Resettlement research and practices.
An international perspective.

Lect. Dr. Ioan Durnescu
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Executive summary

This report provides a comprehensive account of resettlement practices and research around the world. The main focus is around the questions: what are the initiatives that have been found effective by research and how are they implemented into real life settings.

An adapted version of the framework provided by Taxman (2004) is instrumental in structuring the presentation. Therefore, research findings and practices are divided into three different stages: institutional stage, pre-release stage and the post-custody stage.

A summary of the existing theoretical models available is also provided. In this part, Risk-Needs-Responsivity model and the Desistance paradigm receive a more extended account since they are the dominant ones and are already considered effective by the empirical studies. A few messages are important to retrieve from this section. First, it is essential that prisoners are treated fair and just and the quality of the professional relationship is carefully observed. Second, programs based on cognitive restructuring, motivating offenders and developing human and social capital seem to be the most effective in triggering and supporting change.

As for the institutional stage a number of ideas stood up as important learning points: programs should start as soon as possible after the sentence and are organized from the release perspective, programs should be designed and delivered by motivated and professional staff that strongly believe in change, programs such as vocational training, education, drug rehabilitation and therapeutic - community are acknowledged in systematic reviews as effective in preventing reoffending.

At the pre-release stage concepts such as continuity, coherence and consistency are important for describing effective programs. Two programs – FOR...A Change and Reducing the Risk of Reoffending – seem to incorporate these concepts and produced promising results. Programs dealing with transition from inside to the outside world and also with employment produced also useful conclusions.

In the post-release stage it is important to continue the programs started inside the prison and overcome the reintegration barriers while supporting hope and motivation within released people. Issues like employment, stigma, financial aid, community and family are discussed in some depth.

Some of the conclusions refer to the fact that research already produced some important hard data that can be used in real life settings. More has to be done to promote prison and probation organisations to become true learning organisation. Research on penology issues should employ more sensitive and credible methodologies such as quasi-experimental or experimental designs. In the same time qualitative insights should be pursued in order to understand better what, with whom and in what context change is possible.

In the final part of the report the author suggests an European project structured in three directions: develop a trans-theoretical model for resettlement, pilot the model and evaluate it.

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Introduction

The European Organisation for Probation (CEP) commissioned this report. In the terms of references it was noted that the report will include:
- To map resettlement best practices in Europe;
- To identify what the known key factors for successful resettlement are
- To outline pilots to improve resettlement practice which could realistically be included in a EU-funded project

Therefore the paper aims at providing a critical overview of resettlement research and practices as they are developed and implemented internationally. The presentation mode is a blended one: first the what works information is presented as derived from the research and then second practices and initiatives based on these what works ideas are introduced. This approach was chosen *a priori* in order to capture also the dynamic between research and practice. This decision was made considering that sometimes in the process of 'technological transfer' from research to practice, knowledge suffers many distortions or fragmentations (Andrews and Bonta, 2006; Bourgon et al., 2010; Raynor et al., 2010). Thus this paper will strive also to identify the limits (Lewis, Maguire, Raynor, & Vanstone, 2007) of technology transfer into real life settings. For the sake of clarity the most important studies that reflect what works in resettlement are summarized at the end in the Annex. The final part of the paper will synthesize what is the state of art in the resettlement field and suggest new ways for advancing knowledge and practices for a safe return of prisoners into the open society.

The term resettlement is used in this paper as 'the process of reintegration back into the community in a positive and managed way' (Mead, 2007: 268) after serving a prison sentence. The term is more morally neutral comparing to the old terminology such as aftercare or throughcare (in England and Wales) that imply that ex-offenders are in need of care. Furthermore the term covers all programs or interventions run inside or outside prison that aim at overcoming the obstacles or assisting the ex-prisoner in the reintegration process. In this sense the term resettlement is close to the American concept of reentry as it was defined by Petersilia (2003): all activities that cover how prisoners spend their time during confinement, the process of release and their supervision after release.

In order to identify the relevant literature on this topic several search methods had been used:
- Desktop research – conference papers, governmental reports, journals (such as Crime and Delinquency, Federal Probation, Probation Journal, European Journal of Probation and so on)
- Electronic search – in electronic databases such as: Social Sciences Citation Index, ProQuest, JSTOR, Google Scholar and Wiley InterScience. Keywords like resettlement, reentry, aftercare, throughcare, probation and parole were used alone or in different combinations.

- Networking – relevant experts and professional networks were consulted for relevant studies or programs.

For structuring the paper, an adapted version of the Taxman (2004) Five – Step Offender Active Participant Model will be used. For the sake of simplifying and focusing the paper solely on resettlement and not on crime in general the Five Step Model will be adapted into a Three Step Model: Institutional Treatment, Pre-release stage and the Post-release stage. Before going into details presenting what works in each stage a short presentation will be made on the existing theoretical models of resettlement.

Theoretical models

From the current research it can be safely claimed that interventions based on the **_Risk/Needs/Responsivity_** principles (RNR) can reduce reoffending. A number of meta-analyses (Cleland et al., 1996; Dowden and Bonta, 2000) demonstrated that interventions based on all these principles are associated with reductions in recidivism between 26-30 % (Dowden and Andrews, 2004).

Based on the work of Gendreau and Ross (1979) and also on the Andrews et al. (1998) meta-analysis, Petersilia (2004) summarizes the effectiveness principles as follows:
- 'Treatment services should be behavioral in nature, interventions should employ the cognitive behavioral and social learning techniques of modeling, role playing, reinforcement, extinction, resource provision, verbal suggestions, and cognitive restructuring;
- Reinforcements in the program should be largely positive not negative;
- Services should be intensive, lasting 3 to 12 months (depending on need) and occupying 40 to 70 percent of the offender's time during the course of the program;
- Treatment interventions should be used primarily with higher-risk offenders, targeting their criminogenic needs (dynamic risk factors for change). Less hardened or lower risk offenders do not require intervention and may be made more criminogenic by intrusive interventions;
- The most effective strategy for discerning offender risk level is to rely not on clinical judgments but on actuarial based assessments instruments, such as the Level of Supervision Inventory;
- Undertaking intervention in the community as opposed to an institutional setting will increase treatment effectiveness;
- In terms of staffing, there is a need to match styles and modes of treatment service to the learning styles of the offender (specific responsivity). Depending on the offender's characteristics (e.g., intelligence, levels of anxiety) he or she may have different learning styles and thus respond more readily to some techniques than others.'

