas of material and household support.

O.G. Kovalev convincingly reveals the novelties in living and material support in the light of the implementation of the new Internal regulations of correctional institutions of the penal system, pre-trial detention facilities and correctional centers approved by the order of the Ministry of Justice of Russia of July 4, 2022, which indicates the humanization of conditions

of detention, the expansion of the rights and interests of detainees [8].

Thus, it can be concluded that from a legal point of view, according to Article 99 of the Penal Code of the Russian Federation, living and material support for convicts includes:

- creation of necessary housing and communal living conditions in compliance with the norm of living space, depending on the place of serving the sentence (Paragraph 1);
- provision of individual beds and bedding, as well as wearable clothing and shoes for the season, individual hygiene products (Paragraph 2);
- provision of food in accordance with the minimum standards of nutrition and material and household provision for convicts established by the Government of the Russian Federation (Paragraph 3).

At the same time, certain categories of convicts (the sick, the disabled, pregnant women and nursing mothers, adolescents) are legally provided with improved conditions of detention and more extended rights to social security, both at the expense of the income of enterprises employing convicts and the convicts' own funds. The internal regulations of correctional institutions in 2022, consistent with the provisions of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, include a modern humanitarian approach to the conditions of detention of convicts and socio-economic needs. They are aimed at expanding the rights and interests of people who are subject to restrictions: preserving life, health, and human dignity, increasing educational standards, acquiring a profession, and preserving family ties through digital innovation and online procurement. It contributes to the formation of positive attitude towards correction and social adaptation [2; 4; 5].

Improving the legal status of persons deprived of liberty has a positive effect on all aspects of the organization of the activities of penitentiary institutions in the field of regime observance and supervision, escorting, and educational work [8, p. 381].

Economic approach to living and material support for persons sentenced to imprisonment and its place in support activities of penitentiary institutions

Let us consider the economic side of the material and household provision of convicts in

two aspects. From an economic point of view, conditions should be created in institutions of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia that meet the needs and demands of a person.

Needs exist objectively, do not depend on the will and consciousness of people, and are not created by them, since need is a biologically tangible lack of something (food, clothing, shelter, and security). It is the needs that must be fully met in a correctional facility, taking into account financial capabilities of the society. T.I. Isakova emphasizes the existing duality: by carrying out correctional and preventive measures, it is necessary to meet the minimum needs of convicts in food, clothing, and accommodation, while the amount of money allocated by the federal budget depends on the social and political situation in the country [5, pp. 245–246].

While demand is fundamentally a form of need, it takes on a specific shape influenced by the development level of both society and the individual. This refers to the requirements essential for sustaining life and fostering personal development. Demands are social and spiritual in nature. S.I. Petrova considers demands to be basic principles of any expedient behavior, logical awareness of one's ability to take care of the future [9, p. 212].

Consequently, conditions of detention and nutrition have been improved, with provisions tailored to the specific category of convicts (including minors, women, the sick, persons with disabilities, and others). Additionally, measures have been implemented to ensure access to general, vocational, and higher education; to raise cultural and educational standards; and to enhance healthcare provision and social guarantees, such as pensions and benefits. So, the Russian penitentiary system satisfies not only basic needs, but also other demands that contribute to person's survival, growth and development, since unmet biological and social needs cause discomfort, stress, and inappropriate behavior among convicts, and this complicates social adaptation and socialization.

Penitentiary institutions while keeping people with different interests should ensure biological needs at a decent level and, if possible, meet those demands that allow detainees to overestimate negative phenomena and ensure successful reintegration in the future.

The second economic aspect concerns the financial costs of society for the maintenance and development of the penitentiary system.

So, since its creation in 1879, the Fifth Office for Accounting for Funds Allocated from the Treasury for Enforcement Proceedings has been managing all amounts allocated from the State Treasury for execution proceedings [10]. The state, performing a punitive function, allocates financial resources depending on the state of the country's economy. A significant part of them is aimed at creating conditions for serving sentences that comply with the Minimum Standard Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners and the regulatory acts of the Russian Federation.

