

Research New Zealand

Long-term Insights Briefing The Future of Imprisonment in New Zealand II Final Report

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Long-term Insights Briefing
The Future of Imprisonment in New Zealand II

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Public Service Chief Executives have a statutory requirement to engage with the general public in order to conduct a Long-term Insights Briefing. The justice sector public service agencies (Ministry of Justice; Ara Poutama Aotearoa; Oranga Tamariki; NZ Police; Crown Law and the Serious Fraud Office) have worked together on a Long-term Insights Briefing on the future of imprisonment in New Zealand.

Phase One of this Long-term Insights Briefing was completed late last year (November-December 2021) and involved gaining public feedback through two streams of work: a nationally representative sample of New Zealanders, 18 years and over and an opt-in survey, through Citizen Space, hosted on the Ministry of Justice website.

Phase Two, which is the subject of this report, and ran from 12 September to 17 October 2022, involved a similar approach:

1. An opinion survey with a **nationally representative** sample of New Zealanders, 18 years and over. The survey was completed online, between 3 and 17 October 2022, with a sample of 1,269 people. **Māori** were over-sampled so that their results could be examined separately, with confidence.

The achieved sample has been weighted to account for the over-sampling of Māori. This has the effect of rebalancing the sample so that it is truly representative.

Results based on the total weighted sample of this survey are subject to a maximum margin of error of plus or minus 3.3% (at the 95% confidence level).

2. An opt-in survey, through Citizen Space, hosted on the Ministry of Justice website. The survey was 'open' between 12 September and 7 October 2022 and was completed by 49 people. Given that this was an opt-in survey, the results only reflect the opinions of those people responding (i.e. they are not representative of the opinions of adult New Zealanders, which was the purpose of the population survey above).

Note, that in comparison to the profile of the sample that completed the population survey, the opt-in sample is over-represented by males, older people, Māori and people that have worked or volunteered in prisons.

This report presents the results of both these surveys.

Key findings

Population survey

In order to provide **context** to help understand respondents' opinions about the future of imprisonment in New Zealand, various questions were asked in order to establish their level of knowledge, beliefs and opinions. The key findings relating to these questions are as follows:

1. There is a general belief that the amount of crime in Aotearoa New Zealand has **increased**.

Over one-half of respondents surveyed in the population survey (54%) believed that the *total amount of crime in Aotearoa New Zealand* had '**changed a lot**' in the last 5 years (Figure 1 overleaf).

Crime involving gangs and crime involving youth are seen as major contributors. Crime involving gangs was more likely to be mentioned by non-Māori compared with Māori.

2. There is a general belief that the amount of crime in the community has **increased**.

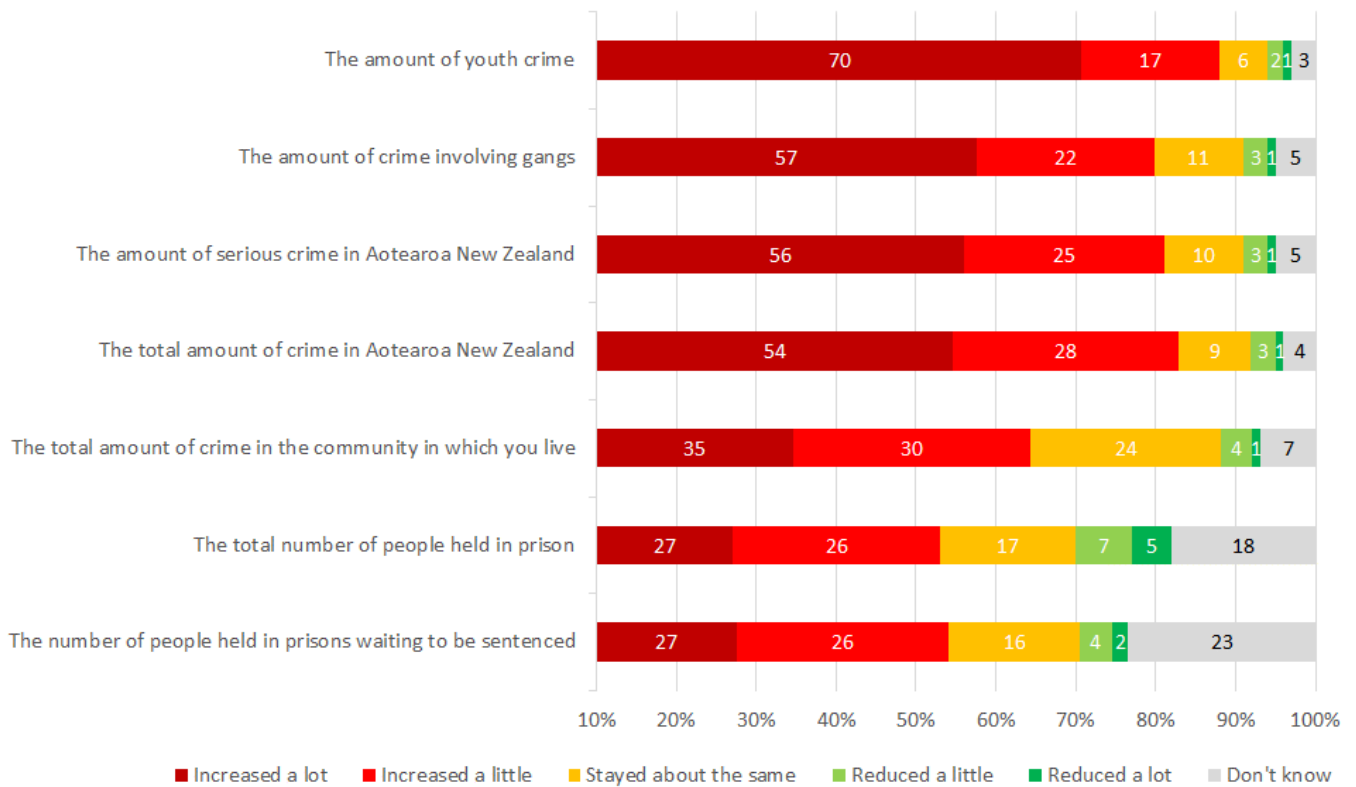
Over one-third of respondents surveyed (35%) also believed that the *total amount of crime in the community in which [they] live* had 'changed a lot' in the last 5 years.

3. Some people feel **personally** impacted by the 'increased' level of crime.

Sixteen percent of respondents felt the total amount of crime in Aotearoa New Zealand had impacted their personal 'quality of life'.

There are **no** significant differences between Māori and non-Māori; that is, both stated their 'quality of life' had been impacted to the same extent (19% and 16% respectively)

Figure 1: Aspects about crime and the current prison system which have ‘changed a lot’ in the last 5 years



Q5. In comparison to the situation about 5 years ago in Aotearoa New Zealand, do you think...?

Related to these results, are the following:

1. A general belief that the prison population is **increasing**.

Twenty-seven percent of respondents felt the *total number of people held in prisons* had ‘changed a lot’ in the last 5 years and the same percentage felt that the *number of people held in prisons waiting to be sentenced* had also ‘changed a lot’ in the same time period.

Overall, 56% of respondents felt the number of people in prison was increasing, compared with 9% who thought the number was decreasing.

2. Some **misinformed** perceptions are held about the prison population, although there are also some correct ones.

Significant percentages of respondents correctly believed that Māori and Pacific peoples are over-represented in the prison population (60% felt that Māori are over-represented and 43% felt that Pacific people are over-represented).

However, respondents felt that the prison population **mostly** comprises younger people (27% compared with 13% for older people), and that the number of women in prison is **increasing** (36% compared with 5% for decreasing).

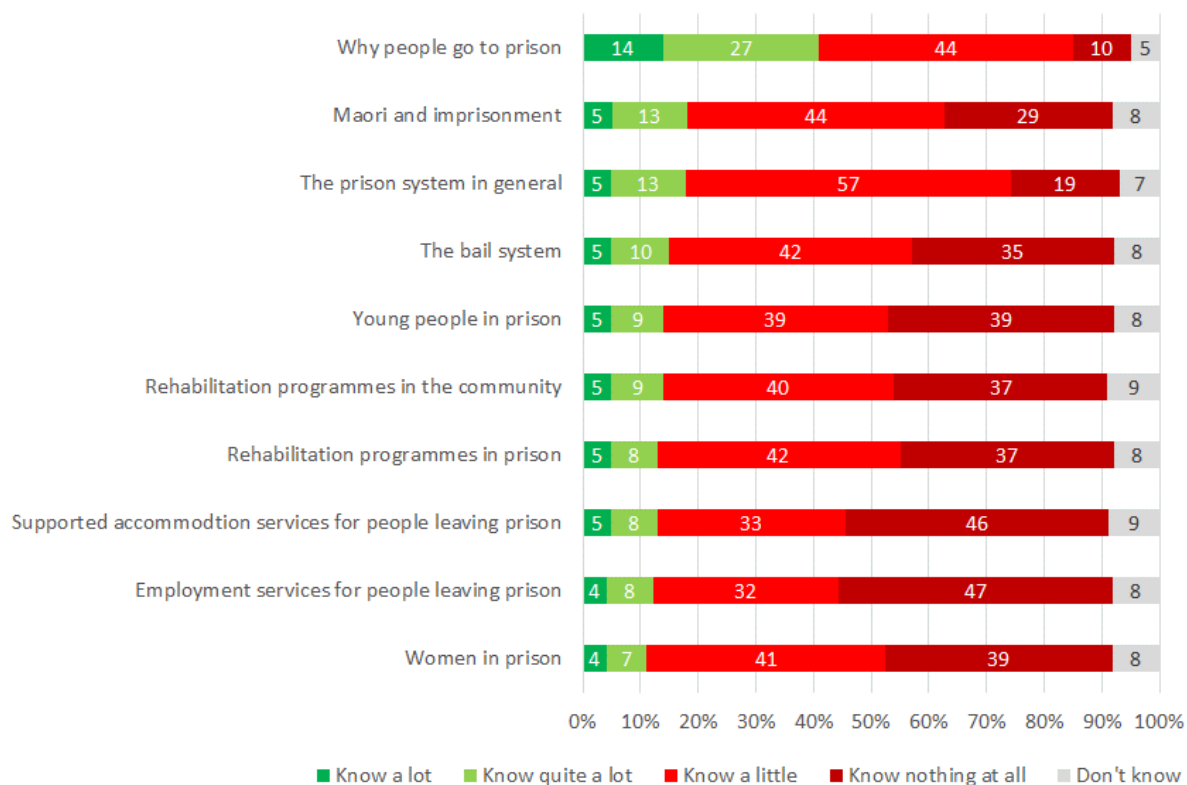
These results might be contributed to by the following results:

1. There is a relatively **low level of knowledge** about prisons and the criminal justice processes surrounding prisons. Overall, just 18% of respondents stated they knew ‘quite a lot/a lot’ about the prison system (Figure 2).

Significantly less than one-quarter of all respondents stated they knew ‘quite a lot/a lot’ about most of the following aspects: *the bail system, why people go to prison, rehabilitation programmes in prison, rehabilitation programmes in the community, supported accommodation services for people leaving prison, employment services for people leaving prison, Māori and imprisonment, young people in prison and women in prison*. The exception was, *why people go to prison*, at 41%.

While both Māori and non-Māori recorded low levels of knowledge, Māori recorded relatively **higher** levels compared with non-Māori.

Figure 2: Know ‘quite a lot/a lot’ about prisons and criminal justice processes surrounding prisons



Q9. When you think about prisons and the criminal justice processes surrounding prison, how much would you say you know about each of the following?

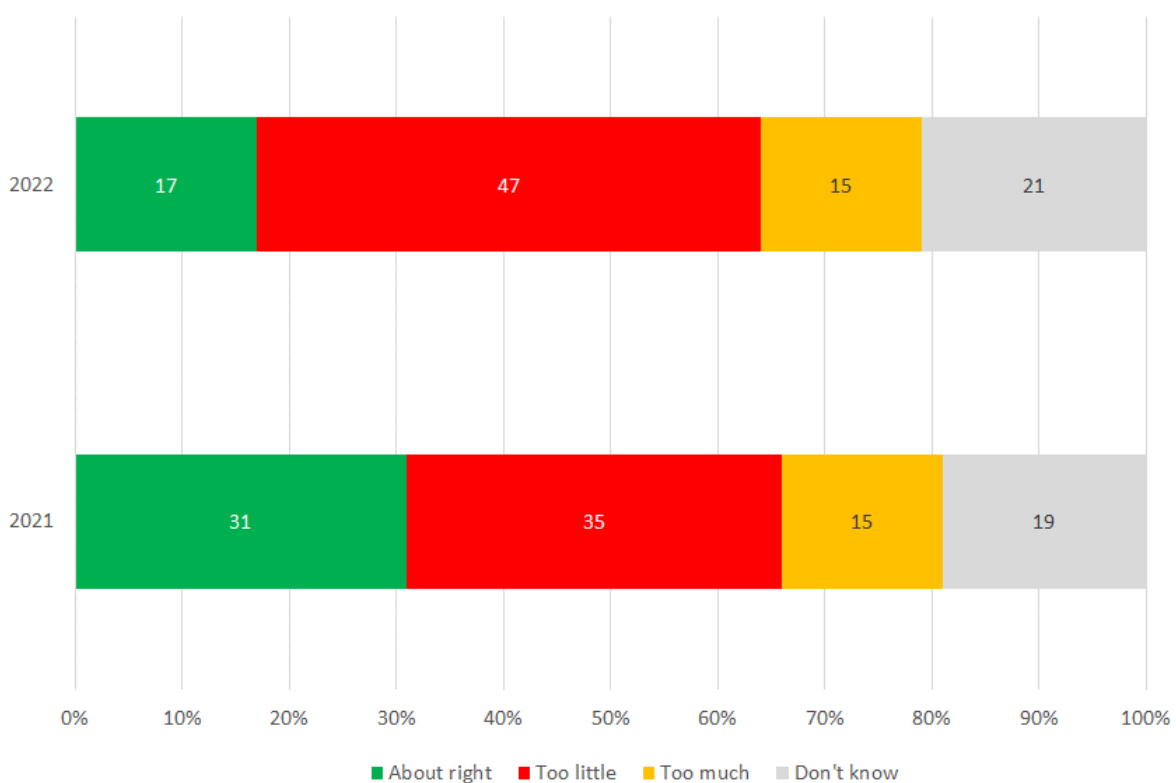
2. A relatively strong belief that imprisonment is **not** used enough.

Overall, most respondents felt that imprisonment was used 'too little' (47%). In comparison, 17% felt it was used 'about right' and 15% 'too much' (Figure 3).

However, Māori were **more likely** than non-Māori to state that imprisonment was currently used 'too much' (31% and 12% respectively).

This year's results are significantly different from those recorded in the population survey last year, suggesting a possible shift in mood. Compared to last year's survey, a significantly larger percentage of respondents in the current survey stated that imprisonment was used 'too little' (35% last year) and a significantly smaller percentage said that it was used 'about right' (31% last year).

Figure 3: Opinions about the extent to which imprisonment is currently used



Q11. Do you think imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand is currently used...?

3. A relatively **weak** level of confidence in Aotearoa New Zealand’s prison system.

Overall, most respondents had a weak level of confidence in Aotearoa New Zealand’s prison system (20% stated they were ‘fairly/very confident’) and this was reflected in relatively low levels of confidence in the following specific aspects: protects the public from serious offenders who may cause them harm, acts as a deterrent to others, *keeps the community safe by rehabilitating people* and *successfully helps people reintegrate into the community when they leave prison* (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Fairly/Very confident about various aspects of the current prison system in Aotearoa New Zealand



Q12. How confident are you that the current prison system in Aotearoa New Zealand...?

Against this background, respondents were asked about what was the ‘most important thing’ that could be done to increase their confidence in the prison system in Aotearoa New Zealand:

1. The results suggest opinions are **divided** with some respondents believing a more ‘positive’ approach would improve their confidence and others believing a more ‘negative’ approach would have the same effect.

Roughly about one-third of respondents stated the following initiatives/interventions would improve their confidence: *Provide more support to people leaving prison when they are released back into the community* (18%), *Improve the effectiveness of rehabilitation programmes* (16%) and *Provide more access to rehabilitation programmes* (8%) (Figure 5 overleaf).

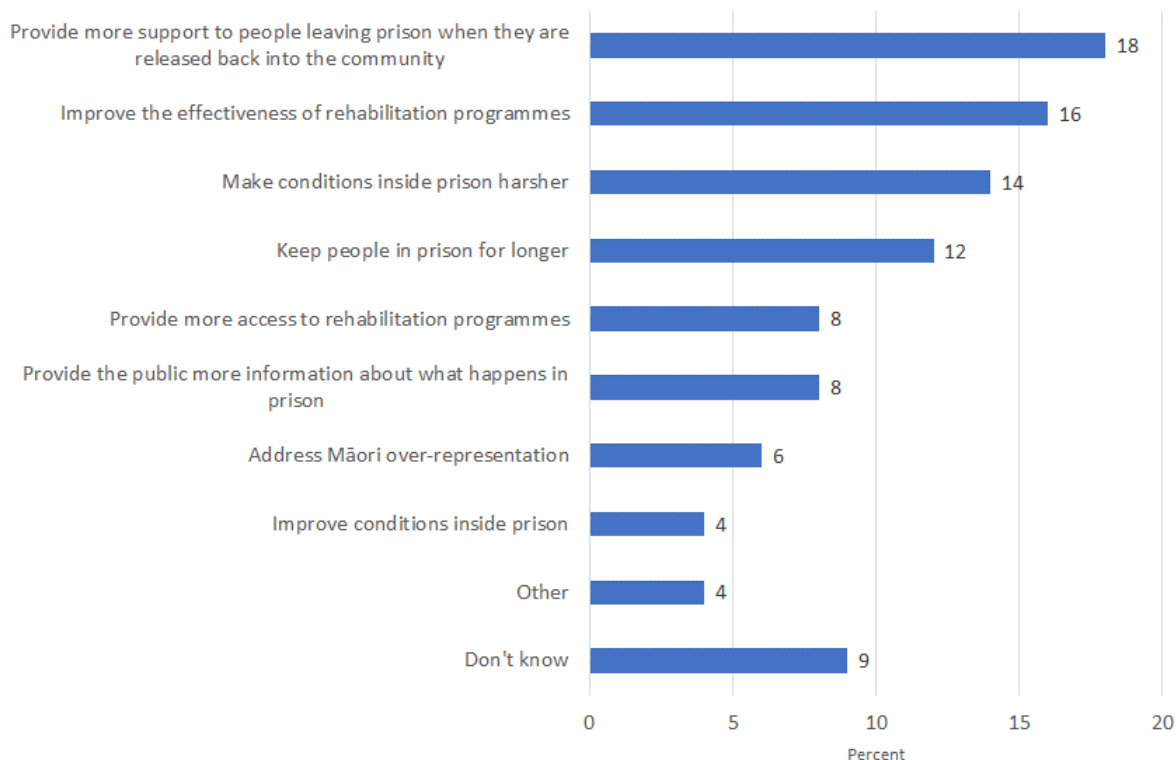
In comparison, about one-quarter of respondents stated the following initiatives/interventions would improve their confidence: *Make conditions inside prison harsher* (i.e., provide the opposite of the activities that would improve conditions) (14%) and *Keep people in prison longer* (12%).