As Petersilia (2004) noted, these principles (also known as evidence-based principles) come from the Canadian psychological perspective on reentry. The American approach on What Works in much more based on recidivism studies and therefore focus more on sociological variables, such as: job, accommodation etc.

In the recent years a new model of working with offenders has emerged in Europe – *the desistance paradigm* (McNeill, 2006). Instead of starting from the question of how practice should be constructed, the new paradigm begins by asking how change can take place. An useful summary of this paradigm is provided by Maguire (2007):

1. Agency is as important as – if not more important than – structure in promoting or inhibiting desistance from crime.
2. Individuals differ in their readiness to contemplate and begin the process of change.
3. Generating and sustaining motivation is vital to the maintenance of processes of change.
4. Desistance is a difficult and often lengthy process, not an 'event', and relapses are common.
5. While overcoming social problems is often insufficient on its own to promote desistance, it may be a necessary condition for further progress.
6. As people change they need new skills and capacities appropriate to their new lifestyle, and access to opportunities to use them. (408-409)

Most of these premises are based on empirical studies conducted by Maruna (2000), Farrall (2002, 2004), Burnett (2004) and so on. What almost all these studies have in common is that they ask how and why some offenders succeed in desisting. Some of their findings will be reflected in the following sections.

Other models of resettlement are also tested and implemented in different parts of the world but with no evaluation as to whether they are effective or not in reducing re-offending after imprisonment. One example of such a promising paradigm is the *strength-based model* (Maruna and LeBel, 2003) that, using elements of 'positive psychology', asks the question how offenders can be useful to their families or their communities and not what are their deficits. By asking this question, offenders change from being help consumers to help providers and transform their identities from 'offender' into 'provider'. Maruna and LeBel (2003) provide a number of examples of initiatives that are based on this theory. For example, convicts from 75 prisons had worked in 1999 with Habitat for Humanity to build up 250 homes for low income Americans. In USA prisoners are constantly sent to areas struck by flooding or fire to provide support and relief.

In England and Wales and also in USA the *partnership model* seems to be popular among the state initiatives (National Audit Office, 2002; US General Accounting Office, 2001). In practice, this partnership involves a strong cooperation between correctional services and the providers of welfare services.

Institutional Treatment

As many scholars have noted, good resettlement starts with good preparatory work in prison. . One important principle that stems from research is that resettlement should be planned and managed early in the sentence and not left like a 'rescue job' for the probation service or other post-prison services (Maguire and Raynor, 1997). Unfortunately what good work in prison entails in a comprehensive sense is not known yet. Different studies have focused on different components of what imprisonment means: moral quality of prison (Liebling, 2004), continuity between prison and probation programs (Broome et al., 2002), prison misconduct and recidivism (French

and Gendreau, 2003; Losel, 1995; Motiuk, 1991), cost-effectiveness of prison programs (Aos et al., 1999;), prisoner classification and risk assessment tools (Buchanan et al., 1986; Hannah-Moffat, 2004, Luciani, 2001), education in prison and recidivism (Motiuk, 1991; Proctor, 1994) etc.

Another useful recommendation that is stressed by Petersilia (2004) is that increased monitoring in the community (like intensive probation, electronic monitoring) does not reduce recidivism alone. The idea that sanctions and punishments are not effective in supporting behavioral change is well documented also in other studies (McGuire, 2004; Smith et al., 2002). Confrontational interventions are also known to undermine the rapport and therefore to reduce treatment effects (Viets et al., 2002). Lambert (1992) suggests that the quality of the working relationship between client and staff accounts for 1/3 of the change that occurs. Thus, staff is a critical resource for any prison intervention. As Serrin (2005) suggests it is important to consider: staff beliefs about inmates and change (punitive attitude will reduce program effectiveness), fundamental skills (fair but firm, empathic, good inter-personal skills) and so on. One important message that comes from research is that the offender 'controls his/her own destiny' (Taxman, 2004). This message for the offender is very close to the concepts of agency and hope developed in the desistance literature. After interviewing 130 adult property offenders released from prison, Burnett (1992) discovered that those who were most confident and optimistic about their future prospects had greater success than those ambivalent or pessimistic. It seems from research that an important component of any pre-release program should be focused on combating defeatism and developing hope and self-confidence.

Another relevant message from research is that all these interventions or programmes have to start from a reliable prisoner assessment and classification. As noted above this prisoner classification has to rely on actuarial or statistical-based tools and not on clinical judgments. Luciani (2001) for instance demonstrated convincingly that after an actuarial tool was implemented in the Canadian prisons the number of escapes dropped from 13.1% to 4.5% while the proportion of those transferred to minimum security increased from 12% to 37.5%. Other studies emphasise the association between a rigorous prisoner classification, behavioral correctional programming and the number of prison misconducts. For instance, in their meta-analysis French and Gendreau (2003) proved that behavioral programs that met the evidence-based principles shown above resulted in a 26% reduction in prison misconducts. Furthermore they suggested that 'the greater the misconduct treatment effect, the larger the reductions in recidivism ($r = .44$)' (2). In other words reductions in prison misconduct generated a lower level of recidivism after release.

Linked to assessment another observation appears to be useful. Experience in England and Wales demonstrated that there is a large amount of distrust between prison and probation services and sometimes even among different prisons (HM Inspectorate of Probation, 2001). The integration of the IT systems is also poor. As a direct consequence of this lack of real cooperation offenders end up being assessed many times based on different risk needs assessment tools. Apart from the so called 'assessment fatigue' experienced by offenders the results generated by these evaluations do not assist good cooperation and continuity between different sectors of criminal justice.

To overcome these obstacles the UK Government decided to amalgamate the prison and probation services and demanded that the two shall use the same assessment tool – OASys. Furthermore in order to facilitate treatment continuity a case management system was set up under the name end to end management. Although OASys was assessed and found to be reasonably accurate in predicting risk of reoffending or other types of risks (Debidin, 2009) it is not yet known if OASys and the end to end management system have a significant impact of the resettlement success. Therefore it could be safely considered as a promising practice.

