An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
Department of Justice

Understanding Reoffending

Push factors and preventative responses

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Foreword

The Department is pleased to publish this valuable research report on understanding reoffending, prepared by Professor Dennis Gough and Dr Megan Coghlan of Portsmouth University

As the Department continues to establish new ways of working, we are continuously seeking to improve our capability in the development of evidence-based work. Goal 3 of the Department of Justice Statement of Strategy 2021-2023 includes a focus on reducing reoffending rates, explicitly referencing 'the development and implementation of strategies and actions to reduce offending and bring greater coherence and shared purpose to the criminal justice sector'. An informed understanding of factors related to reoffending and the role of multi-agency working is critical to driving success in this area.

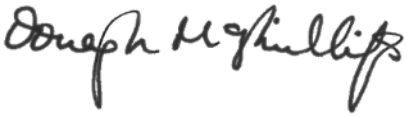
The Criminal Justice Sectoral Strategy commits to supporting a strong data culture to inform effective policymaking. The Department's Review of Policy Options for Prison and Penal Reform 2022-2024, which was published recently, sets out a suite of priorities to enable the development of penal policy and practice that is evidence informed and data driven.

Against this backdrop, the Interagency Group for a Fairer, Safer Ireland, chaired by Deputy Secretary John O'Callaghan, joined with relevant Government Departments and agencies to facilitate research by developing this Rapid Evidence Review.

In this piece of work, Professor Gough and Dr. Coghlan have helpfully synthesised the push factors linked to reoffending; and the effectiveness of interagency-based programmes which enable people to move away from reoffending. This piece of

work builds on Professor Ian O'Donnell's 2020 evidence review of recidivism and policy responses, but develops further thematic understanding of the primary factors linked to reoffending and desistance while also providing an evaluation of multi-agency approaches.

I very much welcome the publication of this report, and would like to thank the co-authors for their work in researching this important subject. I am confident that this research will help to improve data capture across agencies in this area thereby improving interagency cooperation regarding the management of those who offend



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Executive Summary

This rapid evidence review (RER) presents an analysis of literature and research to understand factors linked to reoffending and desistance, while also analysing multi-agency working in relation to reducing reoffending. This is important given the 2021-2023 Department of Justice Statement of Strategy that includes a focus on reducing reoffending and understanding multi-agency working to inform policy and ensure a shared purpose in the criminal justice sector in Ireland.

To identify relevant literature for this RER peer reviewed academic literature only is analysed to understand reoffending and desistance, while a mixture of academic and governmental literature was selected to analyse multi-agency working. To be eligible for analysis, the relevant literature and research was required to be European and published in English from 1990-present.

Findings

An evaluation of academic literature and research identifies that reoffending can be explained through a combination of factors linked to capital and risk. Firstly, capital refers to personal capabilities or wider opportunities and interactions between different types of capital are relevant to understanding reoffending:

Human capital (personal capacities or motivations)

Social capital (relationships)

Structural capital (wider political, economic, cultural and social processes)

Secondly, risk in terms of static and dynamic factors can help to predict reoffending. Static factors usually refer to past behaviour or situations and dynamic factors refer to current behaviour or situations for this reason dynamic factors can become static when they refer to a person's past. This RER finds that a mixture of static and dynamic factors is important for predicting later reoffending such as antisocial personality, substance misuse, financial problems, antisocial companions and employment issues. Static and dynamic factors are commonly targeted in rehabilitation paradigms that aim to correct human or social deficits but this can negate the wider context that surrounds an individual. In combining risk factors with

a focus on capital a more holistic explanation of reoffending emerges from this RER demonstrating the importance of the individual and relationships while recognising the constraining effect of wider processes (e.g., economic or political processes).

Capital also emerges as important following the analysis of desistance literature and research. Like reoffending, interactions between different types of capital in the form of human, social and structural capital allow an understanding of desistance to emerge. Specifically, prosocial changes to human, social and structural capital can help to explain how desistance can be sustained as a process by an individual. A summary of key findings in relation to reoffending and desistance is provided in Table 1 (see page 47).

This RER finds that it is difficult to thoroughly evaluate multi-agency working in criminal justice settings in relation to reducing reoffending due to methodological issues but the analysis has allowed for various different recommendations about multi-agency working to be made. Multi-agency working can be underpinned by different ideologies and thus ideology can determine the type of multi-agency programmes implemented in the criminal justice sector. Multi-agency programmes such as integrated offender management, “mixed economy” models, not-for-profit schemes, innovative partnerships, partnership and the voluntary sector and peer mentoring are evaluated. A summary of this evaluation is in Table 3 (see page 76). Of the programmes evaluated, partnerships involving the voluntary sector align well with desistance as the voluntary sector prioritises the individual and acknowledges the importance of a person’s local and social context.

Moving forward

While programmes of multi-agency working have been discussed in research actual evaluations of multi-agency working in criminal justice are often limited or missing from research. Further research or testing of actual multi-agency work in the criminal justice sector is recommended. What this RER identifies is that for multi-agency arrangements to be successful they should have:

1. A clear rationale
2. A holistic approach

3. Coordinated work
4. Trust and commitment
5. A funding regime to encourage joint working
6. Innovation
7. Clarity
8. Consideration of local needs

1.0 Introduction

This document presents the results of a rapid evidence review (RER) of European research on reoffending, desistance, and multi-agency working from 1990 to present. Recently, a review of reoffending and policy responses for the Department of Justice discussed static and dynamic risk factors linked to reoffending and commented on multi-agency responses to reoffending (O'Donnell, 2020). The current RER differs in that it presents a thematic understanding of the primary factors linked to reoffending and desistance alongside evaluating multi-agency paradigms in reducing reoffending and aiding desistance.

This RER is necessary to inform approaches and policy in relation to reoffending in Ireland. This RER will also provide in-depth information in relation to the factors relevant to reoffending and desistance to complement existing statistical data on reoffending in Ireland. Statistical data is published "under reservation" by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) due to concerns with the quality of crime recorded statistics. The CSO initially postponed the release of statistics on recorded crime and have since decided to resume publication of crime statistics but with an added caveat of "under reservation." Currently, 47% of prisoners released from prison in 2018 were reconvicted within 1 year (Central Statistics Office, 2021a). In comparison, 29% of people placed in Probation in 2017 were reconvicted within 1 year (Central Statistics Office, 2021b). Statistics therefore can provide some insight into the extent of reoffending in Ireland but statistics are limited in generating detailed explanations of reasons or factors that explain reoffending and/or desistance. A RER is therefore appropriate to analyse existing research and provide a comprehensive understanding of reoffending, desistance, and multi-agency approaches.

This RER will firstly analyse reoffending which is often measured through reconviction or reimprisonment (O'Donnell, Baumer and Hughes, 2008). Reoffending can also be considered as a criminal career which is a long term sequence of crimes committed by one individual (Farrington, 2019). There are thus two ways to understand reoffending, measurement of recidivism which was reviewed by O'Donnell (2020) and exploring factors that help to understand reoffending. This

RER will focus on the latter and analyse existing literature to explain why an individual repeatedly commits crime.

The second element of the RER focuses on desistance identifying factors that explain why an individual moves away from crime. There is a lot of debate as to what desistance refers to and how to define it. One side of the debate examines desistance as an event which suggests that change can happen abruptly. More commonly, scholars agree that desistance is a process of maintenance of crime free behaviour (Fitzpatrick, 2011; Healy, 2014). Both Maruna (2012, 2017) and McNeill (2006) differentiate between rehabilitation which focuses on what works and desistance which focuses on individual journeys. The emphasis for practice therefore is to understand how change occurs and build on individual strengths and opportunities for change.

The third and last element of this RER will evaluate multi-agency working in relation to reducing reoffending. Multi-agency working can be thought of as partnership working involving “joined-up thinking” or coordinated action which in criminal justice settings involves agencies working collaboratively to achieve a goal (Hughes, 2019). This RER will focus specifically on the rationale for multi-agency working and evaluate multi-agency programmes in relation to reducing reoffending.

Thus, three aims have been fulfilled through a RER of the relevant literature and research.

1. Identify the primary factors linked to reoffending and understand the relationship between these factors.
2. Understand the factors linked to the desistance process.
3. Evaluate multi-agency programmes in relation to moving individuals away from reoffending.

The first and second aims are similar in that a RER of academic literature and research was undertaken. The third aim is slightly different as this involved a RER of academic literature and research alongside wider reports and policies on multi-agency working because a lot of evidence in relation to multi-agency working is contained in government policy and report documents. This RER therefore required

two slightly different methodological approaches to identify the most relevant literature to fulfil the above three aims. The methodology will be outlined below.

2.0 Methodology

There is a lack of agreement in research as to what a RER is, but overall RERs are deliberately limited in scope in certain ways so that analysis can be completed in a short timeframe (Bryman, 2016; Joliffe and Farrington, 2007). The current RER therefore conducted an analysis of relevant literature and research to identify the key factors in reoffending and desistance and analyse multi-agency work.

To fulfil the three aims of this RER, it was necessary to analyse literature from different evidence bases. To understand reoffending and desistance, a RER of academic literature and research was undertaken given the extent of research in these areas. A slightly different approach was necessary to understand multi-agency working as alongside academic literature there has been copious governmental reports and research evaluating multi-agency working published online. Therefore, a search of academic databases alone for understanding multi-agency working was not appropriate. The methodology is thus divided into two parts, it will first outline the steps taken to provide a synthesis of information on factors linked to reoffending and desistance. It will then outline the steps taken to provide a synthesis of information on multi-agency working.

2.1 Methodology for Understanding Key Factors in Reoffending and Desistance

To conduct this RER, four steps were taken (see figure 1). Firstly, three databases were identified to locate relevant literature. A recent review of recidivism and policy responses in Ireland used 12 databases to locate relevant literature (O'Donnell, 2020). There are some similarities between this RER and O'Donnell's (2020) review given that each focused on reoffending albeit in slightly different ways. O'Donnell's report focused on recidivism and this RER focuses on factors that may explain reoffending. As highlighted in the introduction both an understanding and recidivism and factors that explain reoffending are necessary to develop an in-depth understanding of reoffending behaviour. In addition, the current RER is unique as it analysed reoffending alongside literature on desistance and multi-agency working to reduce reoffending.

To identify the relevant literature to understand reoffending and desistance, criminological databases were searched for in the University of Portsmouth library catalogue which revealed 20 relevant databases. This RER selected three databases to locate relevant literature on reoffending and desistance:

1. Scopus
2. SocINDEX
3. Criminal Justice Abstracts with full text

These databases were chosen for several reasons. Firstly, SocINDEX and Criminal Justice Abstracts with full text are different to the databases used by O'Donnell (2020) and were chosen for this RER as there was a desire to capture more qualitative literature on reoffending to identify factors that explain reoffending. In addition, using a sociological database alongside criminological specific databases allows for multi-disciplinary approaches to reoffending and desistance to emerge. Lastly, Scopus was chosen for its broad and comprehensive coverage of research which is particularly important for desistance as this topic has yet to be subject to a RER for policymakers in Ireland.

Several steps were then taken to identify relevant literature and narrow the selection down (illustrated in figure 1). Firstly, it was necessary to identify key words that were searched for within the three databases: "reoffending" OR "recidivist" OR "reoffender", "repeat offender", "persistence" OR "persister" "criminal career" OR "career criminal", "desistance" OR "desister" OR "desisting". This search revealed a total of 28,764 articles which were then narrowed down.

Secondly, exclusion criteria were applied to reduce the total number of articles. Articles were narrowed down in four different ways:

1. Articles published outside of the EU (with the exception of the UK).
2. Articles published prior to 1990
3. Articles published in a language other than English
4. Articles that were not peer-reviewed

This resulted in a total of 2,702 articles remaining for analysis which was narrowed further.