Other initiatives/interventions were identified by fewer respondents as likely to improve their confidence in the system:

- a. *Provide the public with more information about what happens in prison* (8%).
- b. *Address Māori over-representation* (6%).
- c. *Improve conditions inside prisons (e.g., provide more time out of cells, provide more opportunities for constructive activities)* (4%).

However, Māori were **more likely** than non-Māori to rate: *Address Māori over-representation* as the ‘most important thing’ making a difference to their confidence in the prison system (13% and 5% respectively).

Figure 5: Most important initiative/intervention to improve confidence in the current prison system in Aotearoa New Zealand



Q13. What, in your opinion, is the most important thing that could be done to increase your confidence in the prison system in Aotearoa New Zealand?

- Opinion is also **divided** in terms of the extent to which prisons should be used in the long-term future, defined as 20 years from now.

Eighteen percent stated they envisaged prisons being used to the same extent as they are now. In contrast, 19% said they saw them being used a *little less*, but 16% saw them being used a *little more*. Notably, 15% of respondents were undecided.

However, another 22% envisaged them being used a *lot less*; therefore, ideally, more respondents expected them to be used less.

Māori were **more likely** than non-Māori to state they envisaged prisons being used a *little less* or a *lot less*. Fifty-one percent of Māori choose either one of these two options compared with 39% of non-Māori.

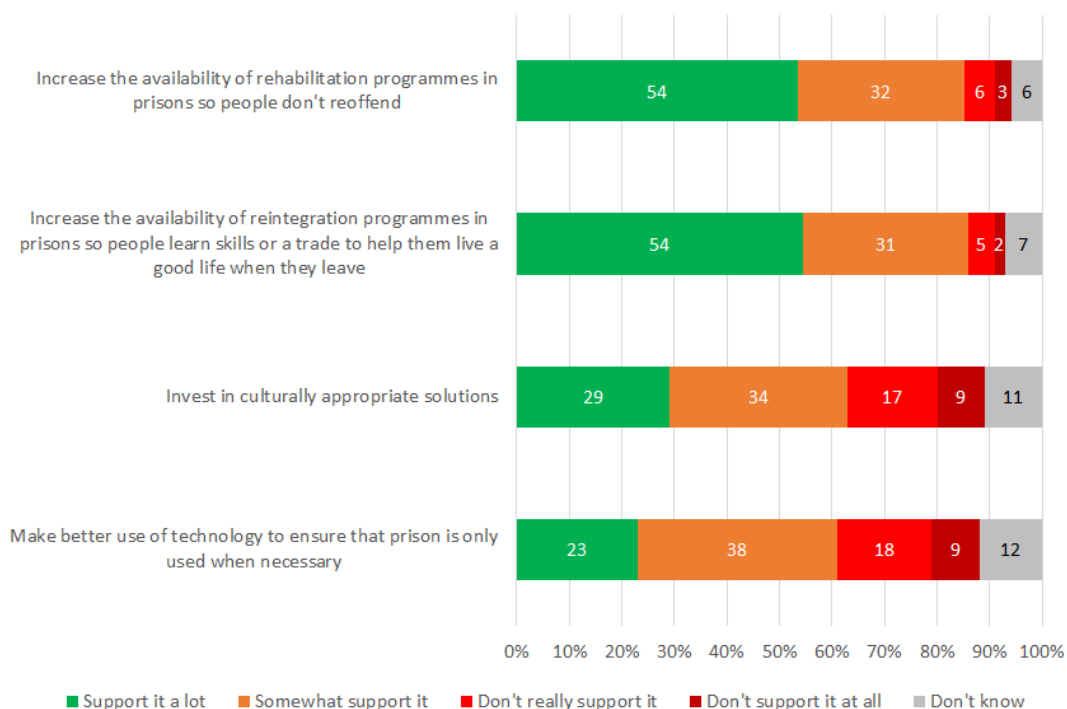
3. There was a **clear level** of support for two of the four suggestions in terms of how prison might be used differently in the future.

Over one-half of respondents stated that they would support: *Increasing the availability of rehabilitation programmes in prisons so people don't reoffend (e.g. drug and alcohol programmes, mental health programmes)* (54% stated they would support this 'a lot') and *Increasing the availability of reintegration programmes in prisons so people learn skills or a trade to help them live a good life when they leave* (54%) (Figure 6).

In comparison, support for: *Investing in culturally appropriate solutions* (29%) and *Making better use of technology to ensure that prison is only used when necessary* (23%) was significantly lower.

However, Māori were **more likely** than non-Māori to support these two suggestions, as they were the two suggestions about rehabilitation and reintegration programmes.

Figure 6: Support for suggestions relating to how prisons might be used in the future



Q15. Some people have suggested how prison could be different in the future. How much do you support each of the following ideas?

‘Opt-in’ survey

The key findings of the opt-in survey are as follows:

1. Enhanced services and support for *rehabilitation* and *reintegration* into the community were the most frequently mentioned when respondents were asked about changes they envisioned and hoped for in the future (33% and 24% respectively).

Importantly, whānau, hapū and iwi were considered important to be involved in the prison system, both to preserve ties and as part of the rehabilitative service provision (by Māori for Māori) (20%).

Twenty nine percent also commented on the need for remand in custody to be addressed, in terms of reduced timeframes and more use of community-based bail conditions. Aligned with this was a strong push for rehabilitative supports to commence at this stage, rather than down the track, once sentenced and convicted.

In-community sentences were also considered likely to increase in the future, as well as community-based facilities (24%).

2. **Specific** changes suggested by respondents were not dissimilar to those described above, but tended to emphasise that wider social changes were required to address the root causes of criminal activity (30%).
3. Addressing **wider social issues** adversely affecting Māori and others disproportionately represented in the prison system (especially youth) were raised (27%) when respondents were asked about addressing over-representation in the prison population.

In addition, respondents raised the issue of addressing the Police and the judicial system generally targeting Māori and other people of colour (e.g. Pasifika) in ways that do not compare to their Pākehā/white counterparts (18%).

2.0 Introduction

Under the Public Service Act 2020, public service agencies are required to develop and share insights with the general public on the trends, risks and opportunities that affect, or may affect, Aotearoa New Zealand. These are referred to as '**Long-term Insights Briefings**'.

The justice sector's current Long-Term Insights Briefing is on **imprisonment**. Phase One of this Long-term Insights Briefing was completed late last year (November-December 2021) and involved gaining public feedback through two streams of work: a nationally representative sample of New Zealanders, 18 years and over and an opt-in survey, through Citizen Space, hosted on the Ministry of Justice website.

Phase Two, which is the subject of this report, and ran from 12 September to 17 October 2022, involved a similar approach:

1. **A population survey with a nationally representative sample of New Zealanders, 18 years and over.**

This survey was completed online, between 3 and 17 October 2022, with a sample of 1,269 people sourced from Dynata, New Zealand's largest panel provider. Māori were over-sampled so that their results could be examined separately, with confidence.

The achieved survey sample has been weighted in order to ensure the survey results are truly representative, with the weighting parameters sourced from the most recent Census of Population and Dwellings. As such, sample is representative in terms of its basic demographic characteristics, as well as geographically.

Results based on the total sample of 1,269 are subject to a maximum margin of error of plus or minus 3.3% (at the 95% confidence level). This means, for example, that had we found that 50% of the people completing the survey believed that the 'total amount of crime in Aotearoa New Zealand had increased in the last 5 years', we could be 95% sure that we would have got the same result – give or take 3.3% - had we interviewed everyone in the population.

2. **An opt-in survey, through Citizen Space, hosted on the Ministry of Justice website.**

This survey was 'open' between 12 September and 7 October 2022 and was completed by 49 people. In addition, the Ministry received five written responses to the Long-term Insights briefing consultation document (see Appendix C).

Given that this was an opt-in survey, the results only reflect the opinions of those people responding (i.e. they are not representative of the opinions of adult New Zealanders, which was the purpose of the population survey above).

2.1 Methodological details about the population survey

2.1.1 Information objectives

The information objectives relating to the population survey were based on measuring the following:

1. Respondents' opinions about what's changed in the last 5 years about crime and the imprisonment system in Aotearoa New Zealand (e.g. the amount of crime, the number of people in prisons).
 - a. Respondents' opinions about whether they believe the current amount of crime affects their quality of life.
2. Where respondents mainly source their information about prisons in Aotearoa New Zealand.
 - a. The level of confidence respondents have in the information provided by government departments about prisons.
3. The level of knowledge respondents believe they have about various aspects of prisons and the criminal justice processes surrounding prisons (e.g. the bail system, why people go to prison, rehabilitation programmes in prisons).
 - a. Respondents' beliefs about various trends that impact prisons (e.g. the total number of people in prison, the extent to which Māori are over-represented in prison, the age of the prison population).
 - b. Respondents' opinions about the extent to which prison is used in Aotearoa New Zealand.
4. Respondents' opinions about the confidence they can have in the prison system in Aotearoa New Zealand.
 - a. Respondents' opinions about what can be done to increase their confidence in the system.
5. Respondents' opinions about the use of prisons in the long-term future.
 - a. Respondents' opinions about a number of suggested initiatives affecting prisons in the future (e.g. increasing the number of rehabilitation programmes, increasing the number of reintegration programmes).

A copy of the survey questionnaire for the population survey can be found in Appendix A (population survey).

2.1.2 Demographic profile of respondents completing the population survey

Table 1 provides a demographic profile of the achieved sample of 1,269 for the nationally representative survey of New Zealanders.

Table 1: Total sample - Demographic profile – Population survey

	Unweighted base =	Total sample 1269 %
Age:		
18-24		8
25-34		23
35-54		31
55+		38
Total		100
Gender:		
Male		49
Female		51
Total		100
Ethnicity:		
NZ European/ Pākehā		72
Māori		14
Pasifika		3
Asian		11
Other		8
Total		**
Urbanicity:		
Large sized city (e.g. Auckland, Wellington)		49
Medium sized city (e.g. Hamilton, Tauranga)		25
Small provincial town		18
Rural town/area		8
Total		100
Experience of imprisonment:		
Have been/know someone who has been in prison		17
Have worked/know someone who has volunteered		24
Other		4
No Experience		62
Total		100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

** Total may exceed 100% because of multiple response.

2.2 Methodological details about the opt-in survey

2.2.1 Information objectives

The information objectives relating to the opt-in survey were based on gathering opinion about the following:

1. Respondents' opinions about how imprisonment might change in the future.
2. Respondents' opinions about the specific changes that they would like to see.
3. Respondents' opinions about how the over-representation of Māori and other disproportionately represented groups might be addressed.

2.2.2 Demographic profile of respondents completing the opt-in survey

This survey, through Citizen Space and hosted on the Ministry of Justice website, was 'open' between 12 September and 7 October 2022 and was completed by 49 people.

Given that this was an opt-in survey, the results only reflect the opinions of those people responding (i.e. they are not representative of the opinions of adult New Zealanders). Table 1 provides a demographic profile of the sample of people who responded.

Note, that in comparison to the profile of the sample that completed the population survey, the opt-in sample is over-represented by males, older people, Māori and people that have worked or volunteered in prisons.

Table 2: Total sample - Demographic profile – Opt-in survey

Unweighted base =	Total sample 47^ %
Age:	
18-24	4
25-34	17
35-54	36
55+	43
Total	100
Gender:	
Male	64
Female	34
Gender diverse	2
Total	100
Ethnicity:	
NZ European/ Pākehā	60
Māori	26
Pasifika	2
Asian	2
Other	11
	**
Experience of imprisonment:	
I have been in prison or known someone who was or is in prison	13
I have worked or volunteered in a prison	43
I have worked in Probation	9
Lawyer, work in the Courts, MoJ employees	9
Other experience	17
No, I have no experience of imprisonment	11
Total	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

** Total may exceed 100% because of multiple response.

^ Two of the 49 people responding to the opt-in survey did not provide answers to the demographic questions.

3.0 Population survey

The results presented in this section are based on a nationally representative sample of n=1,269 New Zealanders, aged 18 years and over. Please refer to Section 2.1.2 for a description of these respondents. The results are presented in terms of analysis based on:

1. The extent to which respondents believed they could have confidence in Aotearoa New Zealand's prison system. Note that at one extreme, 20% of respondents stated they were 'fairly/very confident', while at the other, 18% said they were 'not at all confident'. However, another 29% stated they were 'not very confident' and 28% were 'neither confident nor not confident'.
2. Māori compared with non-Māori.

3.1 What's changed in the last 5 years about crime and the imprisonment system in Aotearoa New Zealand

In order to identify the extent to which respondents believed there have been changes in the last 5 years about crime and the imprisonment system in Aotearoa New Zealand, they were presented with a list of statements describing various aspects of the system and asked whether any had increased, reduced or stayed the same.

Table 3 shows the extent to which respondents felt each had '**increased a lot**' (i.e. the most extreme point of the scale) and provides an analysis by their level of **confidence** in the prison system in general. Table 4 provides a comparison of the results between respondents who identified as **Māori** and those who were **non-Māori**.

The key results are as follows:

1. In general, respondents felt that the amount of crime – of all types – had 'increased a lot' in the last 5 years. Very few felt it had reduced or stayed the same:
 - a. Most frequently, respondents felt that the *amount of youth crime* had 'changed a lot' in the last 5 years (70%).
 - b. However, over one-half also felt that the *amount of crime involving gangs* (57%), the *amount of serious crime* (56%) and the *total amount of crime in Aotearoa New Zealand* (54%) had 'changed a lot' in the last 5 years.
 - c. In contrast to the result for the *total amount of crime in Aotearoa New Zealand*, significantly fewer respondents felt the *total amount of crime in the community in which you live* had 'increased a lot' (35%). However, most others felt that it had 'changed a little' (30%) or stayed the same (24%). That is, few felt it had reduced.

- d. This was also the case for the *total number of people held in prisons* and the *number of people held in prisons waiting to be sentenced*. For example, while 27% of respondents felt the *total number of people held in prisons* had ‘changed a lot’, 26% felt that it had ‘changed a little’ or stayed the same (17%). Significantly, 17% stated they didn’t know.
2. Confidence in the prison system in Aotearoa New Zealand in general is a **significant** determinant of opinion about what’s changed in the last 5 years:
 - a. Eighty percent or more of respondents who stated they were ‘not at all confident’ in the system felt that the *amount of youth crime* (89%), the *amount of serious crime in Aotearoa New Zealand* (88%), the *total amount of crime in Aotearoa New Zealand* (85%) and the *amount of crime involving gangs* (84%) had ‘increased a lot’ in the last 5 years.
 - b. However, while significantly lower percentages of respondents who stated they were ‘fairly/very confident’ in the prison system in general in Aotearoa New Zealand felt that these aspects had ‘changed a lot’ in the last 5 years, the percentages are still substantial in an absolute sense.
3. In comparison, there are relatively **fewer** differences in terms of these results between Māori and non-Māori respondents:
 - a. Non-Māori were more likely to feel that the *amount of crime involving gangs* had ‘increased a lot’ in the last 5 years (59% compared with 49% for Māori).
 - b. Māori were more likely to feel that the *total number of people held in prisons* had ‘changed a lot’ in the last 5 years (38% compared with 26% for non-Māori).
 - c. Māori were also more likely to feel that the *total number of people held in prison waiting to be sentenced* had ‘changed a lot’ in the last 5 years (33% compared with 26% for non-Māori).

Table 3: Aspects about crime and the current prison system which have ‘changed a lot’ in the last 5 years – by level of confidence in the prison system

	Unweighted base =	Total sample	Not at all confident	Not very confident	Neither confident nor not confident	Fairly/Very confident
		1269	232	368	349	255
	%	%	%	%	%	%
The amount of youth crime	70	89	77	62	60	
The amount of crime involving gangs	57	84	66	45	48	
The amount of serious crime in Aotearoa New Zealand	56	88	60	45	43	
The total amount of crime in Aotearoa New Zealand	54	85	63	43	37	
The total amount of crime in the community in which you live	35	64	36	28	24	
The total number of people held in prisons	27	41	28	22	26	
The number of people held in prisons waiting to be sentenced	27	44	29	21	23	
Total	**	**	**	**	**	

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses.

Table 4: Aspects about crime and the current prison system which have ‘changed a lot’ in the last 5 years – by Māori and non-Māori

	Unweighted base =	Total sample	Māori	Non-Māori
		1269	400	869
	%	%	%	%
The amount of youth crime	70	70	70	
The amount of crime involving gangs	57	49	59	
The amount of serious crime in Aotearoa New Zealand	56	58	56	
The total amount of crime in Aotearoa New Zealand	54	57	54	
The total amount of crime in the community in which you live	35	37	34	
The total number of people held in prisons	27	38	26	
The number of people held in prisons waiting to be sentenced	27	33	26	
Total	**	**	**	

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses.

3.1.1 Beliefs about the impact of the current amount of crime on quality of life

Given respondents' perceptions about the change in the last 5 years about the total amount of crime in Aotearoa New Zealand, respondents were asked to rate the impact this had on their personal 'quality of life'.

Table 5 shows the impact respondents felt by their level of **confidence** in the prison system in general. Table 6 provides a comparison of the results between respondents who identified as **Māori** and those who were **non-Māori**.