On the other side of the Atlantic, in Canada, the Correctional Service is using among others The Level of Service/Case Management Inventory, which proves to be effective in tracking progress and allocating prisoners to services (Fretz, 2005).

In Australia the case management system is called 'floating care' and involves a single case manager providing or brokering multi-agency inputs to prisoners or their families from a base in the offender's own home (Borzycki and Baldry, 2003)

Based on rigorous assessment and classification tools, prisoners have to develop reintegration plans (sometimes called sentence planning, individualization of prison sentence etc.) that aim at developing basic skills and build up transitional arrangements for after release (Taxman, 2004). Usually these plans include time-delimited goals that deal with different deficits or treatment interventions for some problems like drug addiction, mental health etc. According to Taxman and colleagues (2004) this plan should include issues that are most important for the offender and should never incorporate more than three components. The research up to now did not focus on the process or the content of the reintegration plans thus it is impossible to assess whether they are good practices or promising exercises. What seems to be reasonable to assume is that the reintegration plans rationalize the process of implementing different treatment interventions.

In terms of treatment components that work in prison in reducing reoffending there are some systematic or synthetic reviews that provide good orientation.
In her synthetic review of the corrections system, Doris MacKenzie (cited in Petersilia, 2004) identifies 184 studies conducted between 1978 and 1998 that used some kind of control or comparison group. She identifies the following in prison programs as having an impact on the recidivism:
1) In-Prison Therapeutic Communities With Follow-Up Community Treatment,
2) Cognitive Behavioral Therapy,
3) Non-Prison Based Sex Offender Treatment Programs,
4) Vocational Education Programs,
5) Multi-Component Correctional Industry Programs, and
6) Community Employment Programs.

In the same time she also identifies some 'promising' interventions:
1) Prison-Based Sex Offender Treatment,
2) Adult Basic Education, and
3) Transitional Programs Providing Individualized Employment Preparation and Services for High-Risk Offenders.

In this paper, she understands by 'promising' practices or interventions that had been under-assessed or assessed using other research devices than randomized control trial. This is also the meaning of 'promising' in this paper.

Another important systematic review in prisoner reentry is the one conducted by Seiter and Kadela (2003). In their analysis they use the Maryland Scale of Scientific Methods (MSSM) developed by Sherman et al. (1998) in order to identify programs that work in reducing re-offending.

One of the most important components of prison treatment is work or vocational training. Seiter and Kadela (2003) identify seven programs that were evaluated and dealt with vocational or work program. Their conclusion was that vocational and work programs are effective in reducing recidivism and also in improving the job readiness for ex-offenders.

Education is another important treatment component from at least two perspectives. First, it seems that the level of education is a good predictor of institutional adjustment (Proctor, 1994; Motiuk, 1991). Secondly, improvements in the educational area seem to be associated with lower recidivism after imprisonment (Porporino and Robinson, 1992). The latter observation seems to be more controversial. Seiter and Kadela (2003) for instance identified only two studies that dealt with this component and the results were not very convincing as to whether increasing education leads to reducing reoffending. Their conclusion was that education programs increase educational achievements but do not decrease recidivism. Those educational programs that link a prison program with community based resources after release seem to be promising. Based on Adams et al. (1994) more attention should be given to who are the most recommended groups of offenders that could benefit from the educational programs and also how many hours of educational program could contribute to reducing recidivism.

As an example from practice, it is useful to note that in USA, based on Higher Education Act 1965, a grant system was set up for funding post-secondary school for inmates – Basic Education Opportunity Grants. This scheme was renamed later Pell Grants and lasted until 1993/1994 when Congress eliminated it as a consequence of the 'nothing works' and 'tough on crime' ideologies (Ubah and Robinson, 2003). With assistance from this grant system the federal prison system was able to create the world famous system of college education in prisons. It is not yet known if the elimination of this system generated a higher recidivism level among ex-prisoners but it is certain that it did not help the reentry journey of those ex-prisoners that were not able to find the necessary funds to attend college education.

Regarding drug rehabilitation Seiter and Kadela (2003) identified 12 programs that were evaluated. In spite of the methodological limits of these studies they concluded that drug rehabilitation in prison works. Due to the fact that some studies out of these 12 present some particular conclusions we will refer to them one by one.
Rhodes et al. (2001) using a quasi-experimental design concluded that drug treatment is effective in reducing recidivism rates and rates of relapse for man but not for women.
Knight et al., (1997, 1999) after evaluating in prison therapeutic communities (TC) inferred that TC is most effective when integrated with aftercare and for offenders with serious crime and drug related problems.

The same idea is reiterated by Hiller et al. (1999) which noted that TC followed with residential aftercare reduce the post-release arrest by 12%.

Seiter and Kadela (2003) also identify a more integrated program – Key-Crest (in Delaware)- that mixes TC with work release. The conclusion was that clients that received aftercare did better than the others in remaining drug free and arrest free. TC has value in work release and program retention is important in predicting long term success in reducing recidivism.

In line with Seiter and Kadela (2003) another systematic review (Mitchell et al., 2006) found that in-prison drug rehabilitation treatment does have an effect on recidivism and on relapse. On the bases of 66 studies, Mitchell et al., (2006) concluded that the those participating in the drug programs had a recidivism rate lower than those who didn't (28% compared to 35%). They also noticed that different drug treatments had different outcomes. For instance the multi-modal programs (e.g. therapeutic communities) are more effective than those targeting exclusively the addiction.

Encouraging results are found by Seiter and Kadela (2003) also in terms of treatment targeting sex offenders and violent offenders. In their study, they identified five programs that comply with the minimum requirements of scientific research and concluded that cognitive behavioral programs have an impact on recidivism. Robinson's (1996) study for instance found that offenders who attended cognitive skills training had a return-to-custody rate within 12 months 11% lower than those who did not complete the therapy. Robinson (1996) also concluded that cognitive behavioral therapy works best with offenders with moderate risk of recidivism.

Apart from these interventions, other programs are also available in the prisons. Some of them are faith based. Some use other theoretical frameworks. Some deal with mental health issues and so on. Research so far is either inconclusive or silent about the effectiveness of these interventions. That should not be a reason not to continue to innovate or test out new approaches but to pay more attention to evaluation and measurement. Some of them might be working in reducing recidivism or helping offenders build a new prosocial life but solid evidence that this is the case does not yet exist.

