

### Long Abstract – Monographic Section

#### *INVESTING IN THE SOCIAL REINTEGRATION CARE FOR DETAINEES: TRENDS AND NEW PERSPECTIVES OF THE ITALIAN WELFARE SYSTEM*

*edited by Alberto Pesce e Veronica Valenti*

---

#### *The application of ICT and AI in the penitentiary system: risks and opportunities*

Sena Santini

ICT, and particularly AI-based systems, are profoundly influencing the criminal justice and penitentiary systems. **This paper first analyzes** the legal risks associated with the use of AI in predictive justice, with a particular emphasis on potential violations of fundamental rights and the rehabilitative purpose of punishment.

It then explores, through a brief historical overview and an international perspective on the use of emerging technologies in the prison system, the opportunities offered by tools and applications such as electronic bracelets for monitoring vital signs, AI for preventing illicit activities, and chatbots for psychological support, by illustrating how they can positively affect the management of detainee conditions.

ICT may act as invasive control tools, but **this article aims to demonstrate** that they can also contribute significantly to safeguarding the physical and mental integrity of detained persons by enhancing healthcare assistance and facilitating the maintenance of personal relationships through virtual communication. Emotional AI systems, capable of detecting emotional signals and simulating empathy, can reduce feelings of isolation, fostering respect for human dignity in line with the principle of humanizing punishment.

Interestingly, through a sort of «dehumanization» of tools – considering AI-based systems such as chatbots or social robots – **this paper argues** that it is possible to move toward greater humanization of punishment and the rehabilitation of detained persons.

While the current applications are predominantly focused on security, **the discussion highlights** significant benefits for detainees well-being and more efficient system management, with potential positive impacts on recidivism, particularly through the process of reintegration into the professional sphere. This is particularly relevant in light of the 2023 Interinstitutional Agreement between the Italian Ministry of Justice and the National Council for Economics and Labour.