Thirdly, duplicate articles were then removed which resulted in a remaining sample of 355 articles. Fourthly, the abstracts of the remaining articles were checked for relevance resulting in a total sample of 195 articles. Lastly, the journal quality of the remaining 195 articles were checked against the criminology and penology social science citation index (Clarivate, 2021). Only journals that appeared on the citation index were included in the final sample with an exception made for articles published by the Irish Probation Journal due to the unique Irish context that these articles offer. Therefore, the final total sample of articles to understand reoffending and desistance was 105.

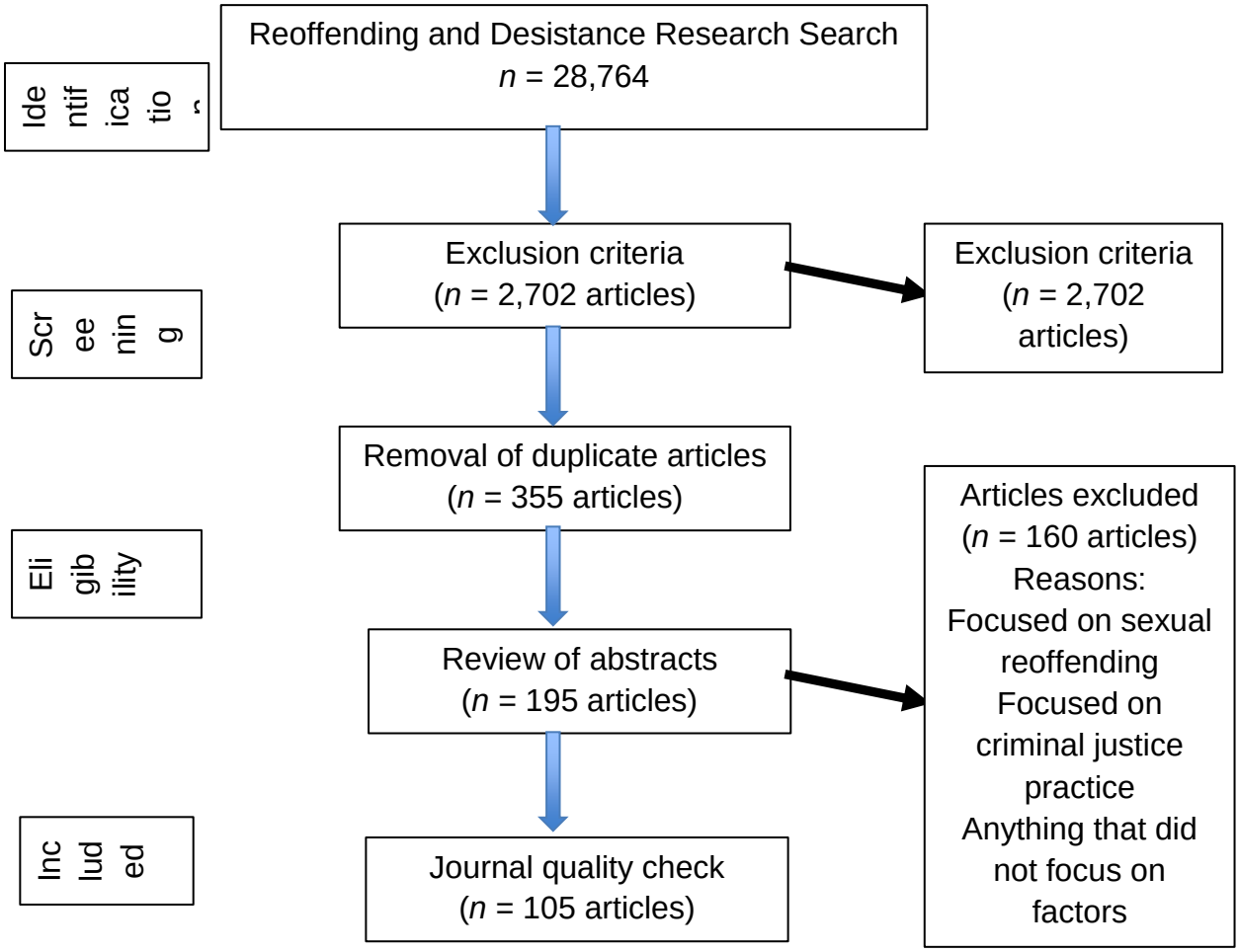
The last step was to read each article with a focus on the following: methodology, factors or concepts being tested or discussed, and outcome summary. This allowed for a comparison of factors across articles that could be combined into themes. The analysis used a thematic network approach to organise the themes that emerged in this RER (Attride-Stirling, 2001). Thematic networks were chosen as they allow for the organisation of:

1. Basic factors that shed light on reoffending, desistance, or multi-agency working.
2. Organising themes comprised categories of basic factors grouped together.
3. Superordinate themes which answer the research question and summarise an understanding of reoffending, desistance, and multi-agency working.

This RER will present the outcome of this analysis by systematically exploring each theme.

Figure 1

Process of article selection and refinement



2.2 Methodology for Understanding Multi-Agency Work in relation to Desistance

As highlighted in the introduction the evaluation of multi-agency programmes in relation to reducing reoffending required an analysis of academic literature and research alongside wider reports and policies on multi-agency working. This is because a lot of evidence in relation to multi-agency working is contained in government policies and reports published online. Therefore, the search strategy for multi-agency working was slightly different to include different databases so that policy documents and reports could be included. Due to the inclusion of grey literature for multi-agency working, there was also no quality check of journals as a lot of work was published on governmental websites. As far as was possible the inclusion criteria per the tender requirements were adhered to:

1. Articles published outside of the EU (with the exception of the UK).
2. Articles published prior to 1990
3. Articles published in a language other than English

To understand multi-agency working in relation to desistance a literature search was carried out on the following databases:

1. EBSCO Discovery service
2. Social Science and Humanities
3. Social Science index
4. Web of Science
5. Criminal Justice Database.
6. UK Government website

A wide selection of academic databases was utilised for the multi-agency aspect of the RER to capture multi-agency programmes and evaluations of multi-agency working. It was therefore important to capture a wide-ranging selection of knowledge on multi-agency working that could be narrowed to fit the requirements of the RER (outlined below). In addition, to identify relevant governmental research on multi-agency working the UK government website was reviewed for published empirical studies produced by the Home Office, Ministry of Justice, and its affiliates. The UK government website was chosen for two reasons. Firstly, the tender requirement for this RER required research outside of Europe (with the exception of the UK) to be excluded. Secondly, there is breadth and depth to the governmental policies and research that have been undertaken on multi-agency working in the UK which makes the UK government website an ideal source of information for this RER.

Similar to the steps outlined above for the reoffending and desistance search, a key word search was conducted. The following terms were searched for "partnership/multi-agency working" AND "effectiveness", "multi-agency working" AND "probation", "partnership" AND "probation", "partnership offender rehabilitation", "partnership resettlement prison". This revealed a significant amount of academic scholarship on partnership arrangements and multi-agency working in the criminal justice system. For example, searching for "multi-agency working" AND "probation' using the Web of Science and its associated databases found 13,673 articles in peer reviewed journals. Similarly, a search for "partnership" AND "probation' resulted in 20,062 articles.

Secondly, to reduce this number, the search term "effectiveness" was added to all searches. While this significantly reduced the number of available articles, the third step which reviewed abstracts found that very few articles contained empirical research on the effectiveness of partnership or multi-agency working. Several articles were effectiveness studies of a multi-agency intervention but the themes of partnership working, or collaboration were not the focus of the article. What emerged is that partnership or multi-agency intervention were used merely to describe the intervention. Therefore, evidence into two key aspects of the partnership evidence search were taken forward in greater detail. Separate searches were completed on

the academic databases for the key words “voluntary sector” AND “prison” AND “probation”, “peer mentor(ing)” AND “criminal justice” AND “prison(s)” to complete a more nuanced search for evidence of multi-agency working using these words.

In addition, linked to the difficulties in finding empirical research and discussions regarding the evidence base of partnerships and multi-agency interventions in peer reviewed journals, the search strategy was altered to include academic writing in peer reviewed books and book chapters. This was anticipated as the second author had previously researched these themes in two edited collections Pycroft and Gough (2010) and Pycroft and Gough (2019).

2.3 RER Structure

The remaining sections of this RER will outline the most common themes that emerged when analysing the literature on reoffending, desistance, and multi-agency work. This will be divided into four main parts:

1. Factors that encourage and influence reoffending.
2. Factors that sustain desistance.
3. Rationale and ideologies for multi-agency working.
4. Evaluation of multi-agency programmes.

3.0 Reoffending: Findings from RER

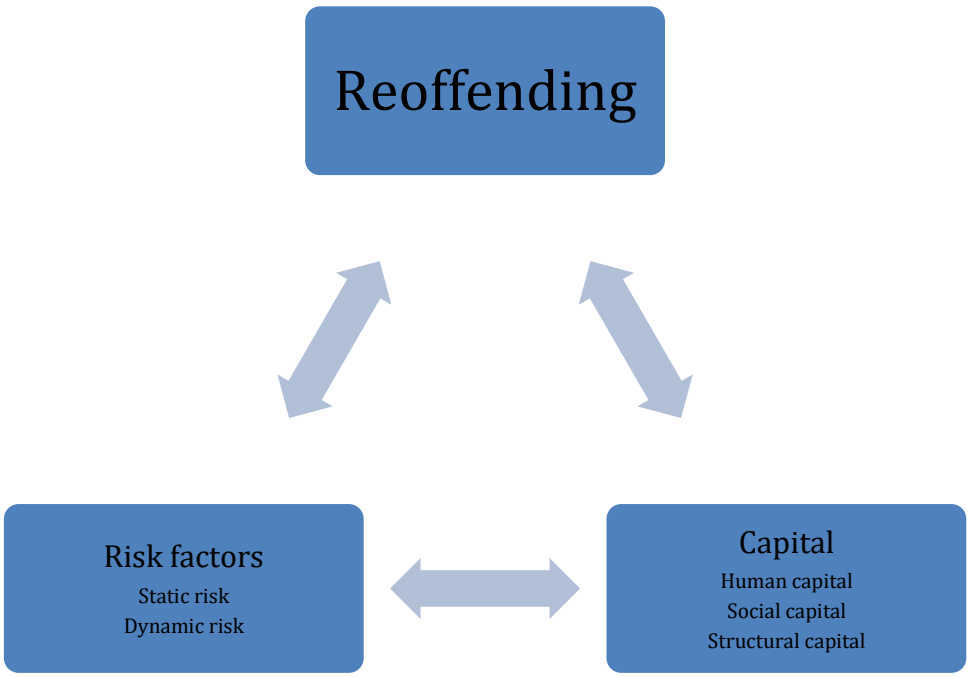
Key reoffending findings emerged from an analysis of a total of 105 papers that focused on reoffending and/or desistance because desistance research often makes conclusions about reoffending. The key themes that emerged to explain reoffending factors are outlined below and illustrated in figure 2:

1. Capital (personal capabilities or wider opportunities)
2. Risk

Sections 3.2 and 3.3 of this RER will discuss these themes in more detail.