Pre-Release Stage

This stage usually lasts 90 days leading up to the day of release . The aim of this stage is to help the prisoner to plan for transition into the community. According to some authors (see for instance Taxman et al., 2004), this stage is characterized by intensive preparation for release, formalizing the reintegration plan and establishing solid links with the community. The core of the reintegration plan should ensure the so-called survival needs like: food, shelter and legitimate sources of financial support. Apart from these welfare needs, resettlement literature also mentions other relevant targets, like: training and employment; mental and physical health; drug and alcohol; finance, benefits and debts; thinking and behavior.

All these resettlement needs were included by the UK Government into the national plan 'Reducing Re-Offending Strategies' in 2004 Some of these pathfinders were evaluated and the results were encouraging in terms of reducing the problems and improving the

offender's attitudes (Lewis at al., 2007). There was also some evidence showing that these programs had some impact on reoffending especially for those who maintain contact with mentors after release (Clancy et al., 2006; Lewis, Maguire, Raynor and Vanstone, 2007). At the same time, research showed that the outcomes are likely to depend on the resources available and the level of funding (Maguire, 2007).

One particular challenge that was identified in the research is the continuity between in-prison interventions and post-release activities. In Canada for instance this principle is central in the continuum-of-care model of reentry that emphasizes the importance of a coherent and structured intervention from the moment of arrest to the point of community reintegration. An important number of studies (see Simpson and Brown, 1999; Broome, Simpson and Joe, 2002) demonstrated that when in-prison services are followed up by community-based treatment the client outcomes are significantly improved. The same principle seems to be crucial also for the programmes that run in American corrections. The 'Step down' programme for instance was evaluated by Fretz et al. (2005) and found to be very effective in reducing re-offending for high risk offenders when prison activities were followed by post-release interventions.
In order to facilitate continuity a number of pre-release programs use an imported model where representatives from the outside institutions/agencies are participating in the in-prison program (e.g. FOR a Change, Reducing the Risk of Reoffending etc.). On the other hand, resettlement practice in Denmark, for instance, is based on an exported model where the offender is visiting community agencies prior to release.

Towards the same aim of promoting continuity and offender engagement, other programs use mentors or volunteers who start working with offenders while in prison and continue cooperating after release. Clancy et al. (2006) demonstrated that post-release contact with mentors after release in the Pathfinders (UK) was associated with lower reconviction rates than expected within one year after release.

Case management principles seem to be employed by more and more resettlement interventions due to the fact that they support consistency, continuation and coherence. Another important advantage of this approach is that through case management the offender develops a stable relationship with one key worker who will navigate him/her through the community resources (Taxman, 2004; Clancy et al., 2006).

Some programs are comprehensive which means that they deal with more of the potential transition needs of the ex-prisoner (e.g. FOR ... A Change - UK, Reducing the Risk of Reoffending – Romania).

> FOR ... A Change is a 13 group sessions programme based on the cognitive-motivational theories developed by Fabiano and Porporino (2002). The principles of motivational interviewing are the basis of this program. This approach developed by Miller and Rollnick (1991) aims at enhancing motivation and set up the agenda for change. The sessions are organized in such a way to lead the participants from problem recognition, setting a plan for change and for avoiding risks. One of last sessions is called marketplace where representatives from institutions from the open community come and talk with participants about their problems (e.g. accommodation, job etc.) and how they can be overcome. The facilitators are encouraged to develop an open

and trusting working alliance and promote self-efficacy. Most notably the program includes a continuation of the contact after release with program staff or mentors in order to support motivation (Maguire, 2007).

Reducing the Risk of Reoffending (RRR) (Durnescu et al., 2009) is another programme that combines the cognitive-behavioral model with the findings of the desistance research. Again, issues like self-efficacy, responsibilisation, initiative and motivation are central for the general approach. The programme also deals with structural issues like shelter, employment and so on. RRR is structured in two parts: six cognitive-motivational sessions inside prison and six optional modules that can be delivered outside prison mostly dealing with practical problems, like: employment, education, drug addiction, mental health and so on.

Neither of these programmes has been evaluated yet in terms of their independent impact on recidivism. However, while evaluating the FOR...A Change Programme for programme integrity, Vanstone (2008) noted that the programme was associated with significant improvements in attitudes and self-reported problems: in accommodation, employment, reduction in reoffending and substance abuse.

An interesting example of an integrated approach comes from Norway, where, since 2005, prisoners can access the Reintegration Guarantee that assists ex-prisoners to find real solutions for all of their problems (work, shelter, education, debts etc.). A lesson to be learnt from this initiative is that the whole Government and therefore all the ministries are behind this program and not only the Ministry of Labour or Social Services[1].

One of the greatest investments in an evidence-based program is the Serious and Violent Offender Re-entry Initiative (SVORI) (Petersilia, in press). This program started in 2003 and was funded by the USA federal Government with more than $110 million, aiming at improving a number of reintegration outcomes among serious and violent prisoners being released like: housing, income, family relationship, work, community reintegration and so on. Although recidivism figures are not yet available, Lattimore and Visher (cited in Petersilia, in press) reported to Congress that differences between those participating in SVORI and those not participating were found to be significant in terms of housing, employment, mental health and substance misuse.

Apart from these comprehensive programmes there are also programs that tackle only some pre or post release needs, like: employment, drug addiction, education and so on.

For example, in the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia an Equal employment project – ZUBILIS[2] - focused on providing vocational training inside prison. What is important is that the project involved probation staff to find suitable work placements after release. The introduction of this post-release intervention raised the percentage of

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[1] for more details, visit: http://www.cep-probation.org/news/65/522/norwegian-reintegration-guarantee-aims-to-provide-ex-prisoners-the-right-tools-for-resocialization (retrieved at 19.01.2012)
[2] Details available at: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal/data/document/etg1-exa2-zubilis.pdf (retrieved at: 19.01.2012)

those finding employment from 48% to 75% (The Quaker Council for European Affaires, 2011).