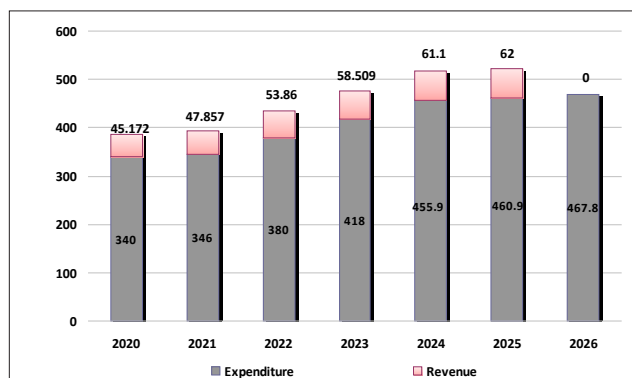


Figure 1. Budget of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia [11]

Figure 1 illustrates that the budget of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia comprises allocations from multi-level state budgets, which demonstrate a growing trend and whose volume depends on the social and political situation both domestically and globally [5, p. 245], as well as funds generated by enterprises within the penal system (accounting for 12 % of the total expenditures) through the employment of convicts [15].

It is worth emphasizing that the state supports the penal system by providing it with preferences in the form of income tax benefits for enterprises of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia and in the implementation of contract purchases of goods.

The Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia, forming its budget from the above-mentioned sources, must fit within the limited budget framework, directing funds not only to the material and household support of convicts, but also to the organization of diverse life support activities for the entire system of execution of

sentences, including professional training and maintenance of personnel, logistical and military supplies, construction and operation buildings and structures of all divisions and bodies, etc. [12; 13], that is, what is related to support activities of bodies and institutions of the penal system. This concept is not legally fixed, it is characterized as generalizing, including various types of provision aimed at providing living and material support for convicts and creating conditions for the normal functioning of all institutions and bodies of the penal system in order to fulfill their assigned tasks of correcting and re-educating those who violate the law.

Support activities are most often defined as a set of measures aimed at meeting the material, transport, medical, and other needs of bodies and institutions of the penal system [12, p. 65].

Indeed, support activities encompass both the provision of living and material support for convicts and the supply of all necessary resources. These activities are carried out in accordance with relevant regulatory acts and are essential for ensuring the normal functioning of institutions and bodies within the penal system. They are implemented by employees who manage organizational, legal, and socio-economic relations among stakeholders through contracts and agreements.

Taking into account the multidimensional functional purpose of support activities and its connection with the material and household provision of convicts, support activities of the penal system can be defined as the creation of the established regulatory framework of the state and the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia to achieve the goals set before the penitentiary system for the correction and social adaptation of the conditions for the life of the system that have violated the law, the normal functioning of bodies and institutions by a set of interrelated departments and services for specific and conditional types of support with existing organizational, legal, socio-economic relations between them and existing counterparties on the basis of contracts and agreements.

All the activities of support services of penitentiary institutions are aimed at providing convicts with material and household services (Figure 2). Let us highlight principles of public utilities and community services in penitentiary institutions (Figure 3).