The key results are as follows:

1. In general, respondents felt their 'quality of life' had neither been affected nor not affected by the amount of crime (i.e. 57% rated the impact as a 3-7 on the 11-point scale used to measure impact).
 - a. However, in comparison, 16% felt that the amount of crime **had** affected their 'quality of life' (as a result of rating the impact with a 8-10).
 - b. While at the other extreme, 26% felt that their 'quality of life' had **not** been affected (as a result of rating the impact with a 0-2).
2. The impact of the amount of crime on respondents' 'quality of life **correlates** with their confidence in the prison system in Aotearoa New Zealand in general:
 - a. One-third of respondents (33%) who stated they were 'not at all confident' in the system felt their 'quality of life' was impacted compared with 20% of those who said they were 'fairly/very confident' of the system.
3. There are **no** significant differences between Māori and non-Māori; that is, both stated their 'quality of life' had been impacted to the same extent (19% and 16% respectively).

Table 5: Impact of the amount of crime on quality of life – by level of confidence in the prison system

	Unweighted base =	Total sample 1269	Not at all confident 232	Not very confident 368	Neither confident nor not confident 349	Fairly/Very confident 255
		%	%	%	%	%
0 - Not affected at all		10	10	8	9	11
1		5	2	7	6	4
2		11	5	11	15	11
3		9	7	12	8	9
4		8	8	10	9	7
5		16	11	15	21	15
6		11	9	12	13	10
7		13	15	16	7	13
8		9	19	5	5	10
9		2	2	1	2	3
10 – Totally affected		5	12	2	3	7
Total		100	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Table 6: Impact of the amount of crime on quality of life – by Māori and non-Māori

	Unweighted base =	Total sample 1269	Māori 400	Non-Māori 869
		%	%	%
0 - Not affected at all		10	12	10
1		5	4	5
2		11	8	11
3		9	9	9
4		8	7	8
5		16	17	16
6		11	9	11
7		13	12	13
8		9	10	9
9		2	2	2
10 – Totally affected		5	7	5
Total		100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

3.2 Information sources about prisons in Aotearoa New Zealand

Respondents were asked to identify their main sources of information about prisons in Aotearoa New Zealand from a range of options.

Table 7 shows their sources of information by their level of **confidence** in the prison system in general. Table 8 provides a comparison of the results between respondents who identified as **Māori** and those who were **non-Māori**.

The key results are as follows:

1. In general, the **main** sources of information about prisons in Aotearoa New Zealand were identified as *national television* (48%), *online news sources* (48%), *national and provincial newspapers* (42%) and *general word-of-mouth* (37%).
 - a. Although the *experience of relatives, friends, neighbours and other acquaintances* (19%) and *personal experience* (10%) were mentioned less frequently, the percentages are **not** insignificant.
 - b. Note that 11% identified *government information/websites* as a source of their information.
2. There are **significant** differences in terms of the extent to which various sources of information were mentioned, based on respondents' confidence in the prison system in Aotearoa New Zealand in general.
 - a. Respondents who stated they were 'not at all confident' in the system more frequently identified the media sources compared with those who said they were 'fairly/very confident' of the system. For example, 58% of respondents who stated they were 'not at all confident' identified online sources compared with 40% of those who said they were 'fairly/very confident' of the system.
3. Compared with non-Māori, Māori were **significantly** more likely to identify the *experience of relatives, friends, neighbours and other acquaintances* (41% compared with 15% for non-Māori) and *personal experience* (17% compared with 9% for non-Māori).
 - a. Māori were also more likely to identify *general word-of-mouth, social media, current affairs programmes, reality TV shows* and *TV crime dramas* as sources of information about prisons in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Table 7: Sources of information about prisons in Aotearoa New Zealand – by level of confidence in the prison system

	Unweighted base =	Total sample	Not at all confident	Not very confident	Neither confident nor not confident	Fairly/Very confident
		1269	232	368	349	255
	%	%	%	%	%	%
National television news broadcasts (e.g. Breakfast)	48	50	56	47	43	
Online news sources (e.g. Stuff)	48	58	51	47	40	
National and provincial newspapers	42	43	48	43	34	
General word of mouth/information from other people	37	41	41	37	34	
Social media sources (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube)	24	28	25	23	22	
Television documentaries (e.g. 60 minutes, Sunday)	24	23	29	24	20	
Radio news	22	30	21	18	23	
Current affairs television programmes (e.g. The Project)	21	27	24	21	16	
Experience of relatives, friends, neighbours, or others	19	20	15	20	23	
Reality TV shows (e.g. Police Ten 7, Highway Cops)	19	18	20	23	16	
Your local newspaper	17	20	17	16	18	
Government information/websites	11	13	14	8	11	
Personal experience	10	16	6	9	14	
Talk back radio	10	18	11	8	7	
Other online sources	8	12	9	6	6	
TV crime dramas (e.g. CSI)	8	12	7	9	7	
Other	2	4	2	3	2	
Don't know	5	3	2	6	5	
Total	**	**	**	**	**	

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses.

Table 8: Sources of information about prisons in Aotearoa New Zealand – by Māori and non-Māori

	Total sample	Māori	Non-Māori
Unweighted base =	1269	400	869
	%	%	%
National television news broadcasts (e.g. Breakfast)	48	44	49
Online news sources (e.g. Stuff)	48	45	49
National and provincial newspapers	42	39	42
General word of mouth/information from other people	37	49	35
Social media sources (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube)	24	41	21
Television documentaries (e.g. 60 minutes, Sunday)	24	27	24
Radio news	22	21	22
Current affairs television programmes (e.g. The Project)	21	27	20
Experience of relatives, friends, neighbours, or others	19	41	15
Reality TV shows (e.g. Police Ten 7, Highway Cops)	19	29	18
Your local newspaper	17	19	17
Government information/websites	11	12	11
Personal experience	10	17	9
Talk back radio	10	14	10
Other online sources	8	11	7
TV crime dramas (e.g. CSI)	8	15	7
Other	2	1	2
Don't know	5	4	6
Total	**	**	**

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses.

3.2.1 Confidence in the information provided by government departments about prisons

As noted in the previous section, 11% of respondents identified *government information/websites* as a source of their information about prison in Aotearoa New Zealand. Against this background, all respondents were asked what confidence they could have that information about prisons from government departments was accurate.

Table 9 shows respondents' level of confidence by their level of **confidence** in the prison system in general. Table 10 provides a comparison of the results between respondents who identified as **Māori** and those who were **non-Māori**.

The key results are as follows:

1. Less than one-half of respondents (46%) stated they were confident that information about prisons from government departments was accurate. In contrast, 22% said they were not confident in the accuracy of this information.
2. Confidence in the accuracy of information about prisons from government departments **correlates** with respondents' confidence in the prison system in Aotearoa New Zealand in general:
 - a. Respondents who stated they were 'not at all confident' in the system were more likely to state they did not have confidence in the accuracy of information supplied by government departments (47% said they had no confidence in this information compared with 12% of those who said they were 'fairly/very confident' of the system).
 - b. Conversely, the latter group were more likely to state they had confidence (73% compared with 26% of those who said they were 'not at all confident' in the system).
3. Compared with non-Māori, Māori were **significantly** less likely to state they had confidence in the accuracy of information about prisons from government departments (38% compared with 47% of non-Māori).
 - a. Relatively similar percentages of Māori and non-Māori stated they lacked confidence (26% and 21% respectively).

Table 9: Confidence in the accuracy of information about prisons from government departments – by level of confidence in the prison system

	Unweighted base =	Total sample	Not at all confident	Not very confident	Neither confident nor not confident	Fairly/Very confident
		1269	232	368	349	255
		%	%	%	%	%
Not at all confident		7	25	3	1	4
Not very confident		15	22	22	7	8
Neither confident nor unconfident		27	25	28	38	11
Fairly confident		35	20	33	40	50
Very confident		11	6	8	10	23
Don't know		5	3	5	4	3
Total		100	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Table 10: Confidence in the accuracy of information about prisons from government departments – by Māori and non-Māori

	Unweighted base =	Total sample	Māori	Non-Māori
		1269	400	869
		%	%	%
Not at all confident		7	10	6
Not very confident		15	16	15
Neither confident nor unconfident		27	28	27
Fairly confident		35	29	36
Very confident		11	9	11
Don't know		5	8	4
Total		100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

3.3 Level of knowledge about prisons and the criminal justice processes surrounding prisons

3.3.1 Level of knowledge

Respondents were presented with a list of aspects about prisons and the criminal justice processes surrounding prisons, and asked to what degree they felt they knew about these aspects.

Generally, respondents stated they knew little about these aspects. Table 11 shows the extent to which respondents felt they knew 'quite a lot/a lot' about each aspect by their level of **confidence** in the prison system in general. Table 12 provides a comparison of the results between respondents who identified as **Māori** and those who were **non-Māori**.

The key results are as follows:

1. **Significantly** less than one-half of all respondents stated they knew 'quite a lot/a lot' about any of the aspects, with the best result recorded for: *Why people go to prison* (41%).
 - a. Of note is the fact that 18% said they knew 'quite a lot/a lot' about: *The prison system in general*. In fact, 19% admitted they knew 'nothing at all' and 57% 'knew a little'.
 - b. The percentage of respondents who said they knew 'quite a lot/a lot' about the prison system in general is exactly the same as was recorded in the population survey completed last year (i.e. both 18%).
2. The low level of knowledge is evident for **all** groups based on their confidence in the prison system in general, including those respondents who stated they were 'fairly/very confident' of the system.
 - a. Note, however, that respondents who were 'fairly/very confident' tend to record higher levels of knowledge of most aspects compared with those who were 'not at all confident' in the system.
3. While Māori also had low levels of knowledge about all aspects, in a relative sense, they recorded **higher** levels compared with non-Māori.

Table 11: Know ‘quite a lot/a lot’ about prisons and criminal justice processes surrounding prisons – by level of confidence in the prison system

	Unweighted base =	Total sample	Not at all confident	Not very confident	Neither confident nor not confident	Fairly/Very confident
		1269	232	368	349	255
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Why people go to prison	41	48	40	39	51	
Māori and imprisonment	18	20	14	17	29	
The prison system in general	18	20	13	15	29	
The bail system	15	16	8	16	27	
Young people in prison	14	15	9	11	27	
Rehabilitation programmes in the community	14	15	8	12	28	
Rehabilitation programmes in prison	13	13	6	13	26	
Supported accommodation services for people leaving prison	13	11	7	12	27	
Employment services for people leaving prison	12	13	6	12	27	
Women in prison	11	10	6	11	23	
Total	**	**	**	**	**	

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses.

Table 12: Know ‘quite a lot/a lot’ about prisons and criminal justice processes surrounding prisons – by Māori and non-Māori

	Unweighted base =	Total sample	Māori	Non-Māori
		1269	400	869
	%	%	%	%
Why people go to prison	41	43	41	
Māori and imprisonment	18	38	15	
The prison system in general	18	27	16	
The bail system	15	24	14	
Young people in prison	14	23	12	
Rehabilitation programmes in the community	14	23	13	
Rehabilitation programmes in prison	13	20	12	
Supported accommodation services for people leaving prison	13	22	11	
Employment services for people leaving prison	12	18	12	
Women in prison	11	21	9	
Total	**	**	**	

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses.

3.3.2 Knowledge of trends relating to prisons

Respondents' knowledge was also tested with respect to a number of trends relating to prisons (e.g. decreasing numbers in prison).

Generally, respondents stated they knew little about these aspects. Table 13 shows the extent to which respondents felt they knew 'quite a lot/a lot' about each aspect by their level of **confidence** in the prison system in general. Table 14 provides a comparison of the results between respondents who identified as **Māori** and those who were **non-Māori**.

The key results are as follows:

1. There is a general belief that the *total number of people in prison* is increasing rather than decreasing (56% and 9% respectively). Respondents also believed that:
 - a. The prison population is mostly made up of *younger rather than older people* (27% and 13% respectively).
 - b. The number of *women in prison* is increasing rather than decreasing (36% and 5% respectively).
2. All respondents also believed that Māori and Pacific peoples are over-represented in the prison population:
 - a. Māori are over-represented rather than under-represented in the prison population (60% and 8% respectively).
 - b. Pacific peoples are over-represented rather than under-represented in the prison population (43% and 7% respectively).
3. There are relatively **few** differences based on the level of confidence in the prison system in Aotearoa New Zealand.
4. This is also the case in when the results for Māori are compared with those of non-Māori, although:
 - a. Māori were more likely to state the population was increasing compared with non-Māori (62% and 55% respectively).
 - b. Non-Māori were more likely to state than Māori that Māori were over-represented in the prison population (62% and 55% respectively).

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Table 13: Knowledge of trends relating to prisons – by level of confidence in the prison system

	Unweighted base =	Total sample	Not at all confident	Not very confident	Neither confident nor not confident	Fairly/Very confident
		1269	232	368	349	255
		%	%	%	%	%
The total number of people in prisons is ...						
Decreasing		9	13	11	8	8
Increasing		56	62	59	55	56
Māori in prison are ...						
Under-represented a lot		8	12	8	6	6
Over-represented a lot		60	63	68	62	56
Pacific people in prison are ...						
Under-represented a lot		7	10	8	8	5
Over-represented a lot		43	40	44	40	51
The prison population is mostly made up of ...						
Younger people		27	30	27	29	26
Older people		13	11	12	10	19
The number of women in prison is ...						
Decreasing		5	7	4	3	5
Increasing		36	45	38	32	41
Total		**	**	**	**	**

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses.

Table 14: Knowledge of trends relating to prisons – by Māori and non-Māori

	Unweighted base =	Total sample	Māori	Non-Māori
		1269	400	869
		%	%	%
The total number of people in prisons is ...				
Decreasing		9	6	11
Increasing		56	62	55
Māori in prison are ...				
Under-represented a lot		8	12	7
Over-represented a lot		60	55	62
Pacific people in prison are ...				
Under-represented a lot		7	10	7
Over-represented a lot		43	42	43
The prison population is mostly made up of ...				
Younger people		27	20	28
Older people		13	17	11
The number of women in prison is ...				
Decreasing		5	5	5
Increasing		36	38	36
Total		**	**	**

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses.

3.3.3 Opinions about the extent to which prison is used

Respondents were asked about the extent to which they believed prison in Aotearoa New Zealand was used.

Table 15 shows the extent to which respondents felt imprisonment was currently used by their level of **confidence** in the prison system in general. Table 16 provides a comparison of the results between respondents who identified as **Māori** and those who were **non-Māori**.

The key results are as follows:

1. Overall, most respondents felt that imprisonment was used 'too little' (47%). In comparison, 17% felt it was used 'about right' and 15% 'too much'.
 - a. These results are significantly different from those recorded in the population survey last year. Compared to last year's survey, a significantly larger percentage of respondents in the current survey stated that imprisonment was used 'too little' (35% last year) and a significantly smaller percentage said that it was used 'about right' (31% last year).
2. Opinions about the use of imprisonment **correlates** with respondents' confidence in the prison system in Aotearoa New Zealand in general:
 - a. Respondents who stated they were 'fairly/very confident' in the prison system in general in Aotearoa New Zealand were more likely to state that the current use of imprisonment was 'about right' compared with those who were 'not at all confident' in the system (44% and 3% respectively).
 - b. The latter group were more inclined to say that there was 'too little' imprisonment (71% compared with 29% who were 'fairly/very confident' in the prison system).
3. Māori were **more likely** than non-Māori to state that imprisonment was currently used 'too much':
 - a. Over twice as many Māori stated this was the case as non-Māori (31% and 12% respectively).

Table 15: Opinions about the extent to which imprisonment is currently used – by level of confidence in the prison system

	Unweighted base =	Total sample	Not at all confident	Not very confident	Neither confident nor not confident	Fairly/Very confident
		1269	232	368	349	255
		%	%	%	%	%
About right		17	3	10	15	44
Too little		47	71	56	41	29
Too much		15	17	16	14	14
Don't know		21	10	18	29	12
Total		100	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Table 16: Opinions about the extent to which imprisonment is currently used – by Māori and non-Māori

	Unweighted base =	Total sample	Māori	Non-Māori
		1269	400	869
		%	%	%
About right		17	14	18
Too little		47	34	49
Too much		15	31	12
Don't know		21	21	21
Total		100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

3.4 Confidence in the prison system in Aotearoa New Zealand prisons

Respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they had confidence in each of the following aspects of the current prison system in Aotearoa New Zealand:

1. Protects the public from serious offenders who may cause harm.
2. Acts as a deterrent to others.
3. Keeps the community safe by rehabilitating people.
4. Successfully helps people reintegrate into the community when they leave prison.

These were in addition to being asked about their confidence in Aotearoa New Zealand's prison system overall.

Table 17 shows the extent to which respondents had confidence in terms of these aspects by their level of **confidence** in the prison system in general. Table 18 provides a comparison of the results between respondents who identified as **Māori** and those who were **non-Māori**.

The key results are as follows:

1. Overall, most respondents had a weak level of confidence in Aotearoa New Zealand's prison system (20% stated they were 'fairly/very confident') and this was reflected in their level of confidence in the specific aspects listed above.
 - a. Less than one-third of respondents stated they were 'fairly/very confident' with every one of the aspects, with the lowest levels of confidence recorded for: *Keeps the community safe by rehabilitating people* (14%) and *Successfully helps people reintegrate into the community when they leave prison* (14%).

In comparison, over **three times** as many respondents lacked confidence in these aspects: *Keeps the community safe by rehabilitating people* (50%) and *Successfully helps people reintegrate into the community when they leave prison* (48%).

2. Under 5% of respondents who were '**not at all confident**' in the prison system in general in Aotearoa New Zealand stated they were confident in every one of the aspects. On the other hand, about 50% or more of respondents who were 'fairly/very confident' in the prison system said they were confident in every one of the aspects. They recorded the highest level of confidence for: *Protects the public from serious offenders who may cause harm* (79%).

3. Māori and non-Māori recorded **similar** levels of confidence, with one exception:

- a. Māori expressed a relatively higher level of confidence than non-Māori with respect to: *Successfully helps people reintegrate into the community when they leave prison* (20% and 14% respectively).

