

Presentation title:

**Presentation title:** The symbolism of prison tattoos in Czech prisons as an indicator of the radicalisation of convicts

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The prison environment is by its very nature a breeding ground for extreme positions - on life, on values, on society. This is also why prison seems to be a breeding ground for extremism. This issue, and in particular the issue of violent extremism in the prison environment, has gained significant not only academic but also political attention across states and prison systems over the last few years. Given the fact that prisons are often perceived as places highly vulnerable to any form of radicalization, academics and scholars in general have often addressed the challenges and opportunities that arise as a result of the presence of extremists inclined to manifest their beliefs violently in prison systems. Extremist clusters in the prison environment and radicalized convicts pose a significant threat, especially to prison staff and members of the Prison Service of the Czech Republic. Prison tattoos are used as one of the possible identifiers of possible radicalisation in the level of recruitment or of an already fully radicalised individual. The authors of the paper will present the basic findings from their own research activities in Czech male and female prisons and will use a wealth of photographic material to present the basic symbolism of extremist tattoos - both the explicitly present and the hidden in terms of cryptic meaning and messages for extremist insiders.