In their systematic review, Seiter and Kadela (2003) identified two pre-release programmes that met the evaluation criteria. One was PreStart program in Illinois that was evaluated using a quasi-experimental design by Castellano et al. (1994). The program included two stages: pre-release education and post-release assistance. The conclusion of the study was that the rearrest rate of those who participated in the program was 40% compared with 48% of the comparison group. The return to prison rate showed an even greater difference between the two group: 12% of the control group and 32% for the comparison group.

Another study identified by Seiter and Kadela (2003) was the study by LeClair and Guarino-Ghezzi (1991) that demonstrated a significant difference between the offenders who participated into the program and those who did not in terms of recidivism within 12 months – 11,8% of the control group and 29% of the comparison group.

Seiter and Kadela (2003) also identified four halfway house programmes that were evaluated. The conclusion was that these facilities help the transition and reduce recidivism after release. Seiter (1975) evaluated the Ohio halfway houses and found that the treatment group did better than the control group in terms of life adjustments, although this finding was not statistically significant. Furthermore, the treatment group committed fewer and less serious offences than the comparison group. Dowell, Klein and Krichmar (1985) evaluated the California halfway house and concluded that the average number of crimes committed by the treatment group was half that of the control group. In addition, the seriousness of the crimes committed by the treatment group was much less than those committed by the control group.

In some countries the continuum-of-care model is also sustained by the law that means that officially different institutions are required to cooperate with prison or probation services in order to support ex-prisoners after release.

In the Netherlands, municipalities have cooperation agreements with the Agency of Correctional Institutions to ensure access to services for ex-prisoners who either signed up voluntarily with probation offices or were obliged by the court to undertake supervision after release.

Since 2006, in Finland a new sentence has been introduced – conditional probationary freedom – that places the prisoner at the end of the sentence outside the prison walls but with strict supervision from the probation service. This new option has already showed the benefits of involving probation services as an intermediate organization that link the offender with community resources (The Quakers Council for European Affaires, 2011).

To conclude what is known about pre-release programmes the following aspects should be stressed:
- a pre-release programme should start as soon as possible but not later than three months prior to release;
- even more than the usual prison programmes, pre-release programmes should focus on the transitional arrangements towards the open community;
- halfway houses, collective houses and other transition infrastructures seem to support successful return of prisoners into society;

- the programme's style should be conceptualized in such a way to enhance prisoner's agency, initiative and motivation;
- programmes should encourage continuity between in-prison and post-release activities;
- the link between prisoner and the outside resources (probation service, mentors, social services, drug rehabilitation centers etc.) should start while in prison;
- principles of case management should be employed to coordinate input from other sources and ensure consistency and continuity;
- focus on the employment need seems to be one of the most promising practices;
- legislation and institutional arrangements should facilitate the progressive transition of prisoners from custody to freedom.
- more research should be done using robust and rigorous methodologies to capture the correlation between the pre-release programs and re-offending and other positive outcomes for different groups of prisoners: foreigners, minorities, women etc.
- more research should be done to evaluate the impact of the comprehensive pre-release programmes.

Post-release Stage

'Staying out of prison is a lot harder than getting out'
(Petersilia, in press)

As it was illustrated above, most of the resettlement programmes start while the prisoner is still in prison. Therefore at the post-release stage one of the most important challenges is to ensure the participants' engagement and continuation of contact.

As few classical studies showed (National Council of Social Service, 1961; Morris, 1965) that at the point of release short –term prisoners experience loss of integrity, serious material loses, problems with employment and family support, wife and children distress and psychological difficulties. Furthermore, their families tend to live in considerably poor conditions and to have multiple problems. The most common difficulties of short-term prisoners are employment, marital and psychological ones. Studies of long-term prisoners have concluded that the problems for this category of prisoners are the same as for the short-term prisoners, but to a different degree. Bank and Fairhead (1976) for instance observed that 38% of the short-term prisoners had experienced problems with accommodation compared with 14,5% of the medium and long-term prisoners.
The problems of women released from prison are mostly similar to those of men but amplified by particular problems related to childcare, family issues and discrimination on the labour market (Hamlyn and Lewis, 2000). More recent studies have stressed that women are more likely than men to meet with obstacles because of unmet mental health needs or the difficulties of rejoining the family or the children (Hamlyn and Lewis, 2000). Because of their limited access to resettlement services in prison and discrimination, the problems of minorities seem to be more acute. From the evaluation of the Pathfinders it appears that involving a member of the minority among the resettlement staff increases the continuity of services (Vanstone, 2008).

Due to the pains of imprisonment (Sykes, 1968), the reintegration barriers and other reasons that belong to the individual, family or community context, most released people reoffend and return to prison. Since the Glaser study (1969) in the USA, there is even a so-called rule of 'two-thirds re-arrest rate'. Based on the official records different reconviction studies confirm this reality. Langan and Levin (2002), for instance, found that 67% of the prisoners release in 1994 from 15 states of USA were re-arrested within three years and 52% were returned to prison for a new offence or technical violation.

Methodologies for evaluating re-arrest, re-conviction, return to prison rates and so on differ from one study to another but what seems to be settled is that the probability of re-arrest decreases as time goes by. Rosenfeld, Wallman and Fornango (2005) demonstrated convincingly that the likelihood of re-arrest declines with months out of prison. The probability of re-arrest during the first month out of prison is double that during the fifteenth month.

This probability depends also on the type of crime: the probability of re-arrest early after release is higher for property or drug offences than for violent offences.

Another study cited by Petersilia (in press) shows that the first months after release are difficult not only in terms of crime prevention but also in terms of death rates. Binswanger et al. (2007 cited by Petersilia, in press) found that the death rates for new prison releases in the first days and weeks is a lot higher than the same rate in the corresponding general population. It seems that this high rate is connected to high homicide rates and drug overdoses.

As noted in the previous section, employment, accommodation and financial needs seem to be the most important needs for released prisoners - not only in terms of survival but also in terms of preventing recidivism.

Employment

Employment seems to be very important for ex-offenders not only in terms of re-offending, but also because employment helps them be productive, look after their families, raise their self esteem and increase social networks.

In his meta-analysis of almost 400 studies, Lipsey (1995) concluded that the single most important factor that reduces re-offending is employment. This seems to be consistent with the Sampson and Laub (1993) theory of informal social control that argues that developing strong social bonds with a spouse and employment commitment and stability can lead to conformity.

