



**CEP AWARDS 2019 - EXAMPLE NOMINATION
(2016 awarded project)**

Nomination <i>Name of the organisation, project or research being nominated.</i>	COMMUNITY RETURN PROGRAMME (CRP)
Award Category	Rehabilitation in the community

1. Description of work being nominated (max 500 words)

The Community Return Programme (CRP) is an early release scheme programme which aims to enhance the resettlement of prisoners after release, their reintegration into the community and to facilitate offender reparation to communities. The scheme incentivises good behaviour and helps to reduce prison overcrowding.

In order to be eligible for early release, participants must co-operate with the prison regime and engage with the therapeutic services available during their prison sentence. On release, they must be prepared to undertake unpaid work for the benefit of the community with early release and resettlement support.

The Community Return Programme was also an important opportunity to further develop the integrated and coordinated working of the partner bodies - the Probation Service, the Irish Prison Service and the commitment and energy of staff and local communities across the country. Existing resettlement research was reviewed to identify key lessons and elements that could add value and effectiveness to the CRP model.

Since the initiative commenced in 2011, over 1600 prisoners have returned to their communities. Approximately 90% have completed community service and complied with the conditions of their release.

2. Why does this work deserve an award? (Max 500 words)

Describe how the work meets the criteria for the award outlined in the guidelines.

The plan and approach proposed an innovative and previously untried co-located, integrated and coordinated project team model working transparently and sharing data, information and practices across professional and agency boundaries.

Supervised release with unpaid work as a condition, with added mentoring and support to strengthen resettlement, was a new approach which had not been tried before. It was uncertain how effectively an integrated cross-agency implementation plan and team structure would work in practice. It was uncertain whether prisoners would be willing to



participate and would comply with the conditions; whether work projects would be available; whether communities would welcome the programme; whether compliance by ex-prisoners could be achieved and whether the expected level of offending after release could be reduced.

Our evaluation of the programme indicated that it has been highly successful. A descriptive evaluation, published in 2014 showed:

- almost 90% of participants from 2011 to end 2013 had successfully completed their hours or were still working.
- Of the prisoners on the programme 91% had not been committed to custody for reoffending.
- 201,056 hours (equivalent to €1,739,135) of unpaid work had been completed.

3. Optional: supporting evidence