Table 17: 'Fairly/Very confident' about various aspects of the current prison system in Aotearoa New Zealand – by level of confidence in the prison system

	Unweighted base =	Total sample	Not at all confident	Not very confident	Neither confident nor not confident	Fairly/Very confident
		1269	232	368	349	255
		%	%	%	%	%
Protects the public from serious offenders who may cause harm		32	3	19	35	79
Acts as a deterrent to others		16	4	6	14	48
Keeps the community safe by rehabilitating people		14	2	2	11	52
Successfully helps people reintegrate into the community when they leave prison		14	2	4	10	50
Aotearoa New Zealand's prison system overall		20	0	0	0	100
Total		**	**	**	**	**

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses.

Table 18: 'Fairly/Very confident' about various aspects of the current prison system in Aotearoa New Zealand – by Māori and non-Māori

	Unweighted base =	Total sample	Māori	Non-Māori
		1269	400	869
		%	%	%
Protects the public from serious offenders who may cause harm		32	30	33
Acts as a deterrent to others		16	18	16
Keeps the community safe by rehabilitating people		14	17	14
Successfully helps people reintegrate into the community when they leave prison		14	20	14
Aotearoa New Zealand's prison system overall		20	22	20
Total		**	**	**

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses.

3.4.1 Opinions about what can be done to increase confidence

Respondents were presented with a list of possible initiatives and interventions and asked which was the 'most important thing' that could be done to increase their confidence in the prison system in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Table 19 shows the extent to which respondents rated each of these initiatives/interventions as the 'most important thing' by their level of **confidence** in the prison system in general. Table 20 provides a comparison of the results between respondents who identified as **Māori** and those who were **non-Māori**.

The key results are as follows:

1. Based on the way respondents responded to this question, respondents can be divided between two camps; those respondents who believe a more 'positive' approach would improve their confidence in the prison system in Aotearoa New Zealand and those who believe a more 'negative' approach would improve their confidence:
 - a. Roughly about one-third of respondents stated the following initiatives/interventions would improve their confidence: *Provide more support to people leaving prison when they are released back into the community* (18%) *Improve the effectiveness of rehabilitation programmes* (16%) and *Provide more access to rehabilitation programmes* (8%).
 - b. In comparison, about one-quarter of respondents stated the following initiatives/interventions would improve their confidence: *Make conditions inside prison harsher* (i.e., provide the opposite of the activities that would improve conditions) (14%) and *Keep people in prison longer* (12%).
2. Significantly fewer respondents rated the following initiatives/interventions as likely to improve their confidence in the system:
 - a. *Provide the public with more information about what happens in prison* (8%).
 - b. *Address Māori over-representation* (6%).
 - c. *Improve conditions inside prisons (e.g., provide more time out of cells, provide more opportunities for constructive activities)* (4%).

3. The way the initiatives/interventions were rated **correlates** with their confidence in the prison system in Aotearoa New Zealand in general. For example:
 - a. Twenty-six percent of respondents who stated they were 'not at all confident' in the system felt *making conditions inside prison harsher* would be the 'most important thing' that would impact their confidence in the system (compared with 8% of those who said they were 'fairly/very confident' of the system).
 - b. In contrast, 26% of respondents who stated they were 'fairly/very confident' of the prison system felt *providing more support to people leaving prison when they are released back into the community* would be the 'most important thing' that would impact their confidence in the system (compared with 9% of those who said they were 'not at all confident' of the system).
4. Māori and non-Māori rated the initiatives/interventions in **similar** ways, with the following exceptions:
 - a. Māori were **more likely** than non-Māori to rate: *Address Māori over-representation* as the 'most important thing' making a difference to their confidence in the prison system (13% and 5% respectively).
 - b. Māori were also **more likely** than non-Māori to rate: *Improve conditions inside prisons (e.g. provide more time out of cells, provide more opportunities for constructive activities)* as the 'most important thing' making a difference to their confidence in the system (8% and 3% respectively).
 - c. Non-Māori were **more likely** than Māori to rate: *Keep people in prisons longer* as the 'most important thing' making a difference to their confidence in the system (13% and 5% respectively).

Table 19: ‘Most important’ initiative/intervention to improve confidence in the current prison system in Aotearoa New Zealand – by level of confidence in the prison system

	Unweighted base =	Total sample	Not at all confident	Not very confident	Neither confident nor not confident	Fairly/Very confident
		1269	232	368	349	255
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Provide more support to people leaving prison when they are released back into the community	18		9	17	19	26
Improve the effectiveness of rehabilitation programmes	16		9	23	19	12
Make conditions inside prison harsher (i.e., provide the opposite of the activities that would improve conditions)	14		26	15	11	8
Keep people in prisons longer	12		21	13	8	12
Provide more access to rehabilitation programmes	8		5	6	10	13
Provide the public more information about what happens in prison	8		8	6	9	9
Address Māori over-representation	6		3	6	6	7
Improve conditions inside prisons (e.g., provide more time out of cells, provide more opportunities for constructive activities)	4		6	4	2	5
Other	4		9	5	2	2
Don't know	9		4	4	14	5
Total	**	**	**	**	**	**

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses.

Table 20: ‘Most important’ initiative/intervention to improve confidence in the current prison system in Aotearoa New Zealand – by Māori and non-Māori

	Unweighted base =	Total sample	Māori	Non-Māori
		1269	400	869
	%	%	%	%
Provide more support to people leaving prison when they are released back into the community	18		19	18
Improve the effectiveness of rehabilitation programmes	16		15	17
Make conditions inside prison harsher (i.e., provide the opposite of the activities that would improve conditions)	14		11	15
Keep people in prisons longer	12		5	13
Provide more access to rehabilitation programmes	8		6	9
Provide the public more information about what happens in prison	8		8	8
Address Māori over-representation	6		13	5
Improve conditions inside prisons (e.g., provide more time out of cells, provide more opportunities for constructive activities)	4		8	3
Other	4		5	4
Don't know	9		10	9
Total	**	**	**	**

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses.

3.5 Opinions about the use of prison in the future and suggested initiatives affecting prisons in the future

3.5.1 The use of prison in the future

Respondents were encouraged to think about the long-term future, 20 years from now and in this context, they were asked about the future use of prisons.

Table 21 shows the extent to which respondents felt prisons should be used in the future by their level of **confidence** in the prison system in general. Table 22 provides a comparison of the results between respondents who identified as **Māori** and those who were **non-Māori**.

The key results are as follows:

1. Eighteen percent stated they envisaged prisons being used to the same extent as they are now. In contrast, 19% said they saw them being used a *little less*, but 16% saw them being used a *little more*.

However, another 22% envisaged them being used a *lot less*; therefore, ideally, more respondents expected them to be used less.

Notably, 15% of respondents were undecided.

2. The future use of prison **correlates** with respondents' confidence in the prison system in Aotearoa New Zealand in general. For example:
 - a. Twenty-four percent of respondents who stated they were 'fairly/very confident' in the system were **more likely** to state they should be used a *little less* (compared with 9% of those who said they were 'not at all confident' of the system).
 - b. Respondents who were 'fairly/very confident' were also **more likely** to state they should be used to the same extent as they are now (25% compared with 8% of those who said they were 'not at all confident' of the system).
 - c. Respondents who were 'not at all confident' of the system were the **most likely** to say they were undecided.
3. Māori were **more likely** than non-Māori to state they envisaged prisons being used a *little less* or a *lot less*. Fifty-one percent of Māori choose either one of these two options compared with 39% of non-Māori.

Table 21: Opinions about the future use of prisons – by level of confidence in the prison system

	Unweighted base =	Total sample	Not at all confident	Not very confident	Neither confident nor not confident	Fairly/Very confident
		1269	232	368	349	255
		%	%	%	%	%
A lot less		22	18	27	21	21
A little bit less		19	9	21	21	24
At about the same level as it is now		18	8	11	26	25
A little bit more		16	14	21	15	13
Don't know		15	43	11	4	12
Total		100	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Table 22: Opinions about the future use of prisons – by Māori and non-Māori

	Unweighted base =	Total sample	Māori	Non-Māori
		1269	400	869
		%	%	%
A lot less		22	26	21
A little bit less		19	25	18
At about the same level as it is now		18	14	18
A little bit more		16	12	16
Don't know		15	11	15
Total		100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

3.5.2 Opinions about suggested initiatives affecting prisons in the future

Respondents were presented with a list of suggestions in terms of how prison might be used differently in the future.

Table 23 shows the extent to which respondents stated they would support each suggestion 'a lot' by their level of **confidence** in the prison system in general. Table 24 provides a comparison of the results between respondents who identified as **Māori** and those who were **non-Māori**.

The key results are as follows:

1. Over one-half of respondents stated that they would support **two** of the four suggestions: *Increase the availability of rehabilitation programmes in prisons so people don't reoffend (e.g. drug and alcohol programmes, mental health programmes (54% stated they would support this 'a lot') and Increase the availability of reintegration programmes in prisons so people learn skills or a trade to help them live a good life when they leave (54%).*
2. Support for these two suggestions did **not** vary significantly by respondents' confidence in the prison system in Aotearoa New Zealand in general. That is, over one-half of respondents in each 'confidence' group stated they would support these suggestions.
3. Māori were significantly **more likely** than non-Māori to support these two suggestions, **as well as** the other two:
 - a. *Invest in culturally appropriate solutions (44% of Māori stated they supported this suggestion compared with 27% of non-Māori).*
 - b. *Make better use of technology to ensure that prison is only used when necessary (34% of Māori stated they supported this suggestion compared with 22% of non-Māori).*

Table 23: Support for suggestions relating to how prisons might be used in the future ('support it a lot') – by level of confidence in the prison system

	Unweighted base =	Total sample	Not at all confident	Not very confident	Neither confident nor not confident	Fairly/Very confident
		1269	232	368	349	255
		%	%	%	%	%
Increase the availability of rehabilitation programmes in prisons so people don't reoffend (e.g., drug and alcohol programmes, mental health programmes)	54	50	62	52	54	
Increase the availability of reintegration programmes in prisons so people learn skills or a trade to help them live a good life when they leave	54	52	60	54	52	
Invest in culturally appropriate solutions	29	26	29	29	37	
Make better use of technology to ensure that prison is only used when necessary	23	23	21	19	36	
Total	**	**	**	**	**	

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses.

Table 24: Support for suggestions relating to how prisons might be used in the future ('support it a lot') – by Māori and non-Māori

	Unweighted base =	Total sample	Māori	Non-Māori
		1269	400	869
		%	%	%
Increase the availability of rehabilitation programmes in prisons so people don't reoffend (e.g., drug and alcohol programmes, mental health programmes)	54	63	53	
Increase the availability of reintegration programmes in prisons so people learn skills or a trade to help them live a good life when they leave	54	59	53	
Invest in culturally appropriate solutions	29	44	27	
Make better use of technology to ensure that prison is only used when necessary	23	34	22	
Total	**	**	**	

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses.

4.0 'Opt-in' survey

The results presented in this section are based on a sample of 49 respondents to the opt-in survey. Please refer to Section 2.2.1 for a description of these respondents. The results have not been analysed by any sub-sample because of the relatively small sample size.

4.1 Responses to the open-ended questions in the survey

The qualitative responses to the open-ended questions in the opt-in survey have been thematically analysed, with the results shown in Table 25 to Table 27. The content of the five written submissions received largely reflect these themes in greater detail.

4.1.1 Opinions about how imprisonment might change in the future

Respondents were asked about changes they envisioned and hoped for in the future.

Enhanced services and support for *rehabilitation* and *reintegration* into the community were frequently mentioned (33% and 24% respectively). Respondents expressed their opinions as follows:

The key to effective rehabilitation and reintegration programmes is access. We repeatedly hear reports from prisoners that they are unable to access the programmes which they believe would contribute to reducing reoffending. Often times, programmes are provided as an incentive to good behaviour, rather than an absolute right to attend. Many prisoners have not met with their principal case officers for some weeks/months after incarceration and have no idea what programmes are available and how to access them. If the body is imprisoned, it takes great facilitators and programmes to free the mind enough to be able to effectively absorb the learnings from these programmes. Standalone programmes don't achieve this. There needs to be a pathway built into the programmes that creates stepping-stones on learning and understanding.

In regard to the reintegration space, there is very little support in this space. There needs to be Regional Reintegration Managers, Northern, Central, Lower, Southern. These reintegration Managers would work alongside, District Managers and have some collaborative conversations so that there are clear processes and roles in place that are centered on the transition of those from custodial to the community space.

Importantly, whānau, hapū and iwi were considered important to be involved in the prison system, both to preserve ties and as part of the rehabilitative service provision (by Māori for Māori) (20%).

The design of treatment and prevention programmes needs to begin with a Cultural Assessment report that includes the whole whānau. It is really apparent that whānau must maintain contact throughout the process. If you want good reintegration the whānau have to be there at the beginning, the middle and the end.

Rehabilitation and reintegration programmes need to be tailored to suit Māori, for Māori, delivered by Māori with iwi, hapū and whānau.

Twenty nine percent also commented on the need for remand in custody to be addressed, in terms of reduced timeframes and more use of community-based bail conditions. Aligned with this was a strong push for rehabilitative supports to commence at this stage, rather than down the track, once sentenced and convicted.

The 2013 Bail Act is an example of a kneejerk reaction promulgated by the penal populist movement, which took power away from judges to make an informed decision and mandated certain offences as remanded in custody. The Bail Act needs immediate repeal, like its brother, the Three Strikes legislation, and EM bail needs to become the default position, so people can maintain employment, accommodation and family relationships. If they breach this, prison is the option.

There needs to be increased access to rehabilitation and programmes for those waiting on remand including increased funding for mental health services.

In-community sentences were also considered likely to increase in the future, as well as community-based facilities (24%).

It is good to see a reduction in custodial sentences for non-violent crime but even for violent crime, it is worth considering smaller area prisons where prisoners are under a greater degree of restriction than presently afforded with community detention but would be able to continue with suitable employment and maintain relationships with whānau.

Table 25: Respondent suggestions for changing imprisonment in the future

	Sub-sample Unweighted base = 45* %
Greater focus on and access to end-to-end wraparound rehabilitation services and programmes (incl. programme pathways, Case Management, education & training), especially for youth/first-time offenders	33
Amend the Bail Act - Less remand in custody/shorter timeframes/more community-based remand or special facilities with social supports in place to assess and begin rehabilitation	29
In-community sentences for non-violent offenders (e.g., drug, theft, traffic offenders)/community-based facilities	24
Earlier (pre-release) and better support for reintegration, including employment/life training and facilitation into the community with support systems in place, including whānau, hapū and iwi-led initiatives	24
Involving family/whānau in the prison process to maintain/heal relationships/involve whānau, hapū and iwi in rehabilitation programmes (e.g., run by Māori for Māori)	20
Greater focus on and support for mental health issues, A&D counselling and addressing family violence	16
Addressing wider social changes required to reduce criminal activity per se (e.g., poverty, ghettos/housing issues, intergenerational trauma, education, employment, mental health and addiction)	9
Education/training for prison staff (and police) re: mental health awareness/understanding and tikanga Māori	7
Greater focus on cultural/mental health/A&D assessment	4
Purpose-designed prisons to cater for an ageing population of those unable to be rehabilitated/reintegrated	4
Stop racist bias/profiling by police/the judiciary to reduce the numbers of Māori (and people of colour) being targeted	2
Community-based/iwi-run sentencing options for non-violent Māori and other offenders (e.g., youth, first-time offenders, Pasifika, women).	2
Other	2

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses.

*Based on those respondents who answered this open-ended question.

4.1.2 Opinions about what specific changes respondents would like to see in the future

Specific changes respondents noted were not dissimilar to those described above, but tended to emphasise that wider social changes were required to address the root causes of criminal activity (30%). Respondents expressed their opinions as follows:

The war on crime would be best served as a war on poverty. If people have steady housing, engaged in meaningful work and have good relationships with their whānau then they are way less likely to be involved in criminal activity of any kind.

We need to heal whole whānau holistically and ensure healthy and positive role modelling from grandparents and parents is available to future generations, so that significant changes can be made.

Māori have no control over government, whose policies cause poverty, dependency on state \$\$, poor housing, unsafe emergency accommodation, overcrowding, no/little education/schooling. It needs to start with education. Drug and alcohol rehab, Juvenile Courts for youth - on marae with whānau plans and family/caregiver support.

Involving whānau, hapū and iwi in the prison process and to support rehabilitation was again strongly recommended (35%), as was such involvement in reintegration (30%), along with other supports for non-Māori in earlier reintegration.

People need to have whanau-centered care, such as Whānau Ora type support, specialising in prison populations to reduce the transmission of intergenerational trauma. More funding in this area with influence/thoughts from iwi.

Safe and stable accommodation is paramount to support people leaving prison, along with whānau support, access to relevant health care services, community rehabilitation programmes, education and secure employment.

Some of the people I have worked with have little to look forward to on coming out of prison. Some were homeless before they went in, dislocated from family, with high health needs, disabilities and no realistic options for meaningful work. They aren't given options that address these issues for when they leave prison, and the accommodation options or release conditions are often inadequate or unrealistic.

Table 26: Respondent specific suggestions for changes to imprisonment in the future

	Sub-sample
Unweighted base =	46*
	%
Involving family/whānau in the prison process to maintain/heal relationships/involve whānau, hapū and iwi in rehabilitation programmes (e.g., run by Māori for Māori)	35
Earlier (pre-release) and better support for reintegration, including employment/life training and facilitation into the community with support systems in place, including whānau, hapū and iwi-led initiatives	30
Addressing wider social changes required to reduce criminal activity per se (e.g., poverty, ghettos/housing issues, intergenerational trauma, education, employment, mental health and addiction)	30
In-community sentences for non-violent offenders (e.g., drug, theft, traffic offenders)/community-based facilities.	20
Greater focus on and access to end-to-end wraparound rehabilitation services and programmes (incl. programme pathways, Case Management, education & training), especially for youth/first-time offenders	15
Greater focus on and support for mental health issues, A&D counselling and addressing family violence	13
Amend the Bail Act - Less remand in custody/shorter timeframes/more community-based remand or special facilities with social supports in place to assess and begin rehabilitation	7
More support for victims and offenders' family/whānau/restorative justice	7
Community-based/iwi-run sentencing options for non-violent Māori and other offenders (e.g., youth, first-time offenders, Pasifika, women)	2
Greater focus on cultural/mental health/A&D assessment	2
Other	9

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses.

