

**Abstract:**

**Background:** A chain of repetitive phenomena is seen in the lives of drug users in the forms of drug use - committing crimes - commencing imprisonment – learning new practices - dismissing from prison - using addictive substances – committing further crimes - then resuming imprisonment. **The main goal** is to describe the experience of serving a sentence drug-related prisoners. **The method of data collection and analysis** is grounded theory and qualitative analysis of interviews (biographical interviews). The results of the research were compared with the analysis of specialized literature on the topic. **Results and discussion:** The work is divided into 3 periods of time - life before imprisonment, whose events determined drug use and criminality, imprisonment as an environment of phenomenon of imprisonment and life after imprisonment as a period of returning to society. **Conclusions:** During the course of life, Contacts got into very risky situations that they were unable to solve in a constructive way. Drug use and crime were/ are the solution to these difficult life events. Increased strictness of rules in prisons does not guarantee a reduction in the threat of recidivism. The experience of imprisonment in itself makes it difficult to adapt to life in freedom.

**Keywords:**

Drug user, drug career, imprisonment