Figure 2

Factors that emerged to explain reoffending



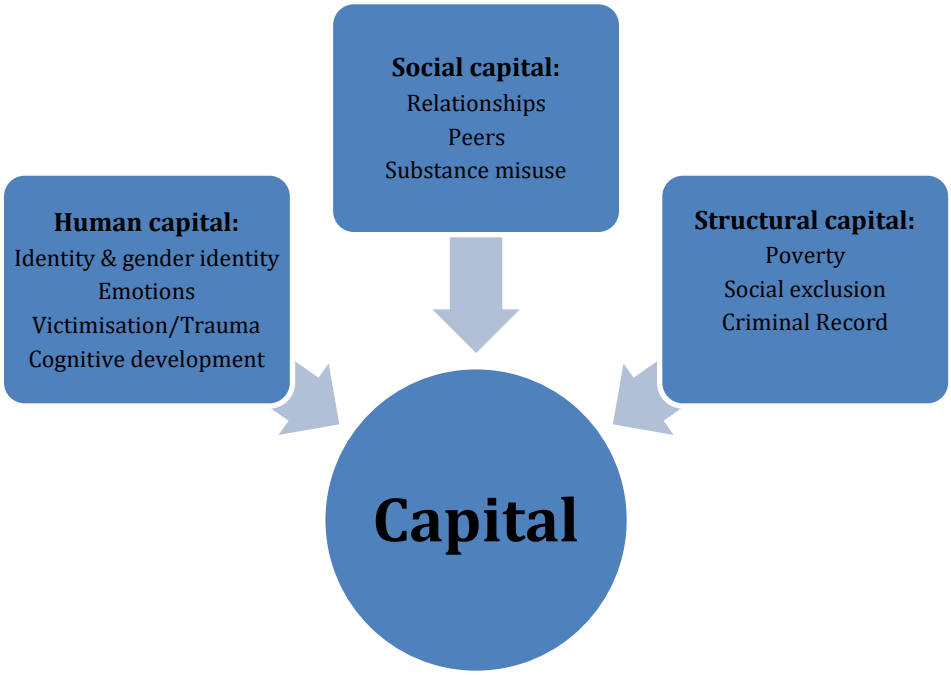
3.1. Capital

Capital can be used in different ways to explain reoffending and is a concept that is more common in desistance research. Human capital is commonly referred to as motivations or capacities that can be encouraged or developed whereas social capital refers to social opportunities or connections (McNeill, 2006; Hucklesby, 2008). Structural capital refers to wider opportunities based on social, economic, political, or cultural processes that are often outside of the control of an individual (Farrall and Bowling, 1999). Changes in capital are therefore relevant to reoffending and desistance as changes to capital in different ways may facilitate offending and facilitate desistance (Farrall, 2004). Unlike risk, capital is not necessarily something that can be quantifiably measured as it refers to personal capabilities or wider opportunities which are different for each person. What will be demonstrated to also be important is the value that people place in the opportunities they encounter.

This RER finds that a mixture of human, social, and structural capital is important to understand reoffending (see figure 3). In other words, people's reasons for engaging in reoffending are influenced by a combination of motivations and capacities, social connections and value placed in those connections, and formal processes all of which are separate strands of capital but interact with each other. Individual research papers analysed for this RER commonly focused on a specific type of capital rather than recognising the importance of interaction between human, social, and structural capital to explain reoffending. Each form of capital will be a primary focus in the sections below but will be discussed in relation to other forms of capital to develop a holistic understanding of reoffending. This is important as it may be relatively easy for criminal justice practitioners to help an individual gain human capital through courses and workshops but if economic and political processes result in the inability to procure a job then working on human capital alone is likely to be insufficient for reducing reoffending.

Figure 3

Interrelated forms of capital that explain reoffending



3.1.1 Reoffending: Human capital

Human capital is composed of different factors linked to motivations or individual capacities and this RER finds that the following factors are important for understanding reoffending: identity, gender identity, emotions, victimisation or trauma, and cognitive development. Each variable will be considered in relation to reoffending and placed in a wider context of social and/or structural capital.

Identity

Identity is an important aspect of human capital and is especially prominent in desistance literature. It is also identified as important to reoffending as those who feel that it is impossible to achieve a future crime free self are more likely to continue reoffending (Healy, 2014). Importantly, those in criminal justice settings may express indifference towards identity change and this may be reflective of the fact that their human agency is restricted by their wider situation (Kirkwood, 2016). Kirkwood (2016) found that practitioners can encourage identify change by working to reinforce

prosocial behaviour and this is something that could be achieved through multi-agency working. Changes in identity are often reliant on personal and social contexts (Hart and Healy, 2018; McMahon and Jump, 2018) so ultimately identity change is contextualised. Reoffending can occur when a person lacks the opportunities to envision and exercise a new identity (McNeill, 2006; Nugent and Schinkel, 2016) and this demonstrates the importance of interactions between human, social and structural capital in understanding reoffending.

Gender identity

In addition, gender identity is an underexplored factor in relation to offending behaviour despite the fact that gender identity is a significant aspect of human capital. There was no specific discussion in the research analysed about women's gender identity and reoffending however, masculinity in relation to reoffending was examined. Masculinity can encourage reoffending as reoffending allows men to achieve masculine goals that they may be restricted from attaining in traditional conventional ways (Carlsson, 2013; Hart and Healy, 2018; Hart, Healy and Williamson, 2020). This restriction may be linked to structural barriers such as a lack of education or having a criminal record which makes employment difficult, these will be discussed later in the RER. In this sense, men's human capacity to offend may be most likely when a person is restricted from accessing opportunities in conventional society.

Emotions

Thirdly, emotions are not commonly discussed in reoffending or desistance research, yet they may be important to understanding human capital and offending behaviour. In terms of reoffending the experience of loss emerged as a subjective factor that may orientate a person towards reoffending. Recent longitudinal research by Rutter (2021) demonstrated that bereavement can act as a push factor towards reoffending as experiences of loss are complex and can disrupt a person's desire to move away from criminal activity. In addition, attempts to move towards desistance are often fragile and despite initial motivation to change, reoffending can occur when people encounter obstacles such as loss which disrupts both human and social capital.

Emotions in this way may also help to identify gendered experiences of reoffending. Men are likely to feel frustration at the fragility of change and resort to reoffending whereas women are likely to feel desperation at the fragility of change and resort to reoffending (Halsey, Armstrong and Wright, 2017). Emotions can directly influence people's human capital and motivation to change and interactions with wider social or structural capital can help in understanding reoffending. In other words frustration at being unable to achieve and sustain desistance can result in self-sabotage in response to perceived mounting obstacles. These obstacles may stem from frustration with communication issues with criminal justice institutions and a perceived lack of institutional responsiveness (Halsey et al., 2017).

Victimisation

Violent victimisation, particularly intimate partner violence is a common offending pathway for women as the experience can often lead women to initiate and continue offending (Gålnander, 2019). In addition, violent victimisation can isolate women from conventional society, limiting their ability to take advantage of conventional social and/or structural capital (Gålnander, 2019). Previous experiences of excessive and recurring violence in women's lives damages their ability to form new social connections meaning that their ability to reconnect to conventional society is limited, demonstrating an important link between human and social capital. Furthermore, women exposed to recurring violence often suffer with post-traumatic stress disorder which further limits their ability to form new skills (human capital) and new connections (social capital) (Kreis, Schwannauer and Gillings, 2014; Gålnander, 2019). This can often create a sense of fear, isolation, and hopelessness which can explain why reoffending continues. This is emphasised by Kreis et al. (2014) who conducted a systematic review of 8 research studies on reoffending and highlighted that dysfunctional relationships can encourage further offending for women especially when combined with anxiety and depression, substance misuse, adult victimisation, and low self-efficacy.

More generally, victimisation is often a factor that is frequently referred to in research to explain women's reoffending as opposed to explaining men's reoffending but that does not necessarily mean that men have not experienced violent victimisation in childhood or as a result of their own reoffending behaviour. To understand

reoffending this RER stresses the importance of the interaction between human capital in terms of gender identity, self-efficacy and mental health; social capital in terms of value placed in creating new attachments; and structural capital whereby those with criminal records or a history of victimisation are constrained from achieving conventional goals. This constraint can provide an insight into why reoffending continues.

Cognitive development

Lastly, cognitive development is also important for human capital and developing an appreciation of reoffending. Given the link between human and social capital, cognitive impairments that affect social abilities may explain reoffending and will be discussed in more detail in relation to risk later in this RER. Thus, reoffending may be linked to low cognitive abilities such as mental impairments, antisocial personality, deficits in social skills, low self-control, and planning deficits (Gendreau, Little and Goggin, 1996; Sigurdsson, Gudjonsson and Peersen, 2001; Contreras, Molina and Cano, 2011; Seruca and Silva, 2015). Altogether cognitive impairments in relation to human capital in the context of constrained social and structural capital may doubly disadvantage people and explain reoffending. In other words when faced with barriers to achieving conventional human, social, and structural capital, individuals may achieve encouragement, affirmation and respect through reoffending (Barry, 2016).

Overall, constrained human capital in the context of social and structural capital helps to develop an understanding of reoffending. People may experience constraint in different ways:

1. Difficulty imagining a crime free future.
2. Imagining a crime free future but lacking opportunities to make vision a reality.
3. Experience of emotions.
4. Experience of trauma.
5. Cognitive impairments.

3.1.2 Reoffending: Social capital

When it comes to a specific focus on social capital, the most common social factors that can encourage reoffending identified in this RER are romantic relationships and peer relationships placed in a wider context of human and/or structural capital. Familial relationships will also be discussed later in terms of risk factors for reoffending.

Romantic relationships

Firstly, although a lot of research is based on male participants, experiences of romantic relationships in terms of encouraging reoffending are gendered. As mentioned previously Kreis et al. (2014) found that for women dysfunctional romantic relationships may increase reoffending. This could be because relationships can often be a source of victimisation or trauma and victimisation is often a route into criminality for women (Gålnander, 2019). In contrast romantic relationships for men can often support the desistance process (Webster, Macdonald and Simpson, 2006; Bersani, Laub and Nieuwbeerta, 2009; Lodewijks, de Ruiter and Doreleijers, 2010; Cid and Martí, 2012; Ellis and Bowen, 2017; Schinkel, 2019). However, relationships are more likely to support desistance when those relationships were perceived as meaningful (Savolainen, 2009; Kirkwood, 2016; Martí et al., 2021). Therefore, an individual's perceived meaning of the romantic relationships they engage in is crucial for whether that social factor will work as a turning point towards desistance. Overall, experiences of romantic relationships are gendered and interact with people's motivations whereby it appears that romantic relationships can motivate women to offend and motivate men to move away from crime. Based on this multi-agency approaches that are coordinated and holistic may be best to encourage prosocial capital and support a move away from offending. Holistic approaches in multi-agency working will be discussed later.

Peer relationships

Relationships that can encourage reoffending for men is the presence of anti-social peers. Gendreau, Little and Goggin's (1996) meta-analysis identified anti-social companions for men as an important predictor of reoffending and this is supported by other research (Mulder et al., 2011; Goodley, Pearson and Morris, 2021; Martí et

al., 2021). Friendships with peers could be linked to human capital such as a person's maturity and maturity itself is influenced by social norms (Coyle, 2019). Whatever the relationship, it is evident that individual actions are guided by the social relationships that matter most to the individual (Weaver and McNeill, 2015). Therefore, whether relationships are romantic or otherwise social capital and human capital do not exist independently of one another. For less mature or younger men it is likely that importance is placed on friendships as opposed to family or romantic relationships and this may encourage reoffending. Ultimately, this illustrates a link between immature capacity (human capital) and peer groups (social capital) to explain reoffending.

Deficits in social skills

In general, human capital in terms of deficits in social skills such as high impulsivity, low self-control, and lack of respect of social rules or values are common amongst people who reoffend (Contreras, Molina and Cano, 2011). This means that people who engage in reoffending may lack the capacity to form pro-social relationships demonstrating the link between human capital (the capacity to form bonds) and social capital (forming pro-social relationships). It is important to recognise that reoffending is not simply characterised by reduced social capital, people may have social connections that are meaningful to them but be anti-social in nature.