While employment projects proved to have an important impact on life adjustment after release, research is not so clear as to whether employment projects have a statistically significant impact on recidivism.

In their Campbell systematic review on community employment programs, Visher et al. (2006) found only eight studies that fit into the evaluation criteria. The Baltimore Living Insurance for Ex-Prisoners (LIFE) has been evaluated by Mallar and Thornton (1978) who concluded that job placement and counseling intervention had no impact on arrest in the first year, but those receiving weekly cash payment of 60$ had fewer arrests in the first year than the control group. The follow-up for this project was Transitional Aid Research Project (TARP) that took place in Texas and Georgia in 1976 and involved for the experimental group either unemployment insurance benefit or job placement. The

project was evaluated by Rossi, Berk and Lenihan (1980) and Berk, Lenihan and Rossi (1980) and the conclusion was that unemployment had an effect on increased arrests but there was no statistical difference between the experimental and the control group. However, the ex-prisoners who gained a job had fewer arrests.

Uggen (2000) evaluated another initiative – The National Supported Work Demonstration – and concluded that the employment programme was effective in reducing re-arrests among ex-offenders over the age of 26. This conclusion brings into light other studies that stress the importance of treatment readiness (Serrin, Kennedy and Mailloux, 2005) or maturation reform (Maruna, 2001).

Some more encouraging results were found in North Rhine-Westphalia (Germany) where a programme called ZUBILIS[3] was implemented to provide: vocational training for prisoners, job placement after release and other aftercare services. The four-year follow-up found that 80% of those who remained unemployed post-release were re-arrested. By contrast, of those who found a job in the field for which they had been trained only 33% were re-arrested. The re-arrest rate was also high (90%) among those who discontinued the course or failed the final examination.

Another positive project could be The Routes out of Prison Project (RooP) that is implemented in Scotland with the aim of offering peer support for short term prisoners. Apart from the employment objectives, the project also addresses mental health, family relations and so on. Central to RooP model is the Life Coach who recruits and selects suitable prisoners six weeks prior to their release and also the principle of 'through the gate' – interventions start inside prisons and continue after release based on the same principles and routines. Together with the Life Coach the prisoner prepares an Action plan that identifies the objectives and the possible barriers in the resettlement process. Once the obstacles are effectively addressed, the ex-prisoner is considered job-ready and is passed to another team of the project that deals with employment. Innovative points in this project are the fact that most of the Life Coaches have an offending history and also the fact that ex-prisoners are to be moved into employment only after they are considered ready: they have a stable home, a stable situation, relevant skills, all their substance misuse problems dealt with and so on.

The project was evaluated in 2011 by the Criminal Justice Social Work Development Centre for Scotland and the conclusion was that 40 % of those who engaged at least once in the community after release returned to custody compared to 44% of those who did not engage at all. The evaluation also showed that 19% of the prisoners involved in the project achieved a 'hard' outcome (job, training or education) after release, with 5% of RooP clients securing a job[4].

Another initiative is taking place in Denmark where High:Five[5] – an NGO – is working to create a network of potential employers and match the ex-prisoner's profile with the demands from the employers. In order to assist an ex-prisoner to gain employment High:Five has a special methodology of working both with offenders and with the

[3] details at: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal/data/document/etg1-exa2-zubilis.pdf (retrieved at 23.01.2012).

[4] The information below was extracted from a recently issued report: *Evaluation of Routes out of Prison*. (personal communication with prof. Bill Whyte).

[5] High:Five project available at: http://highfive.net/en/side/businesses (retrieved on the 23rd of January 2012)

employers. For instance, in order for an ex-prisoner to be considered for the project, he or she needs to be motivated, to be drug and alcohol free and show convincing evidence that their criminal life is history. One self evaluation report show that 700 matches were concluded between 2006 and 2011, out of which 70% continue with job or education and only 5-6 % returned to crime.

Apart from these initiatives, there are a lot of others that run in almost every jurisdiction in the world. The reason they are not mentioned in this report is that they have not been evaluated independently and have not used in the evaluation a random trial design. Most of them rely solely on a sort of administrative follow-up or on good instincts. However even the quasi-evaluated or un-evaluated projects mention the lack of cooperation between stakeholders as one of the main problems of these initiatives (Gillis and Andrews, 2005).

Stigma

As most of the prisoners complain of, the execution of a prison sentence attracts a stigma from the public that lasts a long time after the sentence has been completed . Wester (2002) for instance showed that employers are less likely to employ ex-offenders when compared with candidates with similar skills but with no criminal history. Petersilia (2005) also found that 65% of the employers would not knowingly employ ex-offenders regardless of their offence. State legislation increasingly denies the right to certain jobs for ex-offenders after they return home. In USA for instance it is prohibited to employ an ex-offender in fields like childcare, education, health, nursing, security and so on. As Petersilia (in press) stresses, the number of barred occupations for ex-offenders has increased dramatically since the 80's.

While all these conclusions may look pessimistic there are also other studies that report a brighter reality. The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) (2007) published a survey report that illustrated that in UK 53% of the employers had the experience of employing ex-offenders, with the voluntary sector having the greatest involvement (75%). Only one of seven organisations ask job applicants if they have a criminal record. Only 23 employers from the total sample of 474 respondents reported a negative experience when employing ex-offenders. About half of them (52%) reported that sex offenders are the greatest cause for concern. Most of the employer's worries were about the ex-offenders having soft skills of honesty (92%), reliability (89%) and technical skills. Three-quarters of the employers stated that they would employ ex-offenders if they have the relevant skills that fit with the needs of the organisation.

While the controversies over the right to know for the public and the right for private life for the ex-prisoner is not settled yet, there are a few legal or administrative tools that can be employed to fight against stigmatization.
One 'soft solution' could involve assisting ex-prisoners to explain to the potential employer their criminal history. Resettlement programs in England and Wales include a so called disclosure session - where prisoners are trained on how to respond to the question: do you have a criminal record?
Another approach could be considered a 'hard solution' where the state protects the ex-offender and limits access to private information for employers.