*Based on those respondents who answered this open-ended question.

4.1.3 Opinions about the future focus respondents think might be beneficial for Māori and others disproportionately represented in the prison system

Respondents were also asked a question about what might address the disproportionate representation of Māori and others within the prison system.

Addressing wider social issues adversely affecting Māori and others disproportionately represented in the prison system (especially youth) was again raised (27%), combined with the issue of Police and the judicial system targeting Māori and other people of colour (e.g. Pasifika) in ways that do not compare to their Pākehā/white counterparts (18%). Respondents expressed their opinions as follows

It's a timely question about future focus and investment into better ways of dealing with offending is what is required. Like the new Māori Health Authority, we need to have the equivalent for the Justice Sector. We have some good interventions, e.g., Restorative Justice, Te Pae Oranga that are in place, but need drastic support to transition it away from the transactional system that we have now. A by Māori for Māori [forum] to address the high offending rate and provide the support that is required to address underlying issues. This could co-exist with the Māori Health Authority, as the offending is the last piece of the pie. Generally saying, if we can keep our tamariki and mokopuna in school for as long as we can, then they are more likely not to offend. With the low numbers of rangatahi attending school, this could be the feeder in the future, and we need to address this now.

Training in anti-racism for all criminal justice employees; make police use more diversion and courts use more discharges. But obviously, we need societal racism to reduce. We need to improve socio-economic factors for Māori, so kids get the best start, get good education, get extra help in schools when they need it, families get support early when they ask for help... Stop criminalising young Māori with case histories.

The three strikes legislation has also been a feeder into the prison system, as well.

As above, the importance of involving whānau, hapū and iwi in both the prison process and in rehabilitation initiatives was strongly advocated for (32%).

Support iwi to develop marae as facilities to accommodate Māori to serve sentences by serving their communities, while being exposed to tikanga and other educational opportunities.

Solutions by Māori for Māori. People who have successfully been to prison and gotten out and reformed their lives. These are the type of people who should be leading programmes, in conjunction with iwi, to deliver the types of services that will have the best long-term outcomes on the whānau with members in prison. A

bigger focus on prevention by changing justice system 'racial prejudice'. It would be better if judges didn't 'see' the person - would they give the same sentence? Education, trauma-based healing, reintegration, restorative justice (Māori-based). Māori judges sentencing Māori - non-Māori not involved at all (unless proven cultural competency and understanding of the historical prejudice of the system).

Table 27: Respondent opinions about the future focus beneficial for Māori and others disproportionately represented in the prison system

	Sub- sample
	Unweighted base = 44*
	%
Involving family/whānau in the prison process to maintain/heal relationships/involve whānau, hapū and iwi in rehabilitation programmes (e.g., run by Māori for Māori)	32
Addressing wider social changes required to reduce criminal activity per se (e.g., poverty, ghettos/housing issues, intergenerational trauma, education, employment, mental health and addiction)	27
Stop racist bias/profiling by police/the judiciary to reduce the numbers of Māori (and people of colour) being targeted	18
Community-based/iwi-run sentencing options for non-violent Māori and other offenders (e.g., youth, first-time offenders, Pasifika, women)	14
In-community sentences for non-violent offenders (e.g., drug, theft, traffic offenders)/community-based facilities	11
Earlier (pre-release) and better support for reintegration, including employment/life training and facilitation into the community with support systems in place, including whānau, hapū and iwi-led initiatives	11
More support for victims and offenders' family/whānau/restorative justice	7
Education/training for prison staff (and police) re: mental health awareness/understanding and tikanga Māori	7
Greater focus on and support for mental health issues, A&D counselling and addressing family violence	7
Greater focus on and access to end-to-end wraparound rehabilitation services and programmes (incl. programme pathways, Case Management, education & training), especially for youth/first-time offenders	5
Greater focus on cultural/mental health/A&D assessment	2
Other	9

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses.

*Based on those respondents who answered this open-ended question.

Appendix A: Population Survey Questionnaire

RESEARCH NEW ZEALAND

Ministry of Justice – Imprisonment Population Survey II (Sept 2022)

PN: 5304

DATE September 2022

Title/Subject line: Future of Imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand

Why should you complete this survey?

Tēnā koe, Talofa lava. The Justice Sector agencies (Ministry of Justice; Department of Corrections; Oranga Tamariki; NZ Police; Crown Law and the Serious Fraud Office) are completing a public consultation about the future of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand. The Ministry would like to know what you think so they can reflect your views in this consultation process.

What does completing the survey involve?

This short **voluntary** survey will take you about 10 minutes to complete, depending on your answers to the questions. As you move through the survey, please use the *Save and Continue* buttons - do not use your browser buttons.

Using the unique link in the survey invitation email, you can stop and return to the survey at any time.

Confidentiality

Your responses will be anonymous. We will combine your answers to the questions with the answers provided by other respondents. This means that no one will be identifiable in any analysis or reporting. You can read more about Research New Zealand's privacy policy **here**.

If you would like the text to appear larger in the survey, please tick this button.

About you

1. Are you ...?

- 1Male
- 2Female
- 3Gender diverse

2. Which ethnic groups do you belong to? *Please select all that apply*

- 1New Zealand European (or Pākehā)
- 2Māori
- 3Pacific
- 4Asian
- 5Middle East/Latin American/African
- 96 ...Other ethnic group, **please specify**
- 99 ...Would rather not say ;E

3. Into which of the following age groups do you come into?

- 118-24
- 225-34
- 335-44
- 445-54
- 555-64
- 665-74
- 775 and over

4. Which one of the following best describes where you live?

- 1Large city e.g. Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch
- 2Medium town/city e.g. Hamilton, Tauranga, Dunedin
- 3Small provincial town
- 4Rural area

The following questions are about **crime and the current prison system** in Aotearoa New Zealand.

5. First of all, in comparison to the situation about **5 years ago** in Aotearoa New Zealand, do you think ...? **RDN, EXCEPT THE LAST TWO STATEMENTS**

Please select an answer for each statement listed below

	Increased a lot	Increased a little	Stayed about the same	Reduced a little	Reduced a lot	Don't know	Haven't lived in NZ for 5 years
... the amount of serious crime in Aotearoa NZ has...	1	2	3	4	5	98	99
... the amount of youth crime has ...	1	2	3	4	5	98	99
... the amount of crime involving gangs has ...	1	2	3	4	5	98	99
... the total number of people held in prison has ...	1	2	3	4	5	98	99
... the number of people held in prison waiting to be sentenced has ...	1	2	3	4	5	98	99
... the total amount of crime in the community in which you live has ...	1	2	3	4	5	98	99
... the total amount of crime in Aotearoa New Zealand has ...	1	2	3	4	5	98	99

6. Thinking some more about the amount of crime, how much of **your own quality of life** is affected by your fear of crime. Please answer using this scale, where 0 is 'not affected at all' and 10 is 'totally affected'.

0Not affected at all

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10... Totally affected

98... Don't know

7. Focusing now on **prisons**. Nowadays, people get their information about things from many different sources. Where have you mainly got your information about prisons in Aotearoa New Zealand? **Tick all that apply**

1. Personal experience
2. Experience of relatives, friends, neighbours, or other acquaintances
3. General word of mouth/information from other people
4. National and provincial newspapers (e.g. The Dominion Post, NZ Herald, The Press – including online versions)
5. Your local newspaper (e.g. The Aucklander, The Wellingtonian – including online versions)
6. Online news sources (e.g. Stuff)
7. Social media sources (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube)
8. Other online sources
9. National television news broadcasts (e.g. Breakfast, One News, Newshub, Prime News)
10. Current affairs television programmes (e.g. The Project)
11. Reality TV shows (e.g. Police Ten 7, Highway Cops)
12. Television documentaries (e.g. 60 minutes, Sunday)
13. TV crime dramas (e.g. CSI)
14. Radio news
15. Talk back radio
16. Government information/websites
17. Other
98. Don't know

8. People sometimes get their **information about prisons from government departments** (e.g. websites). How confident are you that the information from government departments is accurate?

Please select one option

- 1.....Not at all confident
- 2.....Not very confident
- 3.....Neither confident nor unconfident
- 4.....Fairly confident
- 5.....Very confident
- 98.....Don't know

9. When you think about prisons and the criminal justice processes surrounding prison, how much would you say you **know** about each of following? **RDN, EXCEPT THE LAST STATEMENT**
Please select an answer for each statement listed below

	Know nothing at all	Know a little	Know quite a lot	Know a lot	Don't know
The bail system	1	2	3	4	98
Why people go to prison	1	2	3	4	98
Rehabilitation programmes in prison	1	2	3	4	98
Rehabilitation programmes in the community	1	2	3	4	98
Supported accommodation services for people leaving prison	1	2	3	4	98
Employment services for people leaving prison	1	2	3	4	98
Māori and imprisonment	1	2	3	4	98
Young people in prison	1	2	3	4	98
Women in prison	1	2	3	4	98
The prison system in general	1	2	3	4	98

10. And based on your level of knowledge, how would you finish each of the following sentences.
It's OK to say you don't know. **RDN**

a. The total number of people in prison is ...

... decreasing

... increasing

Don't know

1	2	3	4	5	98
---	---	---	---	---	----

b. Māori in prison are ...

... under-
represented a
lot

Over-
represented a
lot

Don't know

1	2	3	4	5	98
---	---	---	---	---	----

c. Pacific people in prison are ...

... under-
represented a
lot

... over-
represented a
lot

Don't know

1	2	3	4	5	98
---	---	---	---	---	----

d. The prison population is mostly made up ...

... young
people

... older
people

Don't know

1	2	3	4	5	98
---	---	---	---	---	----

e. The number of women in prison ...

... decreasing

... growing

Don't know

1	2	3	4	5	98
---	---	---	---	---	----

11. Do you think imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand is **currently** used ...

Please select one option

1.About right
2. Too little
3. Too much
98. Don't know

12. How **confident** are you that the current prison system in Aotearoa New Zealand... **RDN**,
EXCEPT THE LAST STATEMENT

Please select an answer for each statement listed below

	Not at all confident	Not very confident	Neither confident nor unconfident	Fairly confident	Very confident	Don't know
... protects the public from serious offenders who may cause them harm	1	2	3	4	5	98
... acts as a deterrent to others	1	2	3	4	5	98
... keeps the community safe by rehabilitating people	1	2	3	4	5	98
... successfully helps people reintegrate into the community when they leave prison	1	2	3	4	5	98
Overall, how confident are you about Aotearoa NZ's prison system	1	2	3	4	5	98

13. What, in your opinion, is the **most important thing** that could be done to increase your confidence in the prison system in Aotearoa New Zealand? **RDN**

Please select one option

1.Provide more access to rehabilitation programmes
2.Provide more support to people leaving prison when they are released back into the community
3.Improve the effectiveness of rehabilitation programmes
4.Address Māori over-representation
5.Improve conditions inside prison (e.g. providing more time out of cells, providing more opportunities for constructive activities, better quality facilities)
6.Make conditions inside prison harsher (i.e. provide the opposite of the activities that would improve conditions)
7.Keep people in prison for longer
8.Provide the public more information about what happens in prison
96.Other **please specify**
98.Don't know

14. Now we'd like you to think about the **long-term future – 20 years from now**. Would you like to see prison used ...

Please select one option

1.A lot less
2.A little bit less
3.At about the same level as it is now
4.A little bit more
5.A lot more
96.Don't know

15. Some people have suggested how prison could be different in the future. How much do you support each of the following ideas? **RDN**

Please select an answer for each statement listed below

	Don't support it at all	Don't really support it	Somewhat support it	Support it a lot	Don't know
Increase the availability of rehabilitation programmes in prisons so people don't reoffend (e.g. drug and alcohol programmes, mental health programmes)	1	2	3	4	98
Increase the availability of reintegration programmes in prisons so people learn skills or a trade to help them live a good life when they leave	1	2	3	4	98
Invest in culturally appropriate solutions	1	2	3	4	98
Make better use of technology to ensure that prison is only used when necessary	1	2	3	4	98

16. And finally, do you have any experience of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand? Which of the following, if any, apply to you?

Tick all that apply

- 1.....Have been in prison, or know someone who has been in prison
- 2.....Have worked or volunteered in a prison
- 3.....Know someone who has worked or volunteered in a prison
- 4.....Have worked in probation
- 5.....No experience of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand
- 96.....Other **please specify**

Thank you for completing this survey.

Appendix B 'Opt-in' Survey Questionnaire

Ministry of Justice - Long-term Insights Briefing Imprisonment

Consultation Survey on website

Closes 7 October 2022

1. Age.
2. Ethnicity.
3. Gender.
4. Do you have any experience of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand
5. Have you been in prison or known someone who has been in prison?
6. Have you worked or volunteered in a prison?
7. Have you worked in probation?
8. Any other experience? (please specify)
9. How do you see imprisonment changing in the future?
10. What specific changes to imprisonment in New Zealand would you like to see?
11. What kind of future focus can you see that would be beneficial for Māori or for other people disproportionately represented in the prison?

Appendix C Long-term Briefing Consultation Document

LONG TERM
INSIGHTS
BRIEFING

Justice Sector

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

FOCUS ON



IMPRISONMENT
IN AOTEAROA



What kind of future do you want to create?

This paper summarises some of the top level findings we have gathered so far towards preparing the justice sector Long-term Insights Briefing into imprisonment. It looks at changes and trends in the prison population over the past 60 years and considers the relationships between these changes.

It is important that we examine our past to better understand the historical causes and consequences that have come together to form where we are today. We can then consider the risks and opportunities for the future and better understand how our choices can shape that future.

We are particularly interested in what New Zealanders think about the future risks and opportunities associated with these changes and invite you to have your say on these to inform the final briefing. We want to know:

- **How do you see imprisonment changing in the future?**
- **What specific changes would you like to see?**
- **What kind of future focus can you see that would be beneficial for Māori and for other people disproportionately represented in the prison system?**

Some of the main themes we wish to explore and their potential implications for the future are highlighted below and then covered in more detail in the rest of this document.

Changing needs of people in prison

This briefing shows that the nature of people in the prison system has changed considerably over the last 60 years. Today the prison population contains proportionately fewer young people and more people convicted of serious violence and sexual violation. It contains fewer people sent to prison for the first time, and a greater proportion of people who have spent more of their lives in institutions including, but not limited to, prisons. While there are fewer people in the system, there is a proportionately higher level of need among this population.

Ending Māori over-representation

A review of the Māori prison population over the past 60 years shows that changes that increased the prison population disproportionately impacted Māori, while changes which reduced levels of imprisonment had less impact for Māori. The number of Māori in prison has fallen over the last four years, down to 4,108 people in June 2022, representing less than 1 percent of adult Māori. However, over-representation has increased, with Māori representing 53 percent of men in prison and 67 percent of women in prison in 2022. This is the case despite changes in the age structure of the general Māori population and falls in the number of younger Māori entering the prison system.

The future use of custodial remand

The briefing shows remanding people in prison while waiting for a court hearing, trial or sentencing increased rapidly following changes to legislation and practice. It is predicted that the remand population will account for half the prison population within the next 10 years, while 50 percent of the women's prison population is already on custodial remand. The increasing length of time to progress through court means that people spend more time on custodial remand, which limits people's access to rehabilitation and reintegration services and can ultimately affect their release date. Remand can also impact people's employment and housing, as well as having an impact on social and family connections.

FOCUS QUESTIONS

Are there different ways of thinking about imprisonment that could contribute to ending the over-representation of Māori in the prison population?

How might the use of custodial remand change in the next 20 to 30 years?

The evolution of rehabilitation, reintegration and the role of the community

The briefing highlights the increased tailoring of rehabilitation programmes over the past 30 years to address the specific needs of Māori, Pacific peoples, women and younger people and the increased role of mātauranga Māori and Māori models of wellbeing in informing the design of programmes.

The strength of community, whānau and family to support rehabilitation and reintegration is critical for providing pathways to avoid entry into prison and to prevent returning to prison after release. Government agencies are increasingly recognising the role communities, iwi and hapū play in building local solutions for keeping people safe, preventing entry into prison and the justice system generally, and supporting rehabilitation and reintegration.

Public submissions

We want to hear from anyone with an interest in imprisonment in New Zealand. Participation in the survey is voluntary and anonymous. Your submission will only be used to inform the final draft of the Long-term Insights Briefing on imprisonment due to be presented to Parliament in November 2022. Submissions will be analysed together and names of individual submitters will not be identified in the briefing. Please do not name or identify other people – any answers with identifiable information or details about cases before the court cannot be used and will be deleted.

Your submission will become official information. This means justice sector agencies may be required to release all or part of the information in your submission in response to a request under the Official Information Act 1982. Justice sector agencies may, however, withhold all or parts of your submission if necessary to protect your privacy or if it has been supplied subject to a duty of confidence. Please tell us if you don't want all, or specific parts, of your submission released and the reasons why.

Contribute here: <https://consultations.justice.govt.nz>

FOCUS QUESTIONS

How might rehabilitation and reintegration programmes need to evolve to respond to the needs of an older prison population with more complex needs?

How can whānau, hapū, iwi and community best support people in the system to not reoffend and live more productive lives?

Thank you.

**Your contribution
will support a better
understanding of
how different choices
may shape the future
of imprisonment in
New Zealand.**

Ngā mihi.



Introduction

Long-term Insights Briefings are a new government initiative to encourage all New Zealanders to think about the future and what matters most for our long-term wellbeing.

They require the public service to develop and share insights on the trends, risks and opportunities that may affect Aotearoa New Zealand. These briefings are not government policy but are an opportunity to identify and explore issues that are important for our collective future.

A joint Justice Sector Long-term Insights Briefing is being prepared by Ara Poutama Aotearoa, the Ministry of Justice, the Serious Fraud Office, Crown Law and Oranga Tamariki working through the Justice Sector Leadership Board, together with [Ināia Tonu Nei](#), a name shared by a kaupapa, a hui, a report and a group of kaitiaki with a goal to reform the justice system.

This first Justice Sector Briefing examines long-term insights about imprisonment.