Ultimately, the quality of social capital may be the most important in demonstrating an interaction between human and social capital. For men and women antisocial or dysfunctional relationships can explain continued reoffending especially when those relationships are perceived as significant to the individual. Familial relationships will be discussed later in relation to static risk factors that can predict reoffending.

3.1.3 Reoffending: Structural capital

This RER finds that an understanding of structural capital can place human and social capital into a wider political, economic, and cultural context. In research conducted in Ireland and elsewhere, poverty, social inclusion, and the criminal justice system were identified as structural barriers (Hart and Healy, 2018; Hart, Healy and Williamson, 2020). Further structural factors of unemployment will be highlighted in the risk and reoffending section of the RER. Structural barriers are

outside the control of the individual and change over time presenting a significant challenge for individuals who do express a desire to change but struggle to overcome barriers. Of importance is the fact that structural capital and human capital interact together and therefore constrained structural capital may explain continued reoffending (McMahon and Jump, 2018).

Poverty

Poverty has been identified as a significant structural barrier whereby people who reoffend are likely to have a low socioeconomic status which when combined with social and human factors such as issues in building conventional social skills and issues with self-control can explain continued reoffending (Contreras et al., 2011). This is emphasised by longitudinal research conducted in England demonstrating that poverty can have a prevalent impact on reoffending especially when combined with constrained social and human capital (Whitten et al., 2019). Lastly, Bell, Butler and Lawther's (2021) qualitative research with 29 men in Northern Ireland found that low socioeconomic status within neighbourhoods can allow for criminal subcultures to form. These subcultures can normalise offending and give rise to substance misuse encouraging reoffending to continue. The links between human, social, and structural capital are therefore important and structural barriers may explain reoffending as they restrict an individual from meeting conventional human and social capital standards.

Criminal record

One of the most important structural barriers in relation to reoffending is having a criminal record as this further constrains an individual's ability to obtain conventional human or social capital. International research has commonly found that people with a criminal record and official label of offender are significantly disadvantaged as a criminal record serves to exclude a person from society and achieving conventional goals (Herzog-Evans, 2011; Maruna, 2012; Halsey, Armstrong and Wright, 2017; Hart, Healy and Williamson, 2020). For example, in a French context research examining legal obstacles and desistance found that it is important for the legal system and wider society to acknowledge people's change (Herzog-Evans, 2011). Furthermore, longitudinal research examining setbacks in desistance identified that people tend to sabotage their own desistance journeys in response to obstacles

such as a lack of responsiveness and support from criminal justice institutions (Halsey et al., 2017). In this scenario, reoffending became the preferred response to perceived unfeasible situations. Lastly, Maruna (2012) highlights the issue with rehabilitation programmes that do not help people overcome structural barriers such as a criminal record.

In an Irish context the Spent Convictions and Certain Disclosures Act 2016 has been argued to be too narrow in scope as only one conviction under certain circumstances can be expunged after a period of seven years and there are exemptions to the legislation too, e.g., most sexual offences are excluded (Hart, Healy and Williamson, 2020). This RER concludes that an official label of offender restricts people from obtaining conventional human and social capital and this can explain why reoffending becomes a person's primary option. In particular, Hart et al. (2020) demonstrate the impact stigma stemming from a criminal record can have in excluding people and their skills from society. Therefore, programmes in practice or criminal justice settings that only focus on building human capital or social capital may not effectively tackle the issue of reoffending as wider structural barriers also serve to constrain an individual.

Overall, wider economic and political factors act as barriers to desistance and serve to constrain an individual from achieving higher levels of human and social capital. This constraint further disadvantages groups who are marginalised and may explain why people continue reoffending and also why some people resume offending after attempts to change fail.

Conclusion to capital section

The sections above demonstrated the importance of interactions between human, social, and structural capital can help to explain reoffending. These forms of capital interact and can explain reoffending through constraint in that wider contextual factors often constrain an individual's capacity and opportunity for change. Given variability in research findings, a chronological order for different types of capital cannot be identified but to understand reoffending it is crucial to recognise that all three types of capital are interrelated. In other words it is not enough to have human capital in terms of an opportunity to change if there are also no corresponding

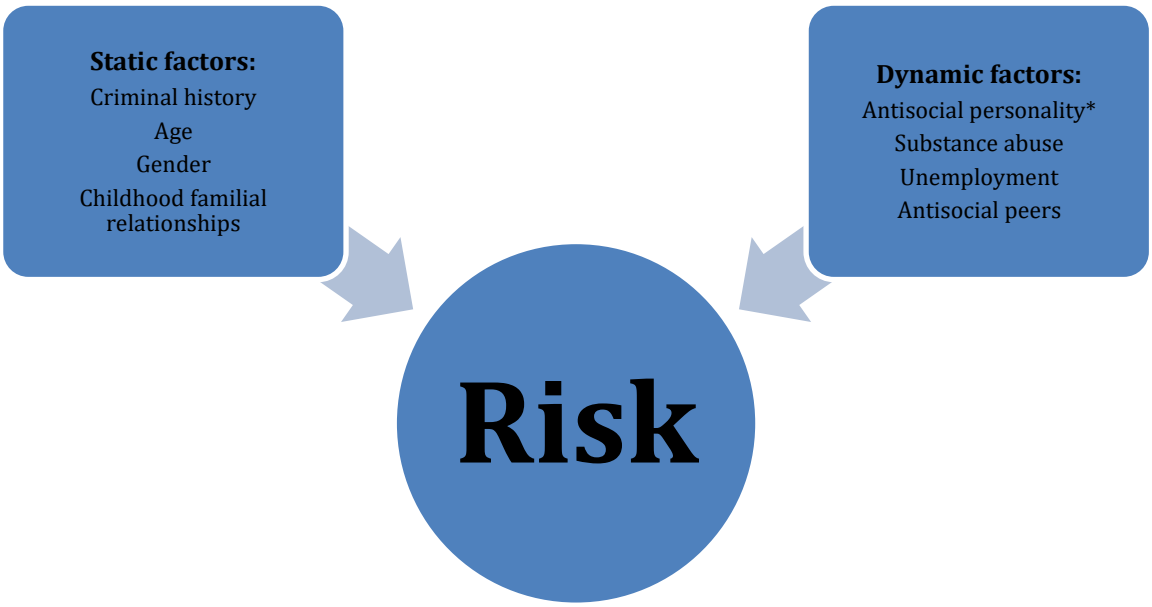
changes in social and structural capital. Reoffending can thus be understood through difficulties in securing conventional human, social, and structural capital.

3.2 Risk Factors

The second emerging theme to understand reoffending stems from quantitative measures of risk. Risk factors allow for the prediction of reoffending and identification of personal deficits that can be treated through rehabilitation. It is therefore common to see discussions of risk factors linked to the "what works" and rehabilitation paradigms. Rehabilitation paradigms are typically concerned with measuring the effectiveness of interventions or institutions in creating change and have therefore been concerned with addressing the question "what works" in generating change (Maruna, 2017). Desistance focuses more on individual journeys and empowering an individual to take advantage of their strengths (Maruna, 2017). Because this RER is focusing on reoffending and desistance rather than risk and rehabilitation, risk will be briefly discussed below and further discussions of risk are present in the O'Donnell (2020) report. Risk factors linked to reoffending are typically divided into static and dynamic factors (see figure 4) and will now be outlined.

Figure 4

Interrelated forms of risk that explain reoffending



3.2.1 Static factors

Figure 4 outlines the common static risk factors identified in this RER. Static risk factors linked to reoffending are usually the fixed aspects of an individual's history which cannot be changed through rehabilitation or interventions (Goodley et al., 2021). However, the distinction between static and dynamic factors is not always clear cut as dynamic factors can become static when they more accurately describe a person's past behaviour or situation and some factors such as age can be considered both a static (age at first offence) and dynamic risk factor (current age).

Criminal history

Criminal history is a static risk factor which has been identified as significant in a variety of research studies. Two separate meta-analyses found that adult criminal history was one of the most significant ways to predict risk of future reoffending (Gendreau, Little and Goggin, 1996; Eisenberg et al., 2019). Similarly, Hancock and Raeside (2009) and Mulder et al. (2011) found that previous offence history was an important way of identifying further offending. In addition, criminal history is significant for predicting women's offending and although men are more likely to reoffend than women, Sivertsson (2016) found that as convictions accumulate over time men and women's risk of reoffending is similar. Static risk factors may therefore be useful for practitioners as data on criminal history can be accessed and measured. However, a sole focus on risk does not allow for an understanding of wider human, social, and structural factors discussed above to emerge that may further explain reoffending. Analysing both risk and capital can allow for a more holistic understanding of reoffending to emerge.

Age

Those who start offending as juveniles are far more likely to commit more crime than those who start offending as adults (van Koppen, 2018). In addition, longitudinal research in England found that there is a positive relationship between the age of onset of criminality and the subsequent length of criminal career so that those who start offending early in life are more likely to have longer criminal careers (Farrington, 2015, 2019). Farrington (2019) examined the duration of criminal careers and identified that those with 7 or more convictions had an average career length of

26.17 years. This highlights a relationship between the number of convictions a person obtains and the duration of a criminal career. In trying to prevent reoffending it may thus be important to target interventions at those who have received their first conviction (Mulder et al., 2011). Across criminal careers it is common to see a reduction in the frequency of offending over time. Therefore, reoffending is more likely for those who start offending at young ages.

Family history

Another important static risk factor to consider when predicting reoffending is a person's family background. Coming from a large family (3 children or more) or a broken home was more common for those who reoffend (Contreras et al., 2011). Contreras et al. (2011) explain that a broken home could be illustrated when families may have been involved with child protection services, have a criminal record, and/or be involved in the consumption of drugs. Financially, most family settings were low income and families were likely to reside in disadvantaged communities (Contreras et al, 2011). Whitten et al.'s (2019) more recent longitudinal research conducted in England supported the findings outlined above finding that those who reoffend consistently in life are likely to have a parent with a criminal record. In addition, poverty and family stress are likely to impact reoffending.

Gender

Interestingly the RER identified mixed findings for the significance of gender in predicting risk. Generally gender is not considered the strongest predictor of reoffending compared to other risk factors yet males are usually found to have higher risk scores for reoffending compared to females (Cuervo and Villanueva, 2015). Eisenberg et al.'s (2019) meta-analysis of 27 research studies on general and violent recidivism found that criminal history and anti-social behavioural pattern were the strongest predictors of reoffending but surprisingly found that gender, race, and ethnicity had no or a negligibly significant predictive value for reoffending. Goodley et al.'s (2021) meta-analysis of 43 research studies on recidivism somewhat agrees with Eisenberg et al in that they found that criminal history and antisocial personality pattern were significant predictors of reoffending. However, Goodley et al. (2021) found that men were more likely to reoffend.

More specifically Sivertsson, (2016) may be able to explain different findings in relation to gender and risk of reoffending as he conducted quantitative research on recidivism patterns and gender with a large sample of 27,071 males and 7,531 females in Sweden. It was identified that men are more likely to reoffend compared to women but as convictions accumulate over time, men and women have similar risks of reoffending. Linking to the findings on capital above it may be that once men and women are involved in a cycle of offending that they struggle to overcome the barriers that result from a criminal lifestyle and therefore reoffending rates across gender become similar. This may be reflected in data on recidivism from the Central Statistics Office in Ireland (CSO, 2020) which reveals that after a 3-year follow-up serving time on probation, men were reconvicted at a rate of 45.9% compared to women who were reconvicted at a rate of 41%. Gender is therefore important to consider in relation to risk as once men and women are caught in a cycle of reoffending they are likely to face similar structural barriers. In addition, gender may determine how treatment may be optimised for an individual (Eisenberg et al., 2019).