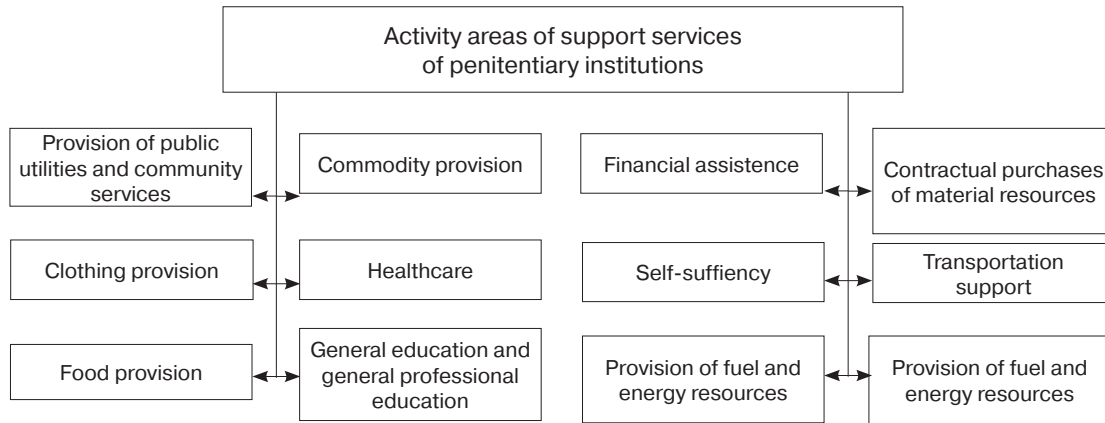


Figure 2. Activity areas of support services of penitentiary institutions in the field of living and material support for convicts

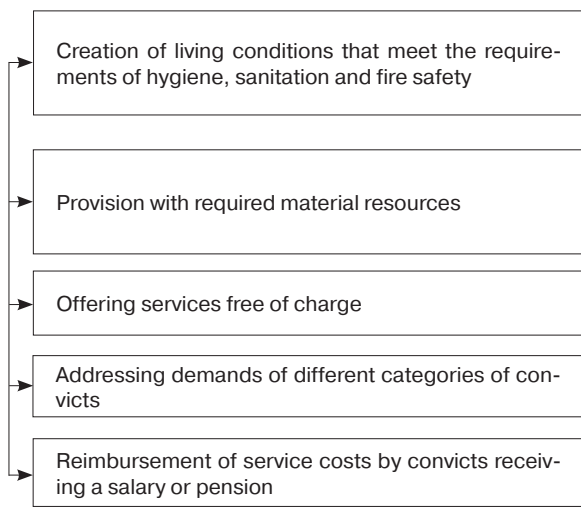


Figure 3. Principles of public utilities and community services in penitentiary institutions

The principles mentioned above focus the penal system on creating decent, favorable conditions for serving sentences that meet the Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. In practice there are certain difficulties with their implementation. Similarly, the principles of organizing clothing and food supplies are aimed at consumption in places of deprivation of liberty in accordance with the norms of nutrition, clothing, medical, sanitary-epidemiological and other requirements established by law.

Satisfaction of material and household needs is an essential component of the physiological, social and psychological life of convicts from both legal and economic positions (Table). Let us reveal the parameters of the relationship between living and material support for convicts and their logistical support.

Legal and economic aspects of living and material support for convicts and their logistical support [12; 13]

<i>Legal aspect</i>	<i>Economic aspect</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>
Purpose: guaranteed observance of the rights, freedoms and interests of convicts in matters of conditions of detention, food and clothing allowances, with a number of related social requests	Purpose: to provide prisoners with living and material support within the available financial resources of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia and to create conditions of detention that comply with the Minimum Standard Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners and standards established by Russian law through the implementation of the federal target program "Development of the Penal System (2018–2035)" approved by the decree of the Government of the Russian Federation No. 420 of April 6, 2018 (as amended on August 30, 2025)
Regulation: articles 60.5, 72, 99, 100, 170 of the Penal Code of the Russian Federation and related regulations	Regulation: articles 60.5, 72, 99, 100, 170 of the Penal Code of the Russian Federation and the regulatory framework for each type of support activities. Financing: limits on multi-level budget allocations; funds from income-generating activities, attracting convicts to work; government preferences, tax benefits and contractual purchases of material resources
Content of living and material support for convicts and types of logistical support	
Provision of necessary housing and communal living conditions	<i>Provision of public utilities and community services.</i> Creation of necessary housing, household and sanitary-hygienic conditions (including a bath and laundry complex) for convicts.