The main considerations are:

- **How has the prison population changed and why?**
- **What helps keep people away from prison?**
- **What are the future risks and opportunities?**

Imprisonment is a broad topic with many overlapping long-term issues. The economic and social costs of imprisonment, especially for Māori, made this topic an obvious choice for the first briefing.

This is an opportunity for some important new analysis of historic trends across the prison system. While other research has looked into specific areas of change at particular times, this briefing offers a chance for a number of agencies to come together to look systematically across the sector over a 60-year period and gain new insights to inform how we work together to create a better future.

Have your say

An initial public consultation on the topic for the briefing took place in late 2021. More than 1,500 New Zealanders took part. The full results are available on the Ministry of Justice website¹.

The initial public consultation involved a non-representative survey on the Ministry of Justice website for public review during November 2021. It received 176 responses.

A representative online public survey was also undertaken by an independent research company, which included a Māori booster sample. This representative random survey, conducted by Research New Zealand, took place from November to December 2021 and included 1,347 adults aged 18 and over, of whom 402 identified as Māori.

Over three-quarters of those surveyed stated they knew little or nothing about imprisonment in New Zealand, with 18 percent reporting knowing 'nothing at all'. Just a third of respondents felt imprisonment was currently used 'too little', a third felt current use was about right, 15 percent felt it was used 'too much' and the balance didn't know. When asked about the future, just under half felt prison should be used more and just over a third felt it should be used less or

not at all. Māori were more than twice as likely as non-Māori to think imprisonment was used too much. More than half of Māori suggested that prison should be used less or not at all in the future.

Compared with the public survey, people who answered the non-representative survey were much more likely to report having direct or indirect experience of the prison system. Respondents to the opt-in survey were far more likely to think that prison was used too much (88 percent) and more likely to feel that prison should be used less (53 percent) or not at all (40 percent) in the future.

We are now asking for further public feedback which will inform the final briefing to be presented to Parliament in November 2022.

This short consultation document summarises some of the top-level findings so far and asks some questions to prompt public discussion around these long-term issues. We want to know your views on how the prison system should look in future, so we can reflect community views in the final briefing.

¹[Justice Sector Long-Term Insights Briefing | New Zealand Ministry of Justice](#)



Key facts and insights

The first consultation phase highlighted that people can have strong opinions about imprisonment and who is in prison and why.

This briefing provides information and insights so that public debate can be based on strong evidence. It contains useful facts about the prison system that may not be widely known.

The number of people in prison has been falling since 2018

While the number of people in prison did rise rapidly from the mid-1980s to 2018, the total prison population has been falling for the last four years. Since reaching a historic high in March 2018 of more than 10,800, the prison population has fallen sharply. The number of people in prison on 30 June 2022 (7,700) was the lowest June figure since 2006. Recent falls have been due to a combination of changes in sentencing patterns, the management of bail and remand, as well as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The most recent prison projection predicts the prison population will continue to fall until 2024, reaching a

low of 7,200. From 2024 the population is expected to increase by 800 to reach 8,000 in 2031. People on custodial remand are predicted to become 50 percent of the total prison population, up from 40 percent currently. It is important to bear in mind that this projection is based on current trends and policy (including the impact of changes to legislation, policy and practice that have been formally approved) and represents only one possible future.

Fewer Māori are going to prison but Māori make up an increasing proportion of the prison population

The number of Māori in prison has been falling for the last four years, along with the general prison population. However, the Māori prison population has dropped at a lower rate, resulting in Māori making up a larger proportion of the prison population.

The number of Māori in prison on 30 June 2022 (4,108) represents 0.7 percent of adult Māori. It is the lowest June figure since 2008 and almost 1,200 lower than June 2018. However, Māori made up 54 percent of people in prison on 30 June 2022, rising from 51 percent on 30 June 2017.



THE NUMBER OF
PEOPLE IN PRISON
HAS BEEN FALLING

MORE THAN
10,800
IN MARCH 2018



DOWN TO
7,700
IN 30 JUNE 2022

Generally, changes that contributed to an increase in the prison population had a more negative impact on Māori, while changes that reduced imprisonment for less serious offending did not benefit Māori to the same degree as non-Māori.

The number of people remanded in custody has been falling since 2020

If people are “remanded in custody” they must wait for their trial or sentencing in prison. The number of people remanded in custody rose strongly from the year 2000 when there were 690 people on remand to reach a peak of more than 3,900 people in January 2020. The number fell to 3,104 on 30 June 2022; a similar level to June 2018 (3,200).

The number of Māori remanded in custody also rose strongly from the year 2000, when there were 350 Māori on remand, to a peak of more than 2,200 in January 2020. This number then fell to 1,793 at 30 June 2022, a similar level to June 2018 (1,808).

Fewer young people are in prison

The number of younger people in prison has been falling continuously since 1980. In that year, 64 percent of prisoners were under 25 years old; by June 2022 this had fallen to 10 percent. During the same time, the proportion of prisoners under 20 years old fell from 29 percent to just 1.2 percent.

There was a larger change for Māori. In 1980, 73 percent of Māori prisoners were aged under 25 years old; by June 2022, this had fallen to 12 percent. During the same time, the proportion of Māori prisoners under 20 years old fell from 38 percent to 1.6 percent.

Most people in prison have committed serious offences

Although crime rates have been falling, mostly this has involved less serious crime that rarely results in imprisonment. On the other hand, convictions for the most serious offences – serious violence and sexual offending and, more recently, dealing in methamphetamine – have increased.

The rise in the prison population was compounded by law changes prompted by public concern, which resulted in longer stays in prison for people convicted of the most serious offences.

Most people serving sentences in prison have been convicted of serious sexual or violent offending. New Zealand prisons are not full of people on minor charges. For example, the idea that people are routinely sent to prison for cannabis possession is untrue – people are rarely imprisoned for that. Most of the time no one is in prison solely for cannabis possession or use. Even cannabis dealing only makes a small contribution to the prison population; on 30 June 2022 there were only 48 people serving sentences for dealing cannabis – 10 fewer than in 1980. Most people in prison are there for serious crimes.

IN 1980
64% of prisoners were
under 25 years old;

by **JUNE 2022**
this had fallen to

10%



**MĀORI PRISONERS UNDER
20 YEARS OLD FELL**

38% to 1.6%

from 1980 to 2022

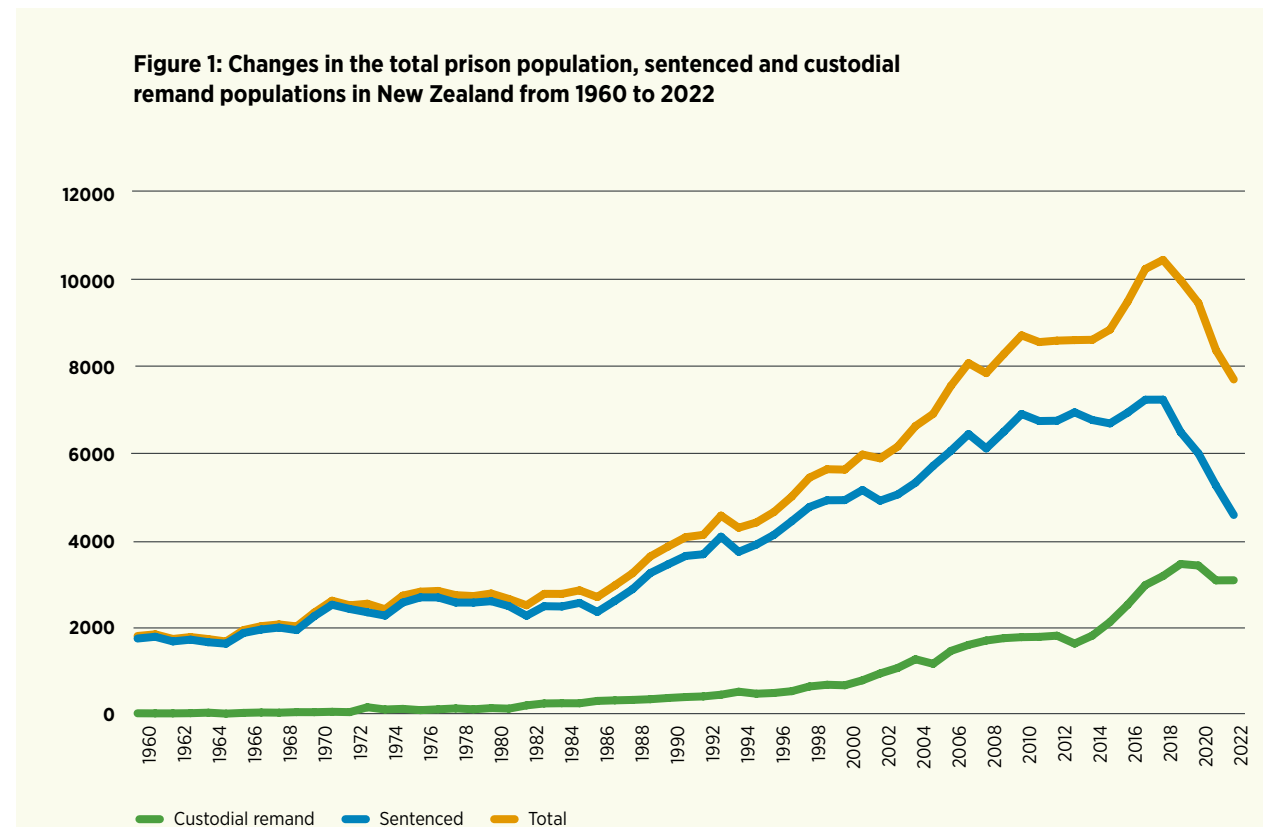


How did the prison population change from 1960 to 2022?

As shown in Figure 1, prisoner numbers remained relatively stable throughout the 1970s and early 1980s, followed by a rapid rise from the mid-1980s. After reaching a historic high in March 2018, the number of people in prison has since fallen sharply.

The patterns of change were different for people convicted and sentenced to imprisonment and people remanded in custody.

There are currently significantly fewer people in prisons designed to hold a much larger population. Significant changes to the number of people in prison creates challenges and opportunities.



The mix of people going to prison and the type of offending taking them there has changed over time.

SOME OF THE MAIN TRENDS ARE:

There are **fewer young people** in prison now compared to

1980

The prison population is aging

The proportion of people in prison identified as **Māori** has **grown**

The proportion of people in prison identified as **Pacific** has **grown**

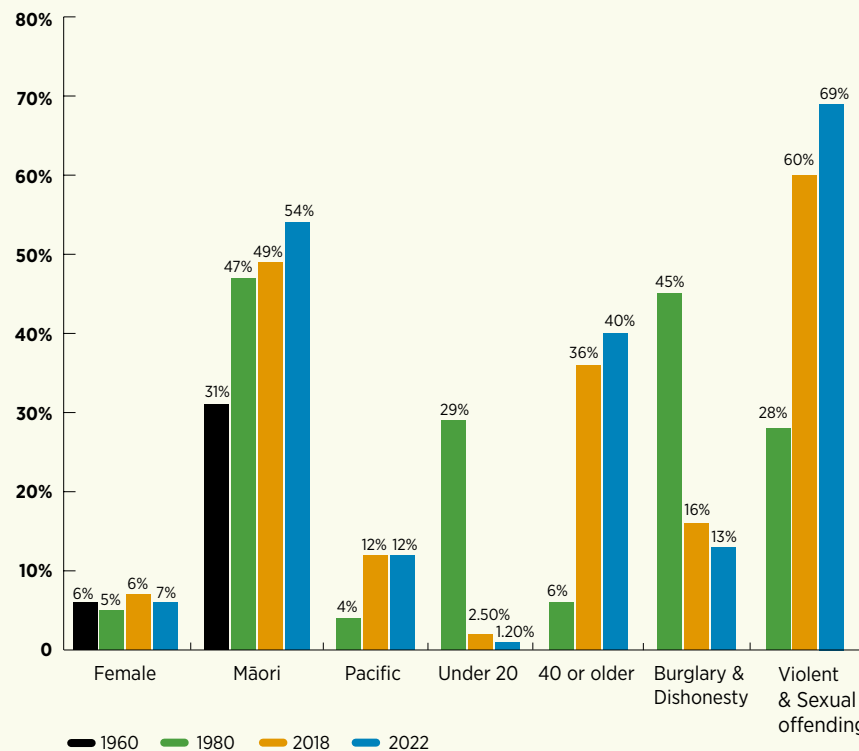
The proportion of **women in prison** has fluctuated around

6%

More people in prison are now there for **violent or sexual offending**

Less people are in prison for **burglary and dishonesty offending**

Figure 2: Proportion of the prison population for selected demographic measures and key offence types at significant points of change to the prison population





What caused the changes?

The causes of crime are complicated, and there is no single or simple explanation. The prison system is the end point of a long chain of social and economic factors, and justice processes.

A wide range of influences have interacted to bring about changes to the prison population.

Some key factors include changes in:

- **social factors (for example, education, health, employment etc)**
- **population**
- **social and political attitudes to behaviours (such as sexual violence and violence)**
- **law and policy**
- **police numbers and practices**
- **conviction rates**
- **sentencing practices**
- **prison release practices.**

These factors are affected by the impacts of colonisation on Māori and by direct, indirect, and systemic racism. This has been identified by a range of researchers and experts in the field such as Moana Jackson, Tracey McIntosh, Kim Workman, Khylee Quince, among others; and in the Turuki! Turuki! report of the Te Uepū Hāpai i Te Ora Safe and Effective Justice Advisory Group.

The long-term rise in the number of people in prison was mainly due to more convictions for serious violent and sexual offending, and changes in the sentencing and release of people convicted of these offences. A rise in convictions for dealing in methamphetamine has contributed to the prison population growth since 2003. Successive governments have seen policy changes that increased imprisonment as a way to ensure public safety. The introduction of the new parole approach in 2002 for people serving longer sentences also substantially lengthened the time people spent in prison.

More recent falls have been influenced by changes in sentencing patterns, the management of bail and remand, as well as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Imprisonment rates

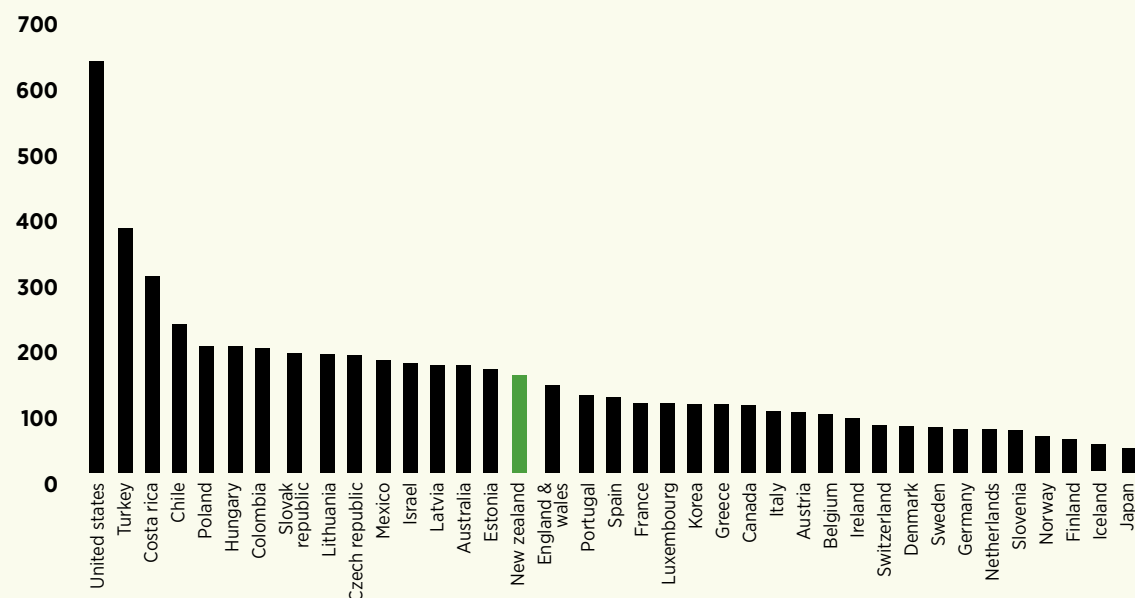
New Zealand's imprisonment rate has traditionally been high compared to similar jurisdictions and much higher than many European countries.

Imprisonment rates are usually calculated as the number of people in prison per 100,000 people in the population. It is a crude measure because it does not recognise some important differences when comparing with other countries.

For instance, there are differences between jurisdictions in the age threshold at which people can be sentenced to imprisonment. The age structure of populations can vary between countries; those countries with the oldest populations will, all other things being equal, have lower rates. Not all jurisdictions report at the same point in the year, and prison populations can be seasonal with highs and lows during the year. New Zealand has tended to have a lower population heading into Christmas and a higher one during the first quarter of the calendar year.

There are other factors around the nature of offending and the likelihood of arrest that can generate differences between jurisdictions that limit the validity of comparisons.

Figure 3: Imprisonment rates per 100,000 people for OECD member states at 30 June 2022



The graph on the previous page shows comparisons taken from the World Prison Brief compiled at Birkbeck University of London. It compares New Zealand to other OECD countries using the most recently available rates.

New Zealand had the 8th highest imprisonment rate in the OECD in 2018; in 2022 it has the 16th highest rate. Figure 3 shows the position of New Zealand in June 2022 against other OECD countries².

The gap between the New Zealand rate and those countries with lower rates in 2018 has narrowed in the last four years. For most of the last 10 years New Zealand has had higher rates than the two jurisdictions we intuitively compare ourselves to: Australia and England & Wales. In 2018 New Zealand's rate (214) was higher than Australia (172) and much higher than England & Wales (140); by 2022 New Zealand's rate (149) was lower than Australia (165) and much closer to England & Wales (134).

²Note for some countries the rates are from 2021.