In total, static factors can be used to identify a person's risk for reoffending. However, this RER urges caution in relation to heavily relying on risk factors in criminal justice practice. People often can feel disempowered by risk assessments (Maruna, 2012). In addition, risk assessments can result in identifying deficits in an individual which are then targeted to be cured through rehabilitation (McNeill, 2006). As identified earlier in relation to capital targeting individual deficits or risk factors alone does not necessarily target social or structural capital that this RER has found to be equally important in understanding reoffending.

3.2.2 Dynamic factors

Dynamic risk factors are changeable and usually link to a person's human capital and behaviour (Goodley et al., 2021). It is worth noting that in Goodley et al.'s recent meta-analysis, static factors were identified as being better overall predictors of reoffending compared to dynamic risk factors. However, Eisenberg et al.'s (2019) meta-analysis found that dynamic risk factors are more strongly related to recidivism. Caution should therefore be taken when it comes to prioritising static or dynamic risk factors over the other. In addition, dynamic factors can be considered static when they refer to factors that are in a person's past.

Antisocial personality

The most significant dynamic risk factor in relation to reoffending identified in research is having an antisocial personality. Antisocial personality is having pro criminal attitudes/orientation, lack of concern for others, antisocial scale score (scale to measure antisocial attitude) and abusive attitudes (Eisenberg et al., 2019). Meta-analyses from Gendreau, Little and Goggin (1996) and Eisenberg et al. (2019) found that an antisocial personality pattern was an important predictor of future offending and this is also supported by other research (Sigurdsson, Gudjonsson and Peersen, 2001; Goodley et al., 2021). Antisocial personality is thought to emerge from an individual's social context and be linked to a connection between a person's biology, psychology, and socio-environment and an early age of onset of problem behaviour which is commonly seen for male children (Moffit, 1994, cited in Goodley et al., 2021). Antisocial personality may in turn link to forming antisocial relationships and antisocial attitudes and beliefs (Goodley et al., 2021) and this can serve to sustain reoffending behaviour.

Antisocial personality is therefore linked to wider social and human factors which highlights the importance of understanding an individual's social and structural capital in relation to their human capital or capacity to develop a holistic understanding of reoffending. Antisocial personality can restrict human capital by limiting a person's ability to form prosocial relationships and limit a person's ability to engage in prosocial behaviour such as securing employment. These barriers to conventional society may explain reoffending behaviour.

Substance misuse

Substance misuse is an important risk factor but not as strong a predictor of reoffending compared to other static and dynamic risk factors discussed above (Goodley et al., 2021). Deficits in self-control are common amongst people who reoffend which may explain relapses into substance misuse (Contreras et al., 2011). In general, there is a strong relationship between changes in substance abuse and recidivism so it is likely that those who relapse will engage in reoffending behaviour (Eisenberg et al., 2019). Sivertsson (2016) found that substance misuse is a stronger predictor of reoffending for women as women tend to misuse substances more than men. Placing substance misuse in context is important and continued addiction or

setbacks in recovery from addiction stem from an interaction between human, social, and structural capital and a contextual understanding of substance misuse can thus help to explain reoffending.

Financial problems

As discussed in relation to structural capital above, financial issues can also predict risk of reoffending. Having a low socio-economic status may mean that crime is legitimised for people from a young age (Contreras et al., 2011). Offending may also be more pervasive when an individual experiences poverty along with other static factors such as low school attainment and family stress (Whitten et al., 2019).

Antisocial peers

Poor socialisation or socialisation that is not considered conventional is common amongst people who reoffend (Contreras et al., 2011; Sigurdsson, Gudjonsson and Peersen, 2001). This may result in people forming anti-social relationships to escape a sense of isolation which encourages offending behaviour. This links to the discussion above in relation to maturity and social capital that can encourage an individual to spend more time with criminal peers. This has also been identified as a significant dynamic risk factor of reoffending (Goodley et al., 2021; Eisenberg et al., 2019; Mulder et al., 2011; Gendreau et al., 1996).

Employment

There is a relationship between employment and people's reduced risk of reoffending. In an Irish context, a relationship was identified between unemployment and reimprisonment (O'Donnell, Baumer and Hughes, 2008). However, interrogation of the literature reveals that this relationship may be complex in that people's perceived importance of that work and the stability and working conditions of that employment may also be important to consider (Skardhamar and Telle, 2012). This is supported by Ramakers et al. (2017) who found that job retention and working in a perceived high quality role is likely to reduce reoffending. Employment in relation to recidivism is discussed in O'Donnell (2020) and employment will be discussed in more detail in the desistance section of this RER.

Conclusion: Risk factors

The factors outlined above, antisocial personality, substance misuse, financial problems, employment, and antisocial companions can predict likelihood of reoffending. Dynamic factors have often been prioritised in rehabilitation due to the fact that they can be changed and targeted through intervention (Eisenberg et al., 2019). However, it is important to note that dynamic factors can become static when they more accurately describe a person's past behaviour or situation so changes in dynamic risk factors may be more important to focus on.

Overall, both static and dynamic factors can predict the likelihood of future offending and for this reason they are useful in practice. Relying solely on targeting risk factors means that there is generally an emphasis on human or social capital and this does not help people to overcome structural barriers that may impede their ability to move away from crime. In addition, measuring risk is common to rehabilitation paradigms which means that treatment often focuses on correcting deficits whereas, desistance focuses on an individual's strengths and a review of desistance will form section 2 of this RER. In sum, to develop a holistic understanding of reoffending risk factors should be considered within a wider context of human, social, and structural capital.

3.3 Conclusion: Reoffending Findings

Taken together both human, social, and structural factors alongside risk factors can outline the key factors that help to explain reoffending. Human, social, and structural factors develop an understanding of reoffending whereas risk factors allow for the prediction of reoffending.

It is important to recognise the relationship between factors linked to capital and factors linked to risk. Dynamic risk factors in particular link to human, social, or structural capital for example, antisocial personality reflects a person's capacity meaning is it linked to human capital. What ultimately emerges as important for understanding reoffending is a relationship between capital and risk factors focusing on:

1. Relationships
2. Individual capacity
3. Wider context surrounding that individual.

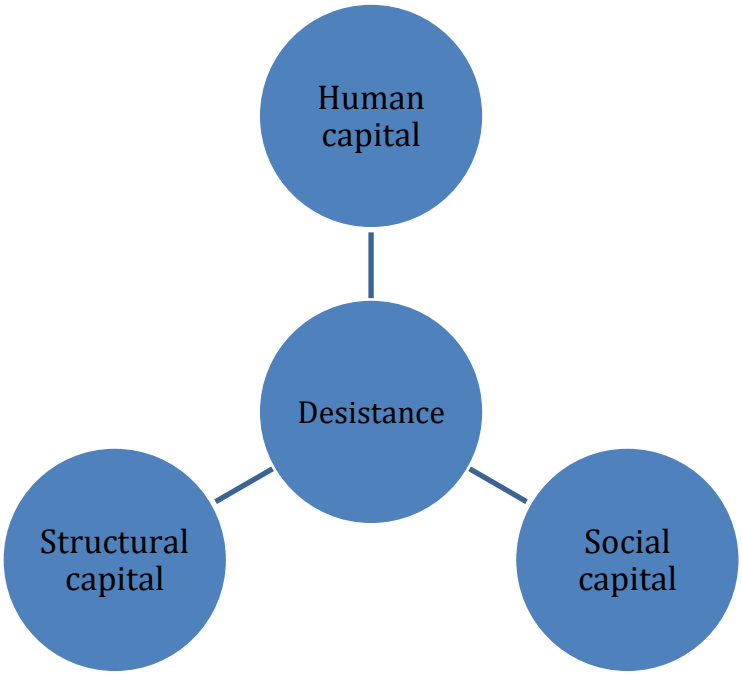
These factors do not occur in a vacuum, they are interdependent but human factors are most commonly targeted in rehabilitation programmes. It is important to consider and pay attention to wider social and structural factors which may also explain continued reoffending.

4.0 Desistance: Findings from RER

Key desistance findings emerged from an analysis of 49 papers. The key theme that emerged to explain desistance is: changes to capital. In a desistance context, this can be understood as changes to human, social, and structural capital (see figure 5) and while all forms of capital are interrelated each type of capital will be discussed individually as this reflects discussions within the research analysed.

Figure 5

Desistance: Changes to Capital



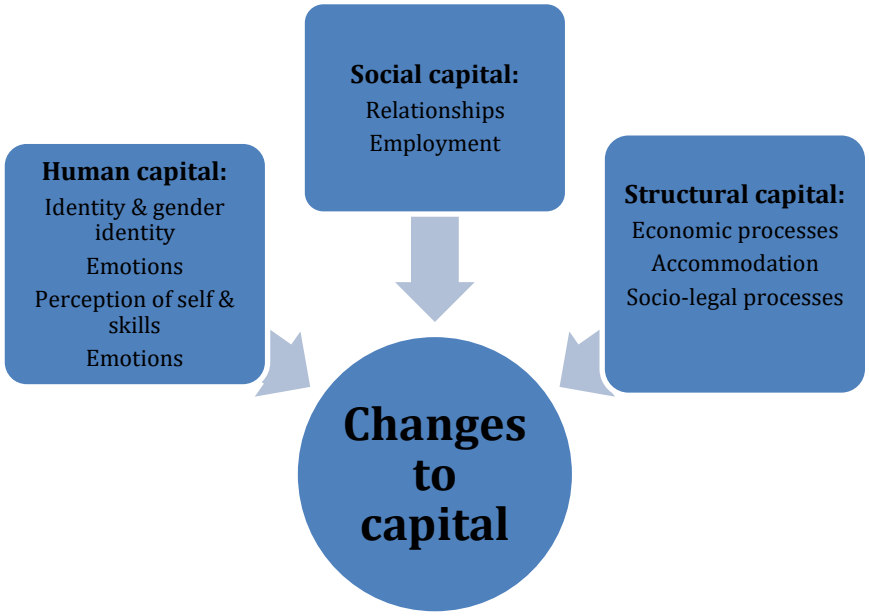
4.1 Changes to capital

Desistance can be explained through changes to capital in the form of human, social, and structural capital. Similarly to the reoffending section above, these three forms of capital are interrelated and changes to human capital only for example may not be sufficient to sustain desistance. The RER will now individually consider changes to each category of capital in relation to desistance while also demonstrating how each respective type of capital has a relationship with other types of capital (see figure 6).

In desistance literature human capital is commonly referred to as motivations or capacities that can be encouraged or developed to support the desistance journey whereas social capital refers to social opportunities to support the desistance journey (McNeill, 2006; Hucklesby, 2008). Structural capital also refers to wider opportunities to support the desistance journey based on wider social, economic, political, or cultural processes (Farrall and Bowling, 1999). As discussed above rehabilitation paradigms tend to target human factors and this is problematic as it does not fully acknowledge that social and structural factors are related to human factors. Desistance as a paradigm recognises the importance of human, social, and structural factors in the process of change (Maruna, 2017).

Figure 6

Changes to capital: Human, social, and structural capital



4.1.1. Desistance: Human capital

Human capital refers to factors linked to a person's motivations or individual capacities. Changes to human capital may thus explain desistance journeys and changes to identity, gender identity, perceptions and skills, and emotions will be discussed below. Individual motivations or capacities alone may not be enough to maintain the desistance process as motivations and capacities are experienced in a wider social and structural context.

Identity

One of the key factors in understanding desistance and human capital is identity. A person's identity is shaped and negotiated over time (Kirkwood, 2016) and identifying as a former offender or ex-offender can help people sustain desistance. In an Irish context, multiple research studies have emphasised the importance of identity change for desistance (Marsh, 2011; Healy, 2014; Seaman and Lynch, 2016; Hart, Healy and Williamson, 2020).