For instance, in France there are three types of criminal record, called bulletins (Herzog-Evans, 2010). Bulletin 1 contains all the convictions based on the Penal Code. Bulletin 2 contains all the convictions except suspended sentences, juvenile records, contraventions (less serious convictions). Bulletin 3 includes only custodial sentences for more than two years except where the court has barred certain professional activities. Only the courts can access bulletin 1. Bulletin 2 can be accessed only by the administration and public services. In general, a private employer could ask the applicant to provide a copy of the Bulletin 3. The exception to this rule is when the job involves a high degree of trust (e.g. bank, child protection etc.) or when specific positions require that candidates should have a clean record.

This system may not be perfect but could create a context in which the ex-offenders could have a fresh start based on a new identity.

It may be true that ex-offenders meet with a lot of resistance on the labour market and they may not always have equal opportunities but probably it could be useful to evaluate to what extent this fear of discrimination is not also exacerbated by the prison subculture.

Financial aid

Financial support is known as another area of intervention that aims at the post-release ex-prisoner's survival. Research in this field is not very well developed yet and the existing results are not congruent.
One of the first studies in this direction is Mallar and Thonton (1978) that examined the impact of the transitional aid program on reducing theft crime. The conclusion was that the ex-offender group that received financial aid had significantly fewer arrests for theft crime than did the control group. If that is true for all crimes it is not known. Berk, Lenihan and Rossi (1980) examined the effect of unemployment benefit on the re-arrest for property and non property crime in two states - Texas and Georgia. The authors found that unemployment benefit had a direct and negative impact on re-arrest which means that ex-prisoners on unemployment benefit are more likely to re-offend.

From the few studies on this matter it can be concluded that financial aid alone would not encourage ex-prisoners to move towards a more productive and fulfilling life.

Family and community

As diZerega (2010) clearly stated, families are a natural resource for the reentry process. Families are crucial to ex-prisoners for many reasons: they can provide understanding and emotional support, they can provide financial support, they offer housing and childcare for the incarcerated parent. Research showed that informal networks play a substantial role in finding employment. For example, more than 60 % of the ex-prisoners interviewed by La Vigne et al. (2004) indicated that they talked to their families, relatives and friends to find a job after release. The same research showed that 58% of the respondents indicated that family support was important in avoiding returning to

prison. Families can also play an important role in the informal social control system. This characteristic is more relevant for former drug users or mentally disturbed ex-offenders. In their case, any deterioration in their state of mind could be identified quickly by the family members and action could be taken.

Neighborhoods also seem to play an important role in the ex-prisoner's reintegration. Hipp et al. (2010) found that the presence of more social services providers within two miles led to a lower recidivism rate. This trend was more powerful for African and Latino parolees. They also found that parolees living in communities with concentrated disadvantages have a greater recidivism rate even after controlling for individual factors. These findings resonate with the conclusion of Haines (1990) that if a prisoner returns to a context where offending is acceptable or where there are few normative controls or too little rewards, there is a greater risk that he/she will reoffend.

The way and the degree in which the other interventions dealing with accommodation and identity papers impact on re-arrest have not been evaluated using random trial design and therefore it is difficult to assess to what extent they work in reducing re-offending. What can be observed though is that they are strongly connected and are likely to produce aggregated effects on this indicator. For instance, it is more likely that an ex-prisoner will find employment if he or she has a stable home. The same goes also for identity papers: it is impossible for an ex-prisoner to access any resettlement service without valid identity papers.

Conclusion

Bearing in mind that evidence of concern for prisoner's return to freedom dates back into the 19th century (e.g. since 1843 in Denmark (Heine, 2008)) it is disappointing how little is known about what works and what does not.
The reasons for this limited 'hard knowledge' about effectiveness are numerous. First, it is only recently that prison and probation organizations have started to develop a culture of scientific curiosity. It is rather difficult to find reliable studies on effectiveness run by these organisations before the 80s.
Secondly, robust methodologies like random trial design have started to be used in social science only recently. Even after they began to be employed in measuring treatment impact they tended to oversimplify the social realities. For instance, most of these experimental designs focused almost exclusively on measuring differences between the control and experimental groups in terms of re-arrests or reconvictions. Let alone that these indicators are not always accurate, they fail to capture other changes that might be caused by the treatment and also represent progress for ex-offenders, their families or communities. Travis (2003) makes this point very clear when evaluating the impact of the drug court. One of his conclusions is that drug courts impact on offenders not only in terms of re-offending but also in terms of health. For instance, children of the drug courts participants are more likely to be born drug free and therefore not facing all the health or developmental difficulties.
The third potential explanation is that funding for resettlement programmes is very limited. For instance, the Congress and President Bush passed the Second Chance Act in 2008, which allocates $200 million per year for prison reentry programmes (Nayer,

2009). According to Wacquant (2010) this sum is less than one-quarter of one percent of the country's correctional budget. In concrete terms this means about $20 monthly per new prisoner released which is enough to buy him or her a sandwich every week. This appalling level of funding for reentry programmes makes Wacquant (2010) state that 'prisoner reentry is not an industry but a bureaucratic charade' (615) meant to preserve the machinery of hyperincarceration. Since the level of funding for reentry programmes is so low, the budget for independent and sophisticated research is next to none.

Another reason for the paucity of reliable research is that almost all studies focus on one or two components of the resettlement process. Yet as it was noted above the resettlement is not a programme but a process that involve ex-prisoners as whole entities with multi–level problems and a myriad of obstacles. Therefore, to provide a full picture of the effectiveness of resettlement a more comprehensive approach should be taken to capture all the elements of the treatment, the process in which the treatment is delivered and the context in which all the players interact.

As noted in the previous sections, it seems that different ethnic groups or distinct age cohorts respond differently to treatment interventions. This hypothesis should be also taken into consideration when designing and evaluating programmes for women, juvenile or Roma people.