1	2
	<p><i>Provision of fuel and energy resources.</i> Organization of timely provision of institutions with electricity, heat, and water supply.</p> <p><i>Warehouse support.</i> Organization of storage of commodity values, their issuance, maintenance of necessary stocks.</p> <p><i>Logistics, delivery. Transportation support.</i> Organization of a centralized motor transport section and repair and transport workshops</p>
Food supply	<p><i>Food supply.</i> Provision and organization of food preparation, bread baking, provision of necessary equipment, property, and inventory.</p> <p><i>Warehouse support.</i> Organization of storage of commodity and material values, issuance and maintenance of necessary stocks.</p> <p><i>Logistics, delivery. Transportation support.</i> Organization of a centralized motor transport section and repair and transport workshops.</p> <p><i>Provision of fuel and energy resources.</i> Organization of timely provision of institutions with electricity, heat, and water supply.</p> <p><i>Self-sufficiency.</i> Systematic development of subsidiary farms producing products for institutions, increasing the number of panel settlements and purchase of food</p>
Supply of personal belongings	<p><i>Clothing provision.</i> Determining the need for property, optimizing purchases, and accounting for property in warehouses and in use.</p> <p><i>Warehouse support.</i> Organization of conditions for the proper storage of personal belongings, distribution, issuance, creation of standard stocks of personal belongings, organization of operation and timely repair of personal belongings, organization of storage of convicts' personal belongings.</p> <p><i>Logistics, delivery. Transportation support.</i> Organization of a centralized motor transport section and repair and transport workshops.</p> <p><i>Provision of fuel and energy resources.</i> Organization of timely provision of institutions with electricity, thermal energy, and water supply.</p> <p><i>Self-sufficiency.</i> Repair and tailoring of clothing for own needs and on the side</p>
<p>Types of material and household support (Article 101 of the Penal Code of the Russian Federation and Chapter 12 of the Internal regulations of correctional institutions of the Russian Federation)</p>	
<p><i>Commodity provision.</i> Providing convicts with basic necessities and food, clothing at their own expense through the retail chains of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia, as well as via the Internet and mail</p>	
<p><i>Healthcare</i></p>	
<p><i>Improved living conditions.</i> Provided to pregnant women, nursing mothers, juvenile convicts, as well as for patients and those with first or second-group disabilities</p>	
<p><i>The right to live outside.</i> For those serving sentences in penal settlements</p>	
<p><i>Convicts' appearance.</i> The right to wear certain categories of their own clothes, etc. The right to a personal search, rather than a full one</p>	
<p><i>Electronic document management.</i> When applying for consultations, appointments</p>	
<p><i>Notarial and advisory services</i></p>	
<p><i>The right to use technical means</i></p>	
<p><i>Pension provision.</i> Old-age, disability, and survivor's pensions are provided</p>	
<p><i>Provision of social benefits.</i> These are benefits related to pregnancy, childbirth, and temporary disability</p>	
<p>Keeping children under the age of four with their mothers in pre-trial detention facilities, children in infant homes at correctional institutions, long-term visits with children under the age of 14, etc.</p>	

Thus, living and material support for convicts includes three main areas, which are implemented through a variety of functions performed by support services. So, for example, in order to ensure food security and high-quality nutrition for convicts, logistics services need to organize the systematic development of subsidiary farms, storage of commodity values, necessary stocks, release of products, opera-

tion of a centralized motor transport site and repair and transport workshops for uninterrupted food delivery, cooking and consumption, etc. With the direct participation of support services, living and material provision for convicts has been significantly improved in recent years.

Thus, the processes of humanization have affected many categories of convicts; the introduced novelties may affect social adaptation

and subsequent re-socialization. Easing detention conditions do not entail special financial costs. Moreover, some of them are paid for by convicts, therefore, from an economic point of view, they are appropriate.