Using identity as a key factor Healy (2014) identifies three different dimensions of desistance that demonstrate an interaction between human, social, and structural

capital. Firstly, imagined desistance whereby an individual imagines a desired crime free future self but believes that this is unachievable. This belief may be influenced by wider social and structural circumstances that do not encourage change. Secondly, authentic desistance whereby an individual can turn an imagined crime free self into a reality. Authentic desistance may thus occur when human, social, and structural capital align to support change. Lastly, liminal desistance whereby an individual desires a crime free self but is constrained by their circumstances in achieving that desire. This liminality idea is also supported by Halsey et al. (2017) who emphasise the fragility of desistance whereby people may desire change but lack the ability to achieve and maintain that change.

These three dimensions are useful for understanding desistance in detail as there is a focus on human capital while also acknowledging the importance of wider social and structural capital in terms of constraining or supporting the desistance process. What is also crucial for maintaining desistance is that an individual perceives value to wider social and structural capital (Kirkwood, 2016; Nugent and Schinkel, 2016). In other words, it is not enough to desire change and have the opportunity to change if the individual does not understand or place value in that opportunity.

Gender identity

Gender identity is another important aspect of human capital in relation to desistance although it is not as commonly discussed as identity in a general sense. In terms of a masculine gender identity and desistance, Carlsson (2013) argues that maintaining desistance allows men to fulfil conventional expectations of masculinity such as employment and family life. This is emphasised by Cid and Martí (2017) who stress that the maintenance of desistance is linked to transitions to conventional adult roles. For women, experiences of trauma and victimisation can constrain the desistance process as this experience restricts a women's ability to reconnect with conventional society (Gålnander, 2019; 2020). Desistance therefore is supported by an interaction between human, social, and structural capital as a person's identity is shaped by their social-structural context (Cid and Martí, 2012). A person's gender identity stems from the "meanings ascribed to male and female social categories within a culture" (Wood and Eagly, 2015: 461). The interaction of human, social and structural factors

may thus be experienced differently according to gender meaning that men and women may have different desistance journeys.

Perceptions and skills

Thirdly, an individual's perceptions or skills form part of their human capital. Desistance can be sustained through the development of new insights into an individual's thoughts and emotions (Hart and Healy, 2018). This is also stressed by Coyle's (2019) research in Northern Ireland with young adults whereby individual understandings of maturity can help an individual to understand their own desistance journey. Individuals may have different understandings of maturity that are influenced by collective norms within society and expectations associated with transitions to adulthood. People may perceive their previous offending behaviour as immature which allows people to distance themselves from offending.

Therefore, new insights and understandings are important in sustaining desistance but so too are the development of skills. Hucklesby (2008) stresses the importance of employment related skills as structurally people may be constrained in the employment market by a criminal record but gaining employment related skills can help to prevent further constraint. In this sense employment itself is a form of social capital, access to the employment market is structural and the development of skills is part of human capital. Developing these skills may help to make employment when secured feel more worthwhile and important to an individual which can be important in sustaining desistance. Hence, the perspective of the individual on their own desistance is important (McMahon and Jump, 2018) and this is imperative for practice which could focus more on helping an individual to develop new awareness of themselves and their desistance.

Emotions

Further building on human capital Sturm et al. (2021) identified that developing emotions such as trust and attachment between the offender and criminal justice practitioners can act as a powerful pull factor towards desistance. What is important is that emotions are placed in context and the research cited above demonstrated an interaction between emotions and other social factors for example, feeling a sense of trust and attachment with a probation officer which builds both human and social

capital. This combination of human and social capital may allow an individual to maintain desistance. However, the loss of social capital in the form of an important relationship in life may serve to diminish social and human capital and highlight the fragility of desistance.

Conclusion: Human capital

Human capital has thus emerged as a key factor in this RER of desistance research. More specifically, the individual aspects in understanding human capital and desistance transpired as:

1. Identity and gender identity
2. Perceptions of self
3. Support (skills and emotions)

However, human capital alone is usually not enough to maintain the desistance process. Desistance therefore relies on an interaction between human, social, and structural capital and this RER will now review social and structural capital in turn.

4.1.2 Desistance: Social capital

Wider social capital is also important as it may be necessary to enable an individual to change their identity and social capital may also work as a turning point initiating the desistance process, for example employment may be a consequence of desistance rather than a cause of desistance (Skardhamar and Savolainen, 2014). There is thus debate about whether identity change or changes in social circumstances happen first to initiate the desistance process. This RER cannot provide a conclusive answer however, it is evident from the research analysed that both human and social capital are necessary to sustain desistance.

Romantic relationships

For men, social capital is important whereby individuals make changes or move away from antisocial peer relationships (Martí et al., 2021). This is often linked with the formation of stable romantic relationships or parenthood for men which reinforces normative conventional social ties in people's lives (Webster et al., 2006; Bersani, Laub and Nieuwbeerta, 2009; Savolainen, 2009). Given changes to modern society whereby marriage is being increasingly delayed, Savolainen (2009) found that cohabitation can be equally important in encouraging desistance. Relationships

interact with human capital in that the meaning that a person attributes to a relationship is also key (Martí et al., 2021). As discussed in relation to reoffending, particular actions are guided by the social relationships that matter most to people (Weaver and McNeill, 2015). Desistance therefore can be sustained through conventional changes to a combination of factors linked to social and human capital.

Employment

Employment is another form of social capital that is important in sustaining desistance (Savolainen, 2009; Farrall and Bowling, 1999;). However, employment contains the caveat that a criminal record serves as a significant barrier to securing a job. When employment is secured it emerges as significant when that employment is stable (Webster et al., 2006); fulfils conventional expectations (Carlsson, 2013; Hill, Blokland and van der Geest, 2016); and has value to the individual (Kirkwood, 2016). Therefore, changes to human capital alone without changes to wider social and structural capital are unlikely to sustain long-term change (Nugent and Schinkel, 2016). In other words, it may be important that employment has value to the individual and it is also important that there are employment opportunities for people with criminal convictions. This RER thus finds that an interaction between human, social, and structural capital is necessary for maintaining desistance as employment for former offenders needs to be an available option, needs to feel worthwhile to an individual, and the individual needs the appropriate skills to conduct the work itself (Skardhamar and Savolainen, 2014; Schinkel, 2019).

Conclusion: Social capital

In sum, social capital provides individuals with the opportunity to change and/or the opportunity to sustain change. As discussed in relation to risk factors rehabilitation often targets human deficits to build human capital but it does not commonly focus on social or structural capital (Maruna, 2017; 2021; McNeill, 2006). Desistance as a paradigm may therefore be better for understanding how people maintain a process of change. So far, this RER finds that desistance is dependent on an interaction between human, social, and structural capital as people need the motivation and capacity to change along with the opportunity to secure social capital in a context of disadvantage stemming from structural barriers. Opportunities to build human and

social capital can often be constrained due to a criminal record and thus structural capital will be discussed in more detail.

4.1.3 Desistance: Structural capital

It is important not to forget or neglect the wider cultural, political, and economic context an individual finds themselves in when it comes to desistance as this links to an individual's motivations and opportunities for change. Desistance is influenced by wider change that an individual experiences and thus human, social, and structural capital are interrelated (Farrall and Bowling, 1999; Seaman and Lynch, 2016).

Economic processes

Wider economic processes whether through state support or stable employment are important in sustaining desistance (Webster et al., 2006). It thus makes sense that financial debt can impede the desistance process as it constrains an individual's ability to imagine a crime free future identity (Todd-kvam, 2019). This may be particularly important when it comes to substance misuse as addiction can be considered a state of powerlessness (Marsh, 2011) and wider state support is necessary to support sobriety and disengagement from substance misusing peers (Webster et al., 2006).

It is also worth stressing that problematic substance misuse is usually bound with structural problems such as disadvantaged neighbourhoods and low educational attainment (Frisher and Beckett, 2006). In general, the neighbourhood in which a person resides and the stability of accommodation are important to desistance. Securing suitable accommodation provides an individual with the security necessary to take advantage of other opportunities for change (Stansfield, 2016). Based on this it may be important for the state to aid in removing structural barriers in terms of access to welfare to support desistance journeys and this will be discussed further in relation to accommodation below.

Socio-legal processes

The role of the state is also important when it comes to socio-legal processes. For desistance to be maintained it is important that an individual feels like their new identity is recognised by society (Herzog-Evans, 2011). Herzog-Evans (2011)

suggests judicial certification of desistance whereby a court can declare that a person has desisted and in France this is done in a number of ways. Firstly, French law limits the amount of information available for criminal record checks and limits the amount of people who can access criminal files. Secondly, part of criminal records which damage career prospects can be expunged. Thirdly desistance is acknowledged by deleting all criminal record files and this is known as judicial rehabilitation. Judicial rehabilitation conditions are extremely strict and some key conditions a person must meet are:

1. Wait a set amount of time before applying and this is dependent on the crime committed.
2. Pay all damages to the victim.
3. Attend a court hearing to test a person's ability to take responsibility for criminal behaviour.
4. Demonstrate exemplary behaviour since their conviction (e.g., changes to relationships, sobriety, attempt to secure employment).

While the conditions of judicial rehabilitation are strict, its scope is broad as judicial rehabilitation can be applied to all types of sentences and serious crimes (although there are exceptions when it comes to sexual crimes). Maruna (2012) also discusses the idea of accrediting desistance to try and remove the stigma of an offender label. Therefore, changes to the legal process or wider advocacy on acknowledgement of desistance could help to sustain desistance by working to reduce the stigma of a criminal label (Herzog-Evans, 2011; Maruna, 2017).

Furthermore, multi-agency working in a criminal justice setting can result in turning points towards desistance (Williams and Ariel, 2013) so human, social, and structural factors do intersect to support desistance journeys. The role of the state is important as desistance itself or changes to human and social capital alone do not necessarily remove the stigma or label of offender (Hart and Healy, 2018). Therefore, state support and multi-agency work could be particularly beneficial in supporting changes to human, social, and structural capital that maintain desistance. This will be discussed later in the RER.

Accommodation

Homelessness is a common feature in the lives of people who regularly engage in reoffending. People can overcome barriers such as homelessness and continue their desistance journeys but this is rarely achieved through the individual alone, quality and timely social interventions and support is necessary to help people move past barriers (Halsey et al., 2016). This is emphasised by Hart et al. (2020) who stress the importance of respect and compassion in criminal justice practice. Further, in a context of community disadvantage, accommodation along with opportunity to engage in employment or education is important to encourage desistance (Stansfield, 2016). Stansfield (2016) emphasises that accommodation is particularly important in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Conclusion: Structural capital

Structural capital therefore is important for understanding the wider context that surrounds an individual and understanding how that context may constrain or enable desistance. Given that structural factors interact with human and social factors there is an opportunity for partnership working between statutory agencies to build human, social, and structural capital to encourage and support desistance. This will be discussed later in this RER.

4.2 Conclusion: Desistance Findings

Like reoffending, desistance can also be understood through a combination of human, social, and structural factors (see table 1 for comparison). When it comes to understanding desistance the role of human capital (in particular that of identity) has been prioritised in research and this puts responsibility on criminal justice practice to consider how to encourage and support changes to capital. This RER has emphasised the importance of skills building and trust between the individual and probation officer to build human capital and support identity change, this co-exists alongside a need for social opportunities for people to take advantage of and use their skills and a need for the removal of structural barriers such as stigma, criminal records, and financial support.

Desistance is different to rehabilitation as rehabilitation often focuses on risk factors and is therefore deficit based compared to a strengths-based desistance paradigm. To understand desistance it is necessary to account for changes to human, social, and structural capital which can explain initial change and maintenance of change.

Table 1

Summary of capital in relation to reoffending and desistance.