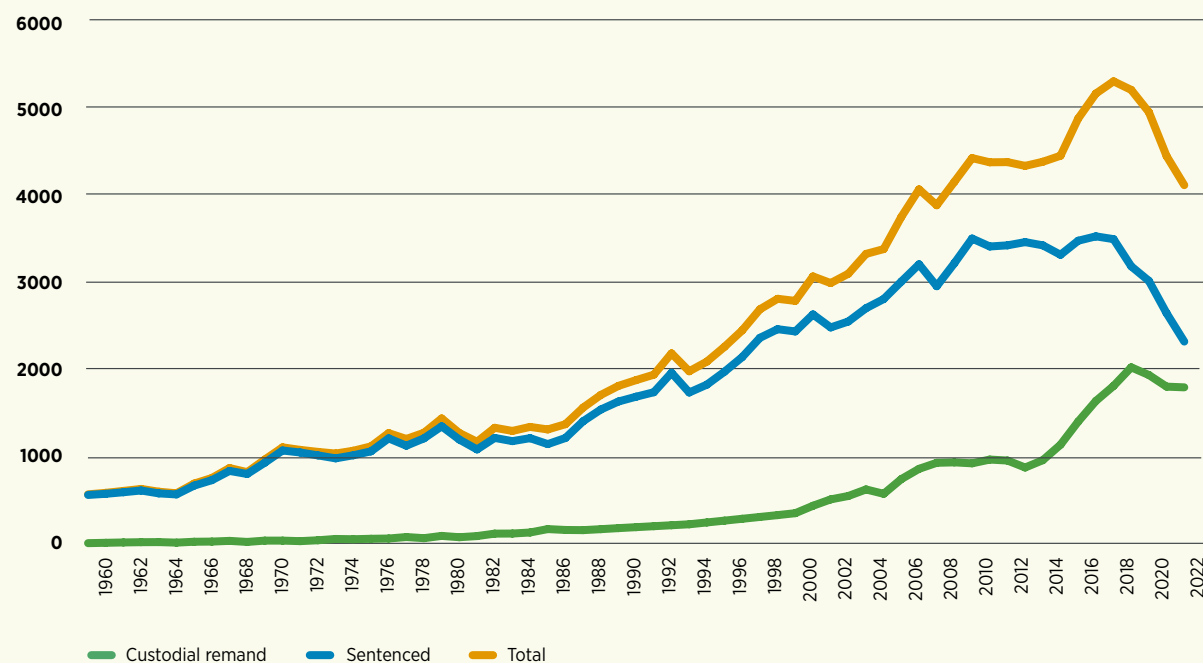
What happened to the Māori prison population?

At the beginning of the 20th century Māori were about 5 percent of the general population and accounted for 2 percent of prison admissions.

By the 1930s, the level of Māori imprisonment had trebled. Across this time, a shift toward reformatory penal approaches, which emphasised the importance of personal circumstances and moral correction, led to more government intervention in the lives of young people, which disproportionately impacted young Māori men.

While the total prison population grew gradually during the 1960s and 1970s, the number of Māori in prison grew much more rapidly. Between 1960 and 1979, Māori men accounted for most of the total increase in imprisonment. The Māori male prison population rose by 135 percent (from 515 to 1,208) between 1960 and 1979, compared to a 19 percent increase in the non-Māori prison population (from 1,190 to 1,416).

Figure 4: Māori prison population 1960 to 2022



Māori over-representation in prison began to develop before 1960 – and by 1960 the level was already significant with Māori making up 30 percent of the prison population. By 1980 the proportion had grown to 45 percent. The proportion has been consistently at or above 50 percent since 1999, only dipping below twice. Changes to policies and practices made since 1980 have not altered levels of Māori over-representation.

The number of Māori in prison is now falling, having dropped 22 percent from 5,295 to 4,108 between June 2018 and June 2022. Despite this, Māori make up an increasing proportion of the prison population – rising from 51 percent of people in prison in 2017 to 54 percent of people in prison at June 2022. While Māori imprisonment has dropped alongside the non-Māori prison population, it has not done so to the same degree, with greater reductions seen in non-Māori imprisonment. This is why the *proportion* of Māori in prison has risen, while the *number* of Māori in prison has fallen.

Figures like these can create the impression that a large proportion of Māori are in prison. However, on 30 June 2022 1.4 percent of adult Māori men were in prison and just 0.1 percent of Māori women were in prison, these proportions have been reducing for the last 10 years.

A complex range of factors affect imprisonment rates, including a larger proportion of Māori in lower socio-economic groups and higher rates of Māori unemployment. It has become increasingly well documented that the ongoing impacts of colonisation and systemic racism on Māori have been significant contributing factors.

Māori born after 1990 have had less involvement in the criminal justice system and, accordingly, have experienced much lower rates of imprisonment.

The younger age structure of the Māori population also played an important part. For example, the time when Māori imprisonment grew coincided with the time when the Māori population had very high proportions of people in the age groups most vulnerable to imprisonment.

Comparing different groups of people born at particular times shows that certain birth cohorts were more affected by imprisonment than others. For example, analysis shows that Māori boys who were born in the 1950s to 1970s went on to experience higher levels of imprisonment before age 20 than those born in the 1980s and much higher than those born after 1990. The generations of Māori born in the 1950s to 1970s also experienced the greatest level of state care.

Māori born after 1990 have had less involvement in the criminal justice system and, accordingly, have experienced much lower rates of imprisonment.



Pacific peoples in prison

From fewer than 100 in 1980 the number of Pacific people in prison grew to just over 1,200, before falling for the last four years.

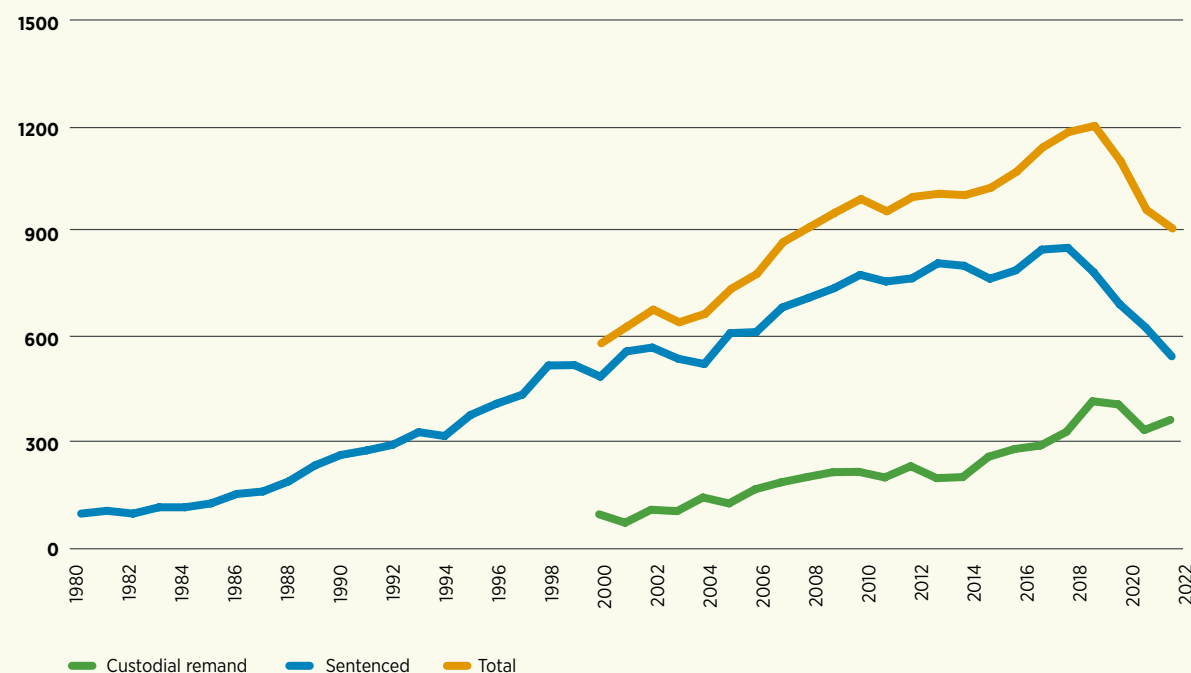
The number of Pacific people in prison on 30 June 2022 (904) is the lowest June figure since 2007, almost 300 lower than June 2018. However, the number of Pacific people in prison has dropped at a slightly lower rate than the general population. This means that Pacific peoples make up a larger proportion of the prison population.

The effects have been different for Pacific men than women. Pacific men now make up 12.4 percent of the male prison population, up slightly from 12.1 percent in 2018. The proportion of Pacific women in the women's prison population has fallen from 5.9 percent in 2018 to 4.5 percent on 30 June 2022.

Generally, changes that contributed to an increase in the prison population had a more negative impact for Pacific men, while recent changes reducing imprisonment for less serious offending has not benefitted Pacific men to the same degree. The younger age structure of the Pacific male population played a part in the high rate of growth from 1980 to 2018.

In June 2022, of those prisoners who identified as Pacific people, 39 percent identified as Samoan, 23 percent as Cook Island Māori, 23 percent as Tongan, 5 percent as Niuean, 5 percent as Fijian, with the remaining 5 percent spread across other Pacific groups. This composition does not vary greatly from the distribution of Pacific peoples in the general population.

Figure 5: Pacific people's prison population 1980 to 2022





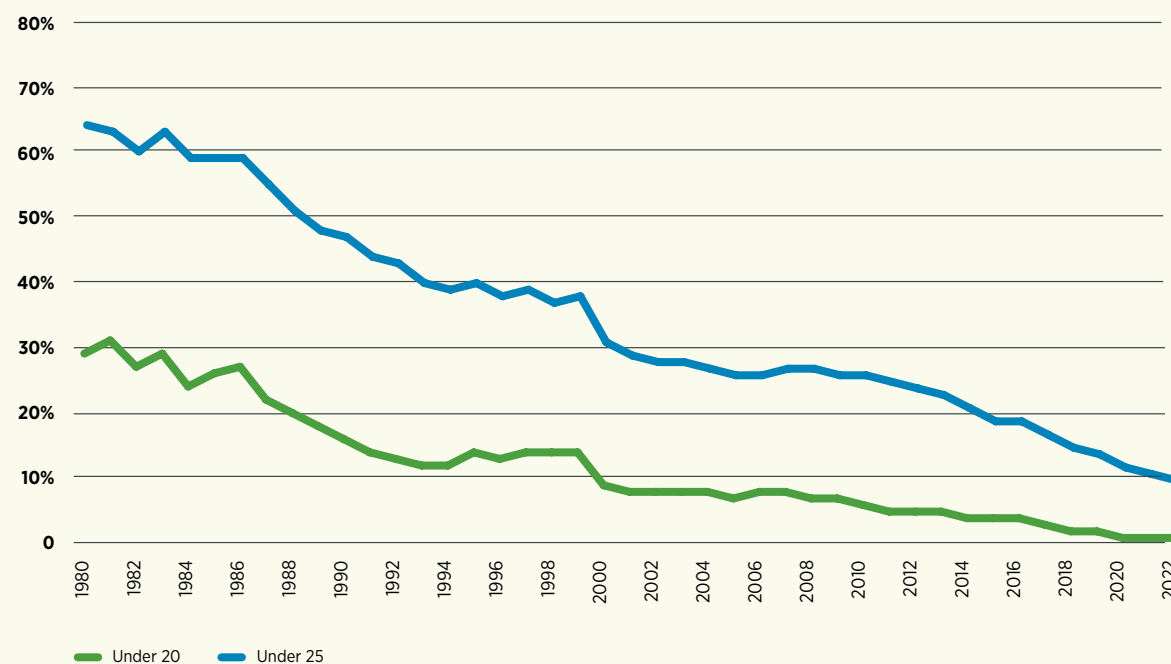
Fewer young people going to prison

The drop in the number of young people in prison is one of the most significant and continuous changes seen over the last 40 years.

In 1980, 29 percent of the prison population was under 20 years-old, however, by 2022 it was only 1.2 percent. The pattern is similar for Māori. In 1980, 38 percent of Māori in prison were under 20 years-old; by 2022, just 1.6 percent were. The reduction is a consequence of a number of factors including the closure of borstals, a desire to keep young people out of prison, greater use of non-custodial sentences as well as changes in the age structure of the general population.

More recently there has been a transformation in the likelihood of young adults being imprisoned. Young people born since 1990 have been progressively less likely to be imprisoned in the first five years of adulthood. It is not because they are receiving alternative sentences; there has been a significant drop in the number of young people receiving fines and community-based sentences, as well as prison sentences.

Figure 6: Proportion of people aged under 20 and under 25 in the total prison population 1980 to 2022

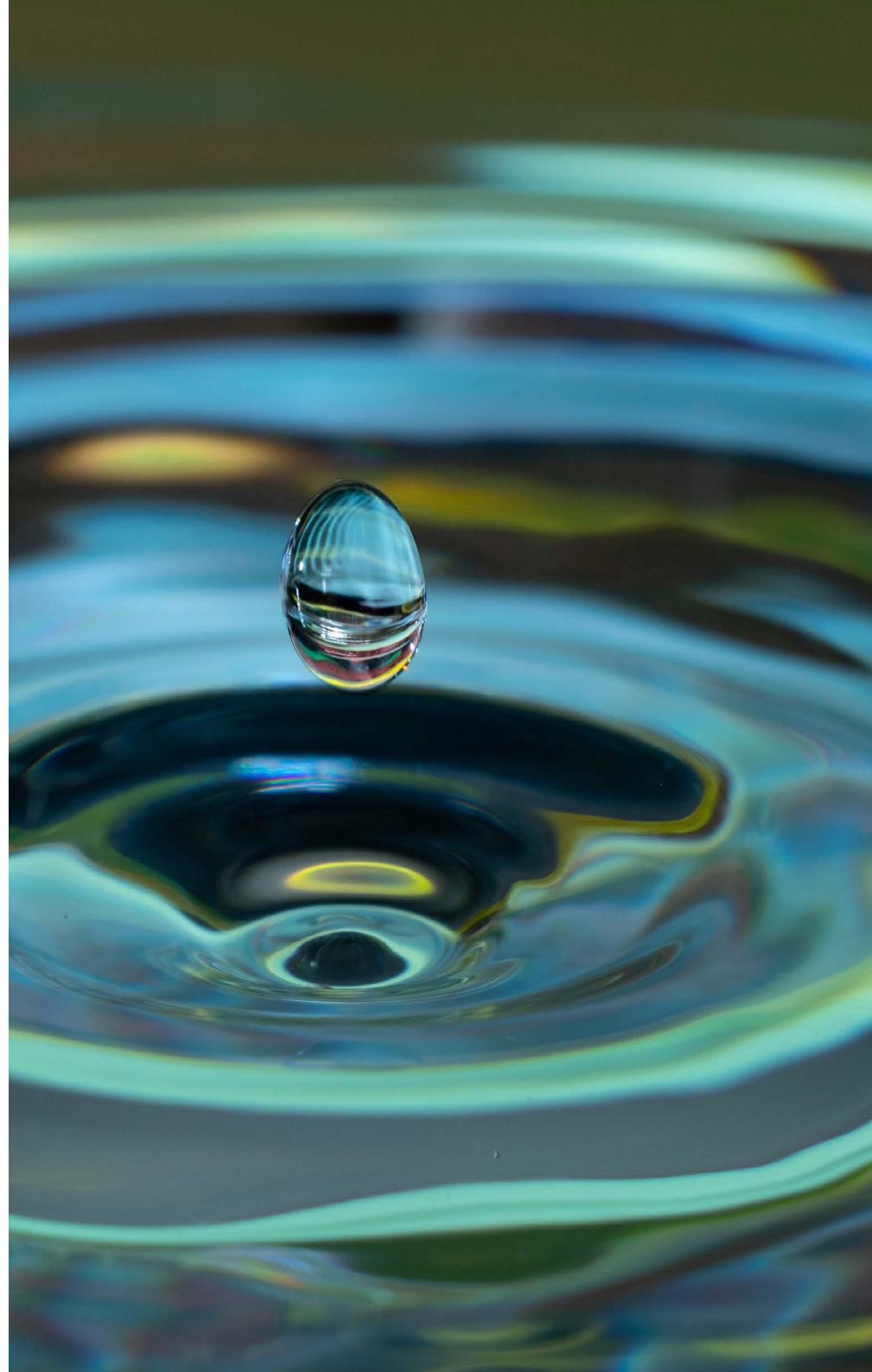


Young people are not simply being diverted away at earlier stages of the system: they are not entering the criminal justice system to anywhere near the extent they once did. Fewer young people are being arrested, charged, and prosecuted by the police. This is a global trend: youth crime has fallen across the world in recent decades.

Reasons for the drop in youth crime are complex. They include: fewer opportunities for offending due to improvements in security, new leisure activities, changes in styles of parenting and better support for young people.

Analysis of Statistics New Zealand's Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI) reveals that successive age groups are achieving better outcomes. Looking at outcomes for different groups of 17 year-olds between 2013 and 2019 shows that, over time, young people were more likely to leave school with a qualification and to have accessed mental health services, and less likely to have been suspended from school, or to have been on an income benefit.

Historical evidence shows that government spending on education and other services for young people increased significantly through the 1990s. Young Māori born in the 1990s are also likely to have benefitted from the Māori Renaissance, a movement which began much earlier and saw the creation of more opportunities and support for young Māori, for example, the expansion of Kōhanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa.





The prison population is aging

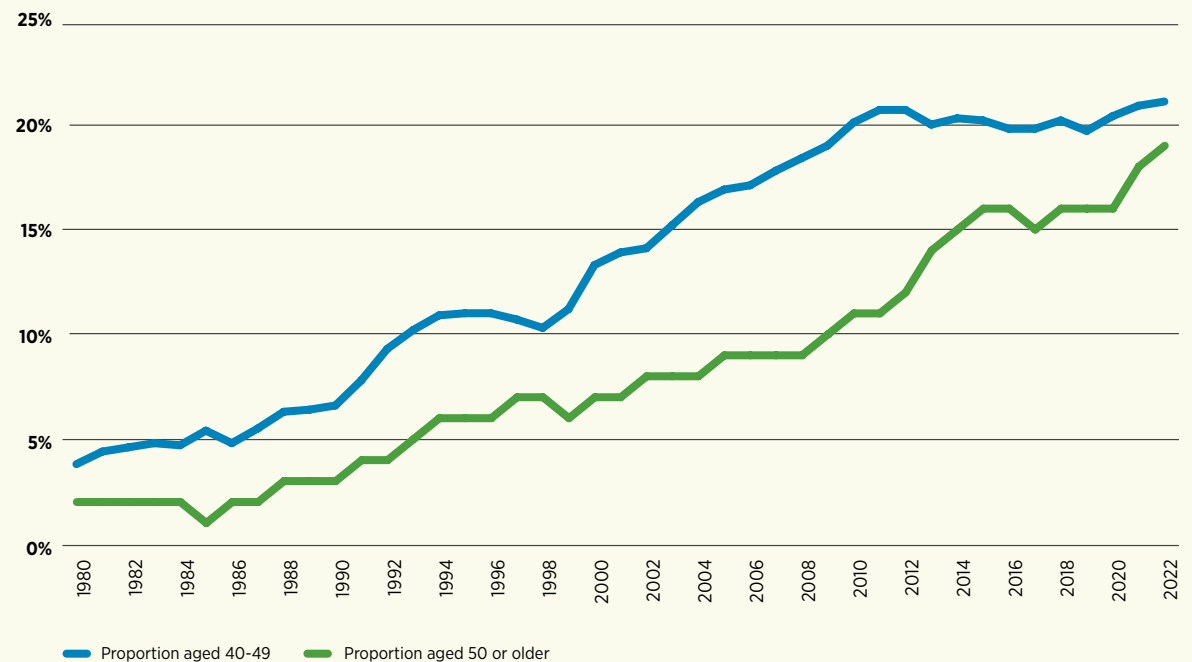
As fewer young people arrive in prison and leave sooner, the remaining prison population has an increasingly older age profile.