Foreign cases of living and material support for convicts

Penal legislation in the countries of the post-Soviet space is based on the achievements of the Soviet period and largely coincides with modern Russian legislation in the field of living and material support for convicts. At the same time, attention is paid to the necessary things that allow those serving sentences to lead a normal life: issues of providing living space, food, clothing in order to maintain proper physical shape, mental state and respect for rights and interests.

But we will also note some features.

For example, in Belarus, the penal law stipulates that in order to improve living conditions, physical and cultural development, and provide financial assistance to those serving sentences, monetary funds and other property of convicted persons and other persons, including assistance from legal entities and individual entrepreneurs, may be raised free of charge in accordance with the procedure established by law. In addition, a child may remain with a convicted parent in a correctional institution if the facility meets specific requirements, including access to internal or external childcare services, qualified personnel, provision of specialized healthcare for children, and continuous monitoring by relevant specialists [14, pp. 431–432].

Regarding convict housing, the legislation of numerous countries includes specific additional requirements, in particular, building regulations in Armenia and Uzbekistan, epidemiological safety requirements in Latvia and climatic conditions in Turkmenistan. At the same time, specific living space standards per person sentenced to imprisonment in Tajikistan, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan range from 2 to 5 m², depending on the type of correctional facility, gender, age, and health status. The Latvian legislature sets a limit of no more than 9 m², while in Estonia the size of the living space is set by the Minister of Justice in the prison's internal regulations [15, p. 46].

Residential premises are referred to by various terms in the regulations of these countries – such as cell, dormitory, chamber-type room, common living quarters, and ordinary residential buildings – yet this terminological diversity does not affect the established norms of floor area per person.

Concepts related to the actual occupancy of institutions are fixed as “limit”, “overpopulation”, “maximum allowable number”, and “capacity” (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, and Estonia). Nutrition of convicts is regulated by legislation of all the states under consideration, taking into account gender, age, health status, and nature of the work performed, while dietary nutrition based on health status is provided in Kazakhstan, Ukraine, and Estonia. Nutrition based on religious beliefs is in Moldova, Estonia. Increased nutrition standards for certain categories are present in almost all countries. Meals at the expense of convicts themselves are provided in Belarus, Tajikistan, and Ukraine, at the expense of the state – in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan; self-cooking is possible in Turkmenistan.

Clothing provision in penitentiary institutions varies by country: climatic compliance (Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan), age considerations (Tajikistan), special uniforms (Georgia), identification markings (badges in Armenia, tags in Moldova, and patches in Estonia). At the same time, personal property is provided at the expense of the state in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan; at the expense of convicts themselves – in Belarus, Tajikistan, and Ukraine. Wearing personal clothing is predominantly permitted in Moldova. Additionally, selected categories of convicts in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Estonia may be granted this right [15, pp. 47–48].

Thus, the penal legislation of former Soviet Union countries contains norms regulating the sphere of living and material support for convicts, which are largely similar to those in Russia, albeit with certain national variations.

In Mongolia, “the essence of punishment applied to a convicted person is expressed in punishment, and the latter is a set of legally established restrictions on human and civil rights and freedoms” [16, p. 61]. There are no incen-

tive measures in the form of additional financial support in penal legislation. Material and household standards depend on socio-demographic characteristics of the convicted person, for example, food, clothing, utilities and personal hygiene products are provided free of charge to juvenile convicts and persons with first and second-group disabilities. There is no regulation on reimbursement of expenses for the maintenance of employed convicts receiving wages in correctional institutions. Regulations allow convicts to maintain funds in their personal accounts and have cash, provided that the amount does not exceed 10 % of the statutory minimum wage. Those placed in penal isolation cells and single cell-type rooms are allowed to have short and long-term visits (Article 127.7 of the law "On the enforcement of judicial decisions of Mongolia"). At the same time, places of detention are characterized by monotony and poverty of conditions [16, p. 64; 17, p. 25].