Capital	Reoffending	Desistance
Human capital	1. Cognitive impairments. 2. Constrained or limited capacities.	1. Identity change through imagining a crime free future self. 2. Ability to fulfil this self is dependent on social and/or structural factors.
	1. Identity and/or gender identity as constrained or restricted by wider social and structural factors that encourage reoffending.	1. Transition to conventional roles important for maintaining men's desistance. 2. Women's previous victimisation acts as a barrier to desistance.
	1. Trauma or victimisation as a gendered pathway that can explain women's reoffending.	1. Human, social, and structural capital must have value to the person. 2. Individual must have the capacity to take advantage of social and structural opportunities.
Social capital	1. Gendered pathway that can explain women's	1. Romantic relationships help to maintain desistance for

	reoffending linked to experiences of victimisation.	men and reduce time spent with peers. 2. Relationships must be meaningful to the person.
	1. Peer relationships are a gendered pathway that can explain men's reoffending.	1. Stable meaningful employment can also sustain the desistance process.
Structural capital	1. Poverty acts as a barrier to desistance. 2. Poverty is also combined with issues developing conventional social skills.	1. Financial security is important for maintaining desistance and removing a sense of powerlessness.
	1. Fatalistic continuation of reoffending for people excluded from conventional society.	1. Suitable accommodation is important for desistance. 2. Suitable accommodation can also help people to maintain sobriety and spend less time with peers.
	1. Criminal record preventing an individual from rejoining conventional society.	1. Wider recognition of change.

5.0 Government strategies of offender rehabilitation: Turning to partnerships and multi-agency arrangements.

5.1 Introduction

Having outlined the importance of facilitating change to human, social, and structural capital to support the desistance process, this part of the RER charts both the governmental demands for partnership between state authorities and non-state actors in the field of offender rehabilitation. Firstly, section 5.2 will provide an overview of approaches to multi-agency working and this will be followed by section 5.3 containing a critical analysis of collaborative working while also evaluating different multi-agency programmes.

This focus on multi-agency working is justified as partnerships, both including and beyond the Irish Prison and Probation Service, were outlined as important in the Irish government's (2014) Strategic Review of Penal Policy where a key focus was given to inter-agency cooperation and creating the conditions for good policy making in the future. More recently, goal 3 of the Department of Justice Statement of Strategy 2021-2023 includes a focus on reducing reoffending and introducing strategies to encourage collaborative working in criminal justice. Furthermore, the Criminal Justice 2022-2044 Sectoral Strategy Strategic Pillar 4 notes how the Department of Justice (DOJ) aims to increase inter-agency understanding and support staff to innovate and think beyond organisational boundaries.

As Brewer (2014) notes the crime reduction benefits of having a coordinated or joined up approach to service delivery has been praised by both politicians and academia. However, such benefits of the "partnership turn" are often made with limited empirical evidence or as result of common-sense notions**.** Earlier sections of this RER highlighted that pathways to criminality and leaving crime behind are increasingly understood as involving complex and interrelated factors between human, social, and structural capital. Multi-agency interventions are increasingly understood as involving a plurality of providers delivering "multi modal" social and psychological offender rehabilitation.

5.2 Ideology and partnership

As discussed in the methodology the tender requirement for this RER required research outside of Europe (with the exception of the UK) to be excluded. This has resulted in a lot of literature for this RER stemming from the UK where the partnership agenda has been the subject of academic scrutiny and research. In a UK context the explosion of the partnership agenda has had significant implications for public sector criminal justice agencies, most notably the Probation Service and the broader field of offender supervision or rehabilitation. Against the backdrop of successive government calls for "joined-up government", by politicians of the left and right, rearrangements between state and society have remained a central feature of government strategies of the Criminal Justice System (CJS) since the 1990s in England and Wales and elsewhere in Europe. Such arrangements incorporated new language and practices. As Crawford (1999: 25) notes

> where once the state was expected to hand down an authoritative answer for the problems and needs of society now we are increasingly witnessing a situation in which the same problem and needs are rebounding back onto society, so that society has become implicated in the tasks of resolving them.

Tasks such as the rehabilitation and supervision of those involved in the criminal justice system are now performed by a coordinated yet fragmented and dispersed set of arrangements involving state institutions, private companies, charities, and citizens. Crawford concludes by stating that the government has increasingly "emphasised responsibility for crime problems is now everybody's", implicating the different sectors of activity, new professionals, and laypersons, including those on the receiving end of the criminal justice system.

Internationally Osborne and Gaebler (1992) go further to note how the call for partnerships increasingly represents a new notion of the state and its relationships with those whom it governs. This is most obvious by the separation of the "steering" responsibilities of government via strategy, policymaking, and the resourcing of state activities away from its traditional "rowing" duties, regarding the implementation and delivery of offender rehabilitation services. As such, the state increasingly "governs

at a distance" by weaving its ambitions through the corporate, charitable and community sectors (Rose, 1996).

The historical call for partnership arrangements in offender rehabilitation has been characterised by fluid conceptualisations reflected by the language used to earmark collaborative activities. Terms such as "partnership", "collaboration", "cooperation", "multi-agency working", "interagency working", "contestability" and "marketisation" have been employed to capture different governance structures creating an offender rehabilitation "complex" across the CJS and civil society.

Indeed, in England and Wales since the 1980s and 1990s this emphasis on partnership and inter-agency working has been a feature of virtually every piece of published guidance designed to stimulate service development in the arenas of drug misuse, children's services, health care, and criminal justice. The genesis of the partnership or multi-agency working ideal in criminal justice stems from early 1980s developments in situational crime prevention whereby the central government "trickled down" funding to grass roots projects in the fields of offender rehabilitation. Probation Circular 8/1984 on crime prevention urged the Probation Service in England and Wales to broaden its remit and cooperate with local crime prevention activities, in doing so further separating the ethos of the organisation away from client centred social work.

Despite having a track record of informal and ad-hoc relationships with voluntary bodies, the Probation service in England and Wales formalised partnership as part of a centre stage move in the 1990 Criminal Justice Act. As Rumgay (2003) argues,

> partnership or multi-agency working characterises the unique position of those delivering offender rehabilitation activities within the criminal justice system, inhabiting the world of the formal institution of the legal system whilst simultaneously engaged in the community based social support systems needed by those in the system to leave crime behind.

In offender rehabilitation, the Probation Service was challenged to ensure that 5% of its financial resources from central government were utilised to stimulate a

flourishing independent sector of community associations, charities, and private companies (Home Office, 1990). Here partnership alluded to the mutually beneficial contractual nature of relationships between probation areas and the independent sector. Implicit in partnership and multi-agency approaches to, for example, domestic abuse reduction, is also the notion of redefining expertise, from valuing the professionally certificated expertise to a new model which values the sharing and communication of diverse knowledge especially when service users or local expertise is accessed.

In sum, the ideologies that sustained the origins of multi-agency working are:

1. Dispersal of responsibility for rehabilitation amongst non-state actors
2. Efficiency
3. Crime prevention
4. Crime reduction
5. Redefining expertise

The RER will now analyse different mechanisms of multi-agency working in more detail based on the ideologies above.

5.2.1 The “third way”

The first mechanism of multi-agency working to be discussed involves the state distancing itself from the delivery of rehabilitation and increasing efficiency. This can be illustrated by multi-agency working that aligns with the theme of a “third way” of working.

The centrality of partnership working was evident in the creation of the National Probation Service (NPS) in 2001 in England and Wales and greater clarity was provided by the 2003 Carter review of correctional services about managing services and reducing crime. Third way thinking related to the modernisation of social democracy and underpinned Labour’s review of the correctional services according to Carter (2003). Holding a centre ground between an omnipotent state and a free market, Carter’s review places partnership between the state and civil society at the core of the future of the penal system.

The vision for a future state was as a commissioner of services to incarcerate and supervise offenders via a mechanism of contestability via a mixed economy of

provision involving statutory, private, and not for profit sectors. Cooperation, partnership, and contests amongst a plurality of actors in the penal sphere were reformulated to maximise effectiveness, better performance and efficiencies without the necessary research and evidence gained from pilot studies for example. Here, multi-agency working takes the form of governments distancing themselves from policy delivery and instead repositioning itself as a consumer who operates to ensure the best deal for them and their taxpayers.

The outcome from the partnership above is conceptualised around adding capacity to achieve National Probation Service outcomes. However, the then newly formed National Offender Management Service's (NOMS) partnership strategies around effective interventions involved ill matched notions of collaboration and competition (Faulkner, 2008). According to NOMS (2004: 7) it was necessary to use
a highly collaborative approach to add value and achieve diversity in service delivery…recognising the value of other sectors in adding strength, capacity and capability. Building a mixed economy through challenge and competition will help ensure that the public receives the most effective service delivery at the best price Therefore, documentation on contestability in probation featured a Home Office directive to introduce a central directive for a 5% target for Probation Boards to subcontract their duties in 2006 increasing to 10% (House of Commons, 2006). Finally, New Labour's reconfiguration of how partnerships and multi-agency arrangements can be delivered culminated in the Offender Management Act 2007 which imbedded national, regional, and local commissioning arrangements with the independent Probation Trusts (formally Probation Boards) being the lead provider of offender management.

Multi-agency working therefore characterised by the "third-way" prioritises efficient delivery of rehabilitation services with the state through probation taking the lead in offender management and utilising resources in the private and not-for-profit sectors.

5.2.2 Coalition government and the move from contests to privatisation

The culmination of partnerships and multi-agency arrangements in government strategies for the offender rehabilitation and supervision field in England and Wales occurred as part of the 2010 coalition government's retrenchment of public sector

expenditure entitled austerity. In this governmental strategy an additional justification for the contracting out of state services was made, via references to statutory provision as public sector “monopolies” or the state “crowding out” private enterprise. As such the marketisation of probation to involve a diverse array of delivery agents was accelerated in strategies such as the “Breaking the Cycle: Effective Punishment and Rehabilitation and Sentencing of Offenders” green paper (Ministry of Justice [MoJ], 2010). With a focus on austerity, the state’s role in partnerships and multi-agency working moved from a central commissioning role to merely being one potential provider amongst many competitors in the marketplace. Probation employees, for example, were encouraged to form mutual or employee-owned enterprises to help create and add value to the market in offender management and rehabilitation.

The appointment of Chris Grayling as Justice Minister marked a further intensification of marketisation of multi-agency arrangements in probation with the ““Transforming Rehabilitation” strategy separating the statutory Probation Service and those private sectors and not for profit organisations it had enjoyed long standing working relationships (MoJ, 2013). Under this strategy the statutory Probation Service would retain responsibility for the management of high-risk offenders and services to the court whilst the efforts to rehabilitate the vast proportion of low and medium risk offenders would be contracted out to a network of other organisations formally called Community Rehabilitation Companies on a payment by results basis. Importantly, Probation lost its commissioning role to engage and work with other agencies and all commissioning efforts were to be undertaken in the central government. It is worth noting that the Transforming Rehabilitation strategy has since been determined as “controversial” and “ineffective” meaning that all supervision of offenders will now be the responsibility of one National Probation Service which will work with the private and voluntary sector in delivering rehabilitative work (UK Parliament, 2021).

Indeed, the degree of involvement of non-statutory actors in the reconfigured offender management field post 2010 has led some commentators to chart what they see as the rise of a “penal voluntary sector” (Tomczak 2017) evident in several western liberal democracies undergoing significant restructuring of their public

services. Tomczak (2017: 3) notes an array of "*charitable and self-defined voluntary agencies working with prisoners, ex-offenders, their families and their victims in prison, community and policy advocacy programmes*".

Different strategies in regard to multi-agency working have thus resulted in various different mechanisms for multi-agency working (summarised in table 2).