Those born in earlier generations are remaining in the system longer. The average age of the prison population in New Zealand has risen from 25 in 1980 to 38 in 2022.

It is worth noting that those cohorts who experienced the highest levels of state care, including in residential institutions, also experienced the highest imprisonment rates.

These cohorts are also those who have experienced the longest criminal careers and form a large part of today's aging prison population. This is not to suggest that experiencing state care led directly to imprisonment. Other factors are likely to have been at play. It is also important to note that most of those who experienced state care did not go on to experience imprisonment.

Figure 7: The proportion of people in the prison population aged 40-49 and 50 or older 1980 to 2022





Women in prison

Women make up a very small proportion of people in prison and have never represented more than 7 percent of the total prison population in New Zealand.

The women's prison population has followed similar trends to the men's prison population. From 1960 to 1980 there was very little change in the number of women in prison and, as the general women's population rose by 54 percent over that time, this represented a net decrease in the imprisonment rate. There were almost no women on remand.

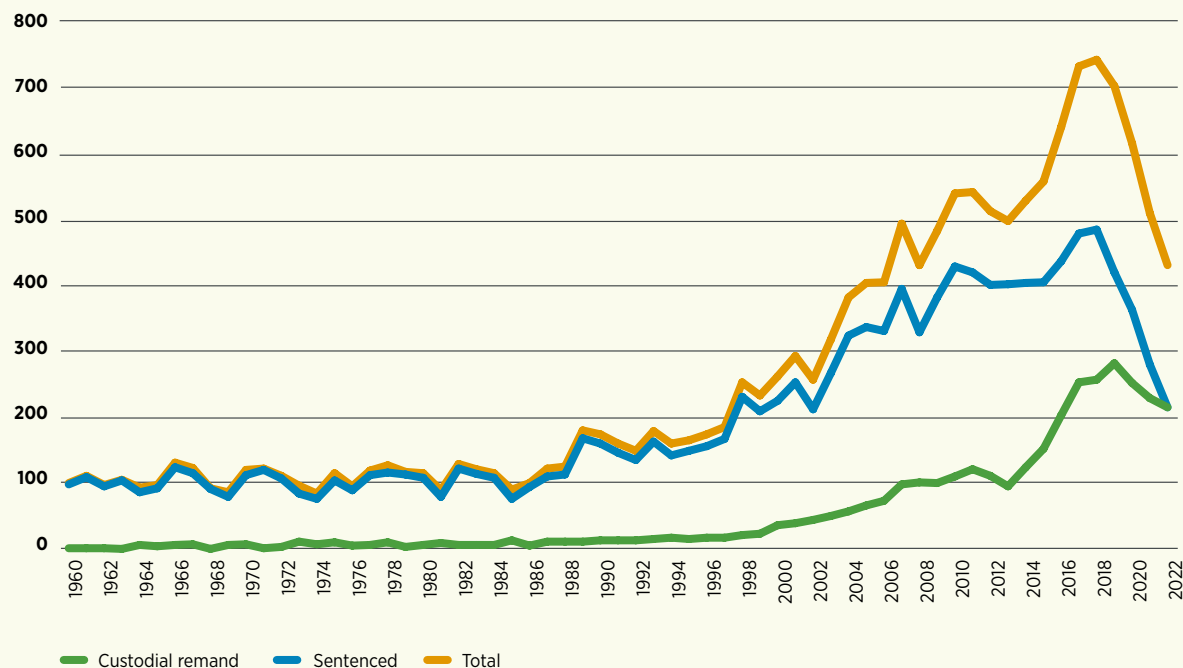
Numbers remained low and relatively constant until the late 1980s, when a period of sustained growth began. The number of women in prison more than doubled between 1980 and 2000: a faster rate than the 24 percent rise in the number of adult women in New Zealand.

The number of Māori women in prison began to rise from 1986, reaching 100 for the first time in 1997. Māori women made up between 55 and 60 percent of the women in prison from 1997 to 2020. In 2022 the proportion reached 67 percent. Again, it is important not to think this means a high proportion of Māori women are in prison, 0.1 percent of adult Māori women were in prison in June 2022.

The total number of women in prison peaked at 809 in January 2018. Since then, numbers have fallen sharply, dropping 46 percent to 433 women in New Zealand prisons on 30 June 2022.

The remand population is a significant part of the women's prison population. In June 2022, 50 percent of women in prison were on remand – a far greater proportion than the men's population. Māori women represented a significant proportion of those on remand: about 72 percent at 30 June 2022.

Figure 8: Women's prison population 1960 to 2022





People remanded in custody

While waiting for a trial or sentencing, people can either stay out of prison – remanded at large or remanded on bail, with associated conditions imposed on them – or they can be remanded in custody.

Any time someone is remanded in custody before conviction is a cause for concern. The presumption of innocence demands that there be good reason for remanding someone in custody. Remand in custody may be made when there is a risk the defendant will offend on bail, will not appear in court or may otherwise attempt to interfere with the process by intimidating a witness.

About 40 percent of people in prison are there on remand. This counts as time served against any sentence of imprisonment.

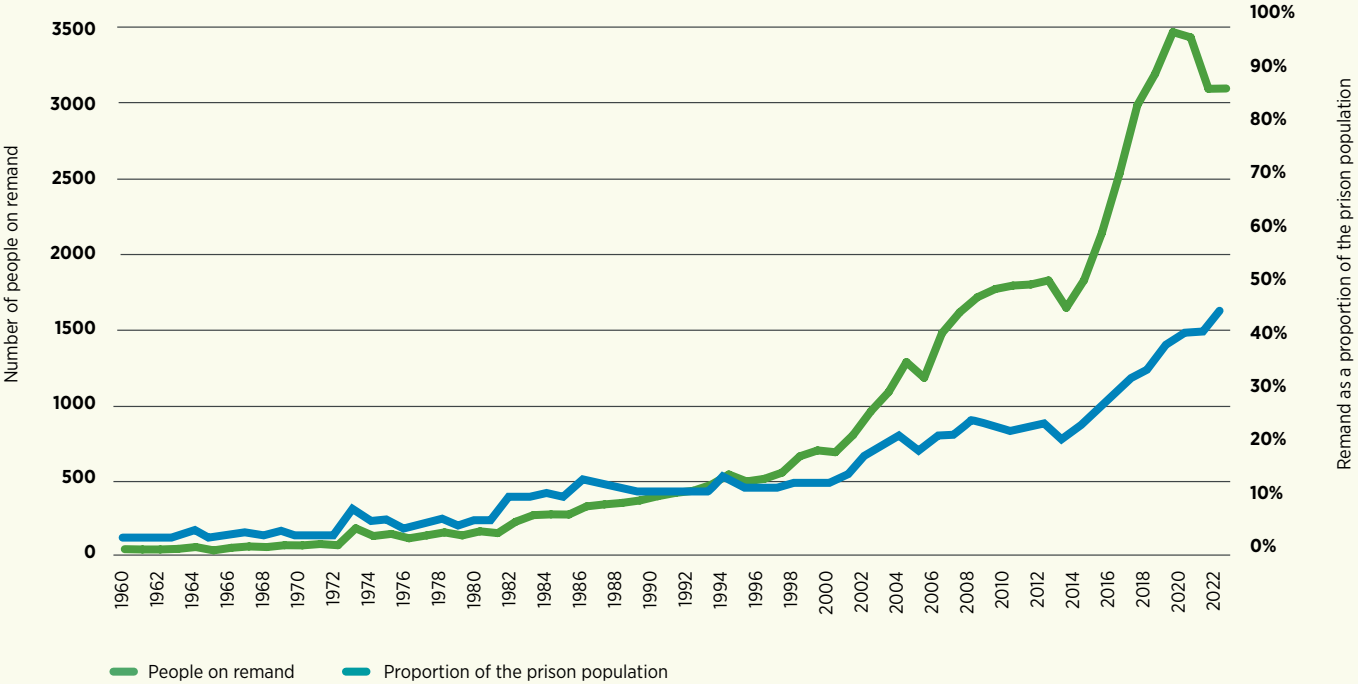
Concerns have been raised about the number of people remanded in custody while waiting for the resolution of charges against them. Growth in numbers on remand accelerated between June 2014 and June 2020, rising from 21 percent of the prison population to 36 percent. The population peaked at more than 3,900 in January 2020.

The remand population began to drop from March 2020. Despite falling by about 800 people, the remand population as a proportion of the total prison population has risen to 40 percent. This is because the sentenced population has fallen at a faster rate than the remand population.

More time spent on remand reduces the time available for people to undertake rehabilitation programmes once sentenced. Not completing treatment can, in turn, make early release on parole less likely.

The rise in numbers of people remanded in custody was partly due to more serious offending and more people appearing before court. The rise is often attributed to the Bail Act amendments in 2013, but there are other important reasons. For example, new technology has allowed for better recording and retrieval of information by Police, there has been more consistent application of law changes on offending while on bail introduced in 2000, and there has been better enforcement of bail conditions. Less tolerance for family violence and slower court processes also contributed to the increase.

Figure 9: Number and proportion of the prison population on remand 1960 to 2022





Violent and sexual offending

The reasons behind the rise in the number of people in prison are complicated. Punitive responses to crime are a part of this story. These responses were also a reflection of changing social attitudes to violence against women and children.

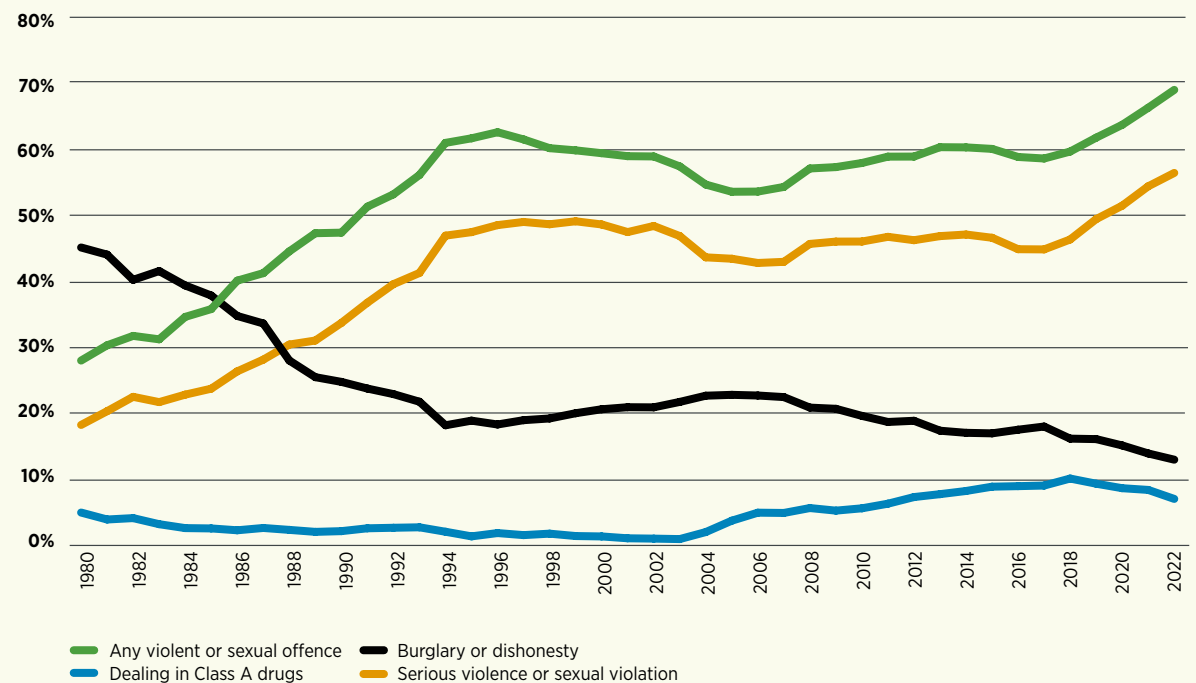
Most of the growth in the prison population is due to more people being convicted of serious violent and sexual offending and longer sentences being imposed. Our changing social and policy responses to these issues have had clear implications for prison numbers.

As shown in Figure 10, the types of offences leading to imprisonment changed substantially between 1980 and 1995. From less than a third of the prison population in 1980, violent and sexual offences quickly reached 60 percent of the population. Almost all of the increase was in serious violent offending and sexual violation. Meanwhile, the increase in dealing in Class A drugs in the 2000s reflects the introduction of methamphetamine into New Zealand on a widespread basis during that decade.

In 1980, one in seven prisoners was facing a charge or serving a sentence for serious violence; in 2022 this was one in three. About 45 percent of the increase in the prison population between 1980 and 2022 was due to serious violent offending.

In 1980, one in 25 prisoners was facing a charge or serving a sentence for sexual violation; in 2018 it was one in five. About 26 percent of the increase in the prison population between 1980 and 2022 was due to sexual violation offending.

Figure 10: The proportion of the total prison population for select offence groups 1980 to 2022





Rehabilitation services

Since the turn of the 20th century successive governments have seen rehabilitation or reform as being a key purpose of imprisonment.

Rehabilitation has changed dramatically over time. In the first part of last century 'reform' was closely tied to prison labour, with hard work believed to reshape character. The mainstay of rehabilitation, group treatment programmes, were a relatively recent invention, with the first group programmes introduced into New Zealand prisons in the 1980s.

From the 1970s onwards there was growing scepticism about the practice of psychology in prisons following several high profile international studies which concluded mistakenly that correctional rehabilitation wasn't working. This led to a group of Canadian researchers exploring what distinguished effective from ineffective treatment. They developed the 'Risk-Needs-Responsivity' model.

This has evolved over time to include principles of effective intervention, which continue to underpin the design and delivery of treatment programmes in New Zealand and most other jurisdictions.

There is now good evidence that prison rehabilitation programmes that adhere to these principles can reduce reoffending. The programmes that lead to the greatest reductions in reoffending are those that target people at a higher risk of reoffending, focus on addressing factors associated with offending, are based on social learning and cognitive behavioural approaches, and are tailored to the needs of the person.

Prison programmes delivered in a way that separates a group of prisoners from the mainstream prison – creating a form of “therapeutic community” – tend to achieve the best results. There are a number of different therapeutic community models run inside prisons in New

Zealand, including special treatment units for people convicted of violent and sexual offences. There are also Te Tirohanga units which are therapeutic communities specifically designed to meet the needs of Māori, and which incorporate mātauranga Māori, local tikanga, and involve local kaumātua and kuia.

Today mātauranga Māori and Māori models of wellbeing inform most of Corrections' rehabilitation programmes. Since the 1990s, specific rehabilitation programmes for Māori, Pacific peoples, women and younger people have been introduced.

Correctional rehabilitation programmes often have a modest impact on reoffending rates – effective programmes typically achieve a 5 to 10 percentage point reduction in reoffending. Some evidence, both

internationally and in New Zealand, indicates that effectiveness has waned slightly in recent years. Research about how people stop offending shows that most people do not stop offending straight away, rather people typically stop offending gradually. It is also the case that an absence of reoffending does not necessarily mean that a person has been successfully reintegrated into the community. Conversely, improvements in people's wellbeing do not necessarily translate to reductions in reoffending. This raises an important question about what should be the primary goal of Correctional rehabilitation: is the aim merely to stop reoffending in the short-term, or should rehabilitation also be focused on longer term goals such as improving people's wellbeing to support more fulfilling and productive lives?





Reintegration services

There has long been a recognition that the community plays an important part in supporting people leaving prison.

In the 1960s reintegration services were primarily delivered by non-government organisations and volunteers, who provided accommodation and other practical supports. Local kaumātua and kuia also provided a wide range of support to Māori in prison and their whānau throughout this time. Until more recently, this work was not typically funded by central government.

Significant investment during the last 10 years has boosted reintegration services. For example, a throughcare service for people leaving prison after short sentences was introduced in 2013. The “Out of Gate” service is delivered by community-based providers. From 2014 on, several tailored employment services have been developed to help people find jobs after leaving prison. Supported accommodation services have also expanded significantly, in recognition of the housing barriers faced by people released from prison.

Several new reintegration services have been introduced into custodial remand settings. These programmes recognise that people remanded in custody have different reintegration needs, as people try to keep jobs and housing while uncertain of how long they’re going to stay in prison.

Evidence is mixed on the impact of reintegration programmes on reoffending. Both international and New Zealand research has shown that employment services can help to reduce reoffending, especially when accompanied by other supports. Evidence on the impact of throughcare services has been more mixed. In New Zealand, reoffending rates for people who have experienced throughcare services have fluctuated from year to year. Supported accommodation has again delivered mixed results, although more recent international studies suggest it can successfully reduce reimprisonment when used as an alternative for the last stages of prison sentences. More New Zealand research is needed into the most effective models of supported accommodation.

Thank you for taking the time to read this paper.

The top-level findings summarised here are informing the development of the justice sector Long-term Insights Briefing, which will be tabled in Parliament in November 2022.

It will be a better briefing for drawing on diverse views and experiences, so please let us know what you think about the future of imprisonment in New Zealand.

Contribute here: <https://consultations.justice.govt.nz/>



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