European countries exhibit diverse systems of living and material support for convicts, reflecting national policy priorities and socioeconomic models.

According to the European penitentiary rules, the penitentiary system is based on the principle of re-socialization rather than punishment. Its main goal is to return a person to society corrected, not broken. Therefore, liberality and ensuring the broad rights and freedoms of convicts are the basis for the administration's control of all types of correctional institutions: open and closed, specialized (including psychiatric hospitals), and institutions that provide preventive detention [18].

The communal living environment provides for sufficient privacy and necessary amenities. Furthermore, inmates are guaranteed the right to receive free, medically supervised nutrition that meets requirements for a healthy lifestyle. Special meals can be provided as prescribed by a doctor; wearing personal clothing has been considered a continuation of the right to personal dignity in Spain since 1979 and in France since 1983. In Germany, the practice of providing standard prison clothing is maintained. Prison stores offer a selection of approximately 800 product types, with prices set below those found in the general retail market.

For example, solitary confinement prevails in Germany, Spain, Norway, and Sweden. A

standard cell is a room with an area of about 8-10 m² with a separate bathroom, bed, table and wardrobe.

Prisoners in these countries are involved in household maintenance and furnishing of places of detention, such as cleaning office premises, washing and cleaning clothes, and working in the laundry. Those serving sentences in open correctional institutions may be employed by different companies. All funds of convicts are placed in a special bank account, divided into three parts: funds for prison (medical care, food, purchases), funds for use after release (paid in cash only after release) and personal funds (savings before incarceration and money transferred by relatives) [18].

Humanization of punishment also concerns the acquisition of a profession and the desired level of education.

In Spain, a "convict – cell" principle of is observed [19, p. 435; 20]. The cells meet the following requirements: 6 m² per person, 4 m² for each person when living together (that is, at least 10 m² for two convicts) [21], while the occupancy rate of correctional institutions is low (11 thousand vacant places) [19, p. 437]. A distinctive feature of living and material provision for convicts in Spain is its absolute gratuitousness. This approach is regarded as a manifestation of the humanistic nature of penal legislation and an important factor in protecting the constitutional rights of convicts [21].

In Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and Finland, convict cells are also designed for privacy. In some prisons, prisoners have the opportunity to cook for themselves, in others they receive food from the canteen; cooking on their own and washing clothes are part of the educational (rehabilitation) process. There is a sports hall, playgrounds on the territory of the institutions, and a laundry room in each block [22; 23]. Convicts in prisons of any security level are allowed to wear their own casual clothes, with radical quotes or symbols on them being the only restriction.

In Sweden, convicts are compensated for their activities (work, education and training, participation in correctional programs) if they do not receive compensation or remuneration from other sources. The funds are credited to accounts specially opened for prisoners, which can be used to purchase any goods and products of free circulation [24, p. 412].

In Denmark, prisoners provide themselves with food on their own: they use the allowance to purchase food products. Convicts receive most of the funds on a monthly basis and can spend them on personal needs or other (legitimate) purposes. In accordance with established regulations, the Prison and Probation Service withholds 15 % of all due payments. These funds are accumulated in a restricted access account and are disbursed to the convict upon release.

In Norway, convicts who work, study, or participate in correctional programs receive benefits. The amount of payments may vary depending on the convict's success, compliance with the regime of execution of punishment and other circumstances [24, p. 411]. Norwegian prisons are allowed to have radios, televisions, video or audio recorders. Convicts eat in the same canteens with prison staff, and at the same time, the food is the same for everyone [25]. All convicts are required to work or study. Those who are engaged in training are not involved in work. The main types of production are furniture manufacturing, metalworking and sewing. The convicts do not receive payment for work; all income goes to the budget [24, p. 411; 26]. Despite the favorable conditions, the Norwegian prison is a place where the prisoner is primarily limited in the most important aspect of human life – freedom [25].