5.2.3 Conclusion

As demonstrated above, often partnership working and multi-agency arrangements are discussed in simplistic terms with respect to the bringing together of a variety of actors' resources, skills, and knowledge bases to meet a commonly shared aim. However, as this section outlines, in practice both the complexity and the fluidity of cooperative practice is noteworthy. It is certainly worth reflecting upon when discussing cooperative, partnership, or multi-agency arrangements, how such arrangements are envisaged in strategic and policy terms and how questions such as who delivers might transform the field of practice both in terms of the statutory and not for profit sectors. Whilst government policy for offender rehabilitation has transformed over the last 30 years with respect to partnership arrangements and multi-agency working irrespective of political persuasion, the arguments underpinning this strategy have consistently been understood as obtaining greater:

1. Efficiencies
2. Effectiveness
3. Flexibility
4. Innovation in provision.

As such competition and plurality of delivery are often touted as providing more efficient and better outcomes for the public. The RER will now consider the evidence base for the different mechanisms that underpin multi-agency working in criminal justice.

Table 2

Mechanisms in place to facilitate multi-agency working.

Mechanism	Description	More formal
Conscription	Mandating or commanding external agencies through mechanisms such as legislation to carry out prescribed functions to rehabilitate or manage offenders. E.g., Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPAs), Youth Justice Units.	
Co-optation of external organisation	State actively seeks cooperation of non-state actors in formal arrangements such as contract specifications, funding arrangements. This requires meeting contract targets and the keeping and disclosure of records for monitoring by the commissioner/contractor. E.g., Peterborough One Project.	
Entitlements and incentives	State offers incentives as a means of inducing institutions or individuals' involvement with policies aimed at offender rehabilitation. See array of informal contracts and funding arrangements.	
Education and capacity building	Providing education or training programmes to raise awareness amongst non-state actors to realise their own expertise and responsibilities to become involved in offender rehabilitation.	

5.3 Collaborative advantage? Ideology and evidence base

Despite the increasing centrality of partnership and multi-agency working in the governance of offender rehabilitation outlined above, it is somewhat surprising that the evidence base underpinning such activities has remained slim. Empirical research has often neglected to evaluate the relative effectiveness of widening the number of actors involved in offender supervision and rehabilitation. For example, even the HM Inspectorate of Probation's (1998) report into "Strategies for Effective Offender Supervision" which established the 'What Works' principles in offender supervision, makes greater reference to case management and programme delivery than the evidence behind partnership in delivery. Indeed the "potential for collaboration" in the report is conceptualised narrowly as Probation areas are formally working together in programme design, training, and research (Underdown, 1998: 135). This RER finds that the evidence base in offender rehabilitation and resettlement largely ignores the increasing government emphasis on partnership working and multi-agency arrangements to tackle increasingly complex social problems. This is important as earlier this RER emphasised complex interactions and change in human, social and structural capital as significant for sustaining desistance and thus further research on the effectiveness of partnership working itself in relation to desistance may be necessary.

Issues with measurement

Moreover, the partnership literature acknowledges significant methodological problems in the evidence base. The key here is the difficulty of attributing cause for any changes in recidivism or rehabilitation that occur to the effects of a single intervention as social welfare and criminal justice agencies are in constant states of flux and a range of community-wide programmes are introduced and life events occur over the same time (Klitzner 1993; Martin and Sanderson 1999). Thus, any outcome evaluation of a multifaceted partnership programme would normally consider the summative impact of the different contributing projects partners as a whole, often without any separation in terms of different treatment outcomes or alternatively without evaluating the power of the network of provision.

Furthermore, researching the effectiveness of any intervention is commonly measured by the performance of activities solely attributable to the single agency under scrutiny. As a result, multi-agency or partnership effectiveness is unlikely to be a valued evidence-based commodity since it looks to the impact of a network or web of provision rather than being owned by a single agency. As such the evidence presented below specifically refers to the impact of a specific partnership or network of collaborative efforts.

5.3.1 Multi-agency working arrangements and complex needs

Complex solutions

Perhaps the strongest support for partnership and multi-agency working comes from related evidence in criminal justice and substance misuse research which emphasises the need for increasingly complex and interrelated services for the complex and interrelated problems which citizen's experience. For example, Christian and Gilvarry (1999) noted the need for joined up interventions in youth services to respond to the presence of issues in the client group as diverse as substance misuse, pregnancy, trauma, and care experience which cannot be addressed by a well-intentioned organisation working in isolation. This type of multi-agency working thus tries to respond to human, social, and structural barriers that an individual may face when trying to desist from crime. As a result, co-production between public, private and voluntary sectors takes advantage of the increase in assets, skills, and resources in all these sectors.

Service delivery

However, much research evidence on partnerships is often to advocate for service delivery rather than provide evidence as to effectiveness. For example, Rumgay (2004) in a criminal justice setting refers to the importance of partnership arrangements in rethinking the problem of criminality and how policymakers respond to those who commit crime and this aligns with the idea that desistance is linked to human, social, and structural capital demonstrated earlier in the RER. This link is emphasised through a focus on interdisciplinary partnership and multi-agency working which contrasts sharply against the influence of psychologically informed treatment programmes which have shaped understandings of rehabilitation in increasingly pathological ways regarding the assessment of risk, and addressing and

treating cognitive deficits and moral aptitude. Rather Rumgay (2004: 125) notes how a focus on partnership reforms rehabilitation and reflects a growing appreciation of the complexity of a broad range of social problems, including crime, and the consequently poor prospects of resolving them through the typically uncoordinated efforts of organisations working in comparative isolation As a result, partnership arrangements represent an alternative conceptualisation approach to reducing recidivism based upon the different agency's tensions and adaptations to understanding the crime problem.

Rumgay (2004: 125) notes further that a focus on partnerships allows for a more rounded understanding and solution to crime problems to emerge.thus, the partnership perspective shifts the focus of attention in understanding crime problems from a restricted concern with unique attributes of offenders to the systemic relationships between the personal, social, health and economic problems of those neighbourhoods where crime proliferates. Consequently, the solution to crime problems is also viewed systemically, rather than individually, couched less in terms of specific treatment programmes for the correction of offenders' faults, and more in terms of the relationships between the agencies charged with tackling each of those broader problems.

Successful partnership arrangements are therefore discussed not in terms of an empirical evidence base of how such arrangements have had a significant treatment impact or been attributed as key to a specific rehabilitative outcome. Rather evidence of success is related to the characteristics of partnerships which are more likely to be successful. As such the evidence of successful delivery within partnerships highlights the importance of:

1. Clarity of leadership.
2. The relative clarity of aims and roles.
3. The introduction of clear processes and plans to communicate the aims and goals of such relationships to frontline staff.
4. The ability to manage any resultant conflicts of power and suppression between different professional groups which emerge when organisations work together.

Furthermore, Rumgay (2004) advocates the benefits of partnership arrangements as they afford an increase in interdisciplinary innovation, diversity of provision and develop flexible, local solutions to criminality.

Lastly, Rumgay (2004) highlights how the partnership perspective which may include organisations who are more client centred and offer choice to service users, allow offenders to have access to the solutions to identical problems of non-offending disadvantaged groups. From this point of view, provision of support services to those groups can be improved by integrated multi-agency practice. Thus, the partnership approach looks to inclusion of offenders in mainstream provision during and after a period of punishment, alongside other disadvantaged groups, rather than exclusion.

Challenges of identifying effectiveness of multi-agency working

There are evidence challenges in research with respect to identifying specific effectiveness of partnership or multi-agency working arrangements within broader intervention programmes. This is illustrated by Mazerolle et al. (2021) who conducted a systematic review of multi -agency programmes with police as a partner for reducing radicalisation. Mazerolle et al. (2021: 76, my emphasis) highlight that:

> Multi-agency partnerships involving police are often implemented to foster collaboration and reduce radicalisation to violence. There is **no clear evidence to support this approach**, although a small number of studies **provide mixed evidence** about the effectiveness of multi-agency partnerships for improving collaboration. Some studies offer insights about the costs and ways to best implement multi-agency programmes.

Indeed, the absence of appropriate research methodology to research arrangements is reflected in their systematic review's methodology. The systematic search identified 7,384 potential studies, of which five assessed the effectiveness of police-involved multiagency interventions. A total of 181 studies examined how the intervention might work and the implementation factors and economic considerations. Of the 181 studies, only 26 studies met the threshold for in-depth qualitative synthesis to more comprehensively understand the mechanisms, implementation, and economic considerations for police involved multiagency interventions. Overall, findings were cautiously positive suggesting that collaboration

may be enhanced when partners take time to build trust, construct and communicate shared goals, not overburdened staff with administration, include strong privacy provisions for intelligence sharing between agencies, and provide ongoing support and training.

The MoJ in England and Wales retain their own evidence base for Transforming Rehabilitation reforms to the offender rehabilitation field and have concluded that evidence regarding the impact of the multi-agency arrangements themselves was difficult to establish. Rather they point to multi-agency arrangements in high level payment by results pilots and where multi-agency arrangements were apparent in local arrangements but give no specific references or examples. The MoJ (2013: 11) state:

> Integrated offender management and multi-agency working can play an important part in addressing the complex needs of offenders and reducing reoffending. There are indications of potential benefits from joint working at a local level and adopting a case management approach to addressing individual circumstances. The way such initiatives have been implemented makes it difficult to establish evidence on their impact on reducing reoffending. However, there is some useful evidence that supports this approach involving, for instance, the police, probation, voluntary sector, health services, local authorities and other partners at the local level.

This RER will now start to examine the evidence for specific types of multi-agency programmes.

5.4 Multi-agency programmes

5.4.1 Integrated Offender Management

The Ministry of Justice and Home Office introduced the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) policy in 2009. Its purpose was to provide a broad framework for Local Criminal Justice Boards (LCJBs) and other relevant partnerships to manage adult offenders who cause the most damage locally. The policy stated that with existing partnerships, such as LCJBs and other such bodies, improvements in community safety, crime reduction and efficiency had been achieved. More specifically, at a localised delivery level, operational partnerships involved in

programmes such as the Prolific and other Priority Offender (PPO) and Drug Interventions Programme (DIP) ". . . had been associated with a period of sustained reductions in crime" (Ministry of Justice and Home Office, 2009: 5).

Thus, the IOM framework was based upon current (at the time) and, arguably, successful partnerships and offender schemes. The Home Office and Ministry of Justice (2010) suggested that local IOM arrangements would be most effective when they involved all local agencies, inclusive of statutory and voluntary, with the latter playing their own role in tackling the factors and risks associated with offending behaviour. Given that there are many interrelated and complex factors that can explain reoffending, the IOM arrangements involving a variety of partners can ensure a more overarching approach to supporting desistance as they can focus on a variety of factors at the same time. The IOM framework intended to provide an umbrella under which existing multi-agency arrangements could be consolidated rather than to create new structures of working relationships. The approach stipulated that importantly all partners would be working together (i.e., multi-agency partnerships).

While it is clear there has been considerable investment and development of the IOM framework in incorporating existing offender schemes and programmes, there is currently no systematic understanding as to whether this approach is effective, for example in reducing reoffending. With its small presence in the literature, it is clear that there has been limited quantitative statistical analysis of reoffending data which evidences that IOM can effectively reduce reoffending in prolific and other priority offenders (PPOs). For Senior's research on multi-agency approaches in IOM schemes, he notes "the jury is still out about how effective the model is at reducing reoffending" (Senior, 2014: 7).

Reviewing the effectiveness of IOMs

Based upon the research findings from 15 articles of published research studies into multi-agency Integrated Offender Management programmes (IOM), a systematic review of IOM services found that IOM programmes increased the collaboration between the police and probation statutory partners, partly as a result of being co-located (Hadfield et al., 2021). In addition, the framework increased the involvement

of the not-for-profit sector and provided greater reach to target vulnerable service users such as female offenders with vulnerabilities. The evidence suggests that the involvement