Having suggested what could be improved in the research field, one should not underestimate what it is known already in the resettlement field:

- Resettlement work should start as soon as possible after the final sentence has been made;
- A process should be designed to ensure continuation and consistency between in-prison activities and post-release services;
- The message that prisoner needs to receive from staff is that he/she is responsible for his/her life and that change is possible;
- Motivation and agency are important ingredients for a successful reentry;
- Prison programmes should focus on developing human capital (e.g. education, problem solving skills, vocational training, drug rehabilitation etc.) with a special focus on the transition mechanisms;
- Pre-release and post-release programs should continue the work done in prison and focus more on supporting motivation and developing social capital and legitimate opportunities (e.g. family, social network, employment etc.);
- Between in-prison and post-prison work a buffering zone should be established to support the transition (e.g. halfway houses, drop-in centers, step down programmes etc.);
- Communities should be made aware of the risks posed by social exclusion and assisted to avoid concentrated disadvantages;
- Governments should be encouraged to take a more rehabilitative approach towards ex-prisoners rather than follow neo-liberal policies that enhance social exclusion and incarceration;
- The balance between the right to know and the right to private (or a new!) life should be settled in such a way to promote desistance and not unnecessary and unfair stigma.

Although some knowledge is available from sound research, the transfer of what works into real life situations is still limited. As was noted above most of the initiatives or practices are simply based on service delivery. 'If offenders have substance misuse problems then let us give them drug rehabilitation programmes'. This seems to the

message coming from the public administrators. This is a serious threat for human dignity. In researching human beings what is important is not only the nature of the interventions but also when they are available, where they can be accessed, what is the right dosage, what is the most appropriate delivery style, what are the associated narratives and so on. Employing a mechanical view on human beings as if they are machines severely oversimplifies the social and subjective context in which desistance occurs. Probably a more integrated theoretical and practical model of resettlement that would focus on all these aspects and further more will improve offender transition from prison to community.

As others have noted (Petersilia, 2004; Byrne at al., 2002; Parent, 2004) when designing and implementing a new resettlement programme the initiators are not always drawing primarily from the 'what works' literature. This is not to say that this literature is completely ignored but in practice there are only a few examples from research of programmes being implemented effectively exactly as prescribed. A useful solution could be to make research more available and more accessible for the policy makers and practitioners.

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Annex

Effectiveness in the institutional stage

Nr.	Component	Study	Result
1.	The association between prison misconduct, programs and recidivism	French and Gendreau (2003) – meta-analysis	Positive
2.	Education and recidivism	Porporino and Robinson (1992)	Positive
		Vito and Tewksbury (1999)	Increased reading and math competencies. Did not seem to have any effect on recidivism.
		Adams et al. (1994)	Increase academic achievements. Recidivism rates were affected if the offender participated in 200 or more of educational programs.
3.	Vocational and Work Programs	Turner and Petersilia (1996)	Participants less likely to be re-arrested but not statistically significant. Facilitated adjustment
		Saylor and Gaes (1992, 1997)	Significant and important training effects in-prison (misconducts reports) and post-prison (employment and arrest rate)
4.	Drug rehabilitation	Rhodes et al. (2001)	Effective in reducing recidivism rates and rates of relapse for man but not for women
		Knight et al., (1997, 1999)	TC are most effective when integrated with aftercare and for offenders with serious crime and drug related problems
		Hiller et al. (1999)	TC followed with residential aftercare reduce the post-release arrest by 12%.
		Mitchell et al. (2006)	Drug treatment reduces post-treatment recidivism (28% compared to 35% of non-starters). TC more effective than those

Nr.	Component	Study	Result
			programs targeting only addiction.
5.	Sex offenders and violent offenders	Robinson (1996)	Completers with 11% lower recidivism rate than the non-completers. Works best with moderate risk offenders.
		Barbaree, Seto and Maric (1996)	Refusers had a higher failure rate than completers (38,9% compared with 22,2%)

Pre-release effectiveness

Nr.	Component	Study	Result
1.	Continuity	Simpson and Brown, 1999	Positive
		Broome, Simpson and Joe, 2002	Positive
2.	Case management approach	Taxman, 2004	Positive
		Clancy et al., 2006	Contact with mentors reduces re-offending.
3.	Pre-release program	LeClair and Guarino-Ghezzi (1991)	Recidivism rate - 11,8% of the control group and 29% of the comparison group.
		Castellano et al. (1994)	Re-arrest rate of those who participated in the program was 40% compared with 48% of the comparison group.
4.	Halfway houses	Seiter (1975)	Better life adjustments but not statistically significant. Fewer and less severe crimes than the control group
		Dowell, Klein and Krichmar (1985)	No. of crimes committed by the treatment group half than those committed by the control group. Less severe crimes.

Post-release effectiveness

Nr.	Component	Study	Conclusion
1.	Employment	Lipsey (1995)	The only sole factor that reduce recidivism
		Mallar and Thornton (1978)	Job placement and counseling intervention had no impact on arrest in the first year, but those receiving weekly cash payment of 60$ had fewer arrests in the first year than the control group
		Rossi, Berk and Lenihan (1980)	Ex-prisoners that received a job had fewer arrests but no statistical difference between control and experimental group.
		Uggen, 2000	Employment programme was effective in reducing re-arrests among ex-offenders over the age of 26
2.	Stigma	Petersilia (2005)	65% of the employers would not employ knowingly ex-offenders regardless their offence.
		Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) (2007)	- in UK 53% of the employers had the experience of employing ex-offenders, with the voluntary sector having the greatest involvement (75%). - Only one of seven organisations asks job applicants if they have a criminal record. - Only 23 employers from the total sample of 474 respondents reported a negative experience when employing ex-offenders. - About half of them (52%) reported that sex offenders are the greatest cause for concern. - Most of the employer's worries were about the ex-offenders having soft

			skills of honesty (92%), reliability (89%) and technical skills. - Three-quarters of the employers stated that they would employ ex-offenders if they have the relevant skills that fit with the needs of the organisation.
3.	Financial aid	Mallar and Thonton (1978)	Ex-offender group that received financial aid had significantly fewer arrests for theft crime than did the control group.
		Berk, Lenihan and Rossi (1980)	Unemployment benefit had a direct and negative impact on re-arrest which means that ex-prisoners on unemployment benefit are more likely to re-offend
4.	Family and community	La Vigne et al. (2004)	60% of ex-prisoners found a job with the help of family and relatives. 58% of them stated that family played the most important role in avoiding reoffending.
		Hipp et al. (2010)	In communities with social services within two miles lower recidivism. Greater recidivism in communities described as concentrating disadvantages.