Local prisons in France house persons under investigation and convicts with short terms of imprisonment (up to one year inclusive). Central prisons now use a progressive correction system with five phases of exposure: solitary confinement, "oborn", improvement, semi-freedom, and release preparation. Significant domestic problems are common: correctional facilities do not have enough beds, which is why prisoners are forced to sleep on mattresses on the floor or in some cases outdoors. The inconvenience is caused by interpersonal conflicts between prisoners, as well as problems in relationships with staff. Discipline is maintained through measures that often border on mental coercion of the convicted person. Penitentiary legislation formally establishes a large volume of cultural, sports, educational, or vocational activities, but their actual implementation is limited due to insufficient funding, security requirements, and staffing deficiencies [27; 28]. A study conducted by experts from the Foundation for Combating Repression on detention

conditions in French prisons has revealed persistent overcrowding in the country's correctional institutions over the past several years. The overcrowding has resulted in unsanitary living conditions and has been associated with a rise in prison violence. The government does not solve this problem, despite numerous recommendations from international bodies [28].

Thus, if living and material support for convicts in the post-Soviet space is rather similar to the Russian one, then Western European legislation, with rare exceptions (France), pursues the idea of humanizing living and material support for convicts, the reasonable and expedient use of means of influencing prisoners. It is worth mentioning that this process does not always require significant financial investments. As D.A. Dobryakov notes, "the Scandinavian model is not as expensive as it might seem at first glance" [24, p. 416]. The penal systems of Northern European countries are characterized by a relatively small scale, which contributes to their manageable operational costs and acceptable conditions of detention. Additionally, the relatively lenient approach to criminal liability for law violators results in reduced expenses associated with the enforcement of penal policies.

Thus, in Russia, the right to personal dignity can be realized without significant financial costs through the following measures: permitting the wearing of personal clothing for inmates who comply with institutional rules, have a positive conduct record, and are not inclined to escape; expanding the range of goods available in prison stores, offering them at prices below those in the external market; granting access to selected internet resources for convicts pursuing higher education. Additionally, measures requiring financial investment also warrant consideration. For instance, introducing a "maximum allowable number" or "capacity" indicator would positively affect convict living conditions. Similarly, allowing a child to stay with a convicted parent in a correctional institution (as practiced in Belarus), subject to compliance with child care service requirements and continuous professional monitoring, could yield a synergistic effect despite associated financial costs. The positive experience of Western countries in recent decades in Russia has greatly influenced the expansion of the rights and interests of convicts, led to a transition to

more humane treatment and improved conditions of detention, but further deepening can be realized only after analysis, probation and financial justification.

Conclusion

From a legal perspective, living and material support for convicts is understood as the establishment of a household, material, and food base that facilitates the implementation of core correctional measures, the expansion of rights, freedoms, legitimate interests, and social adaptation. It is important to acknowledge that these individuals have been convicted of crimes committed against society or individuals. From an economic standpoint, living and material support for convicts should be planned considering not only budgetary financial resources but also revenue generated through the development of production and economic activities,

achieved by engaging convicts in productive employment.

These prospects are outlined in the federal target program “Development of the penal system (2018–2035)”, which aims to improve detention conditions for suspects, accused persons, and convicts; align these conditions with Russian legislation and international standards; create jobs to engage convicts in work. Funding for the program is provided through the federal law No. 426-FZ of November 28, 2025 “On the federal budget for 2026 and for the planning period of 2027 and 2028”. The allocated amounts are as follows: 15 billion rubles in 2026; 21 billion rubles annually in 2027 and 2028. This represents a significant increase compared to 2.2 billion rubles allocated in 2024 and 2025, suggesting a positive outlook for improving living and material support for convicts.

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE AUTHOR

NINA M. TOMINA – Candidate of Sciences (Economics), Associate Professor, associate professor at the Department of Accounting, Analysis, Finance, and Taxation of the Academy of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia, Ryazan, Russia, nineliya@list.ru, <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1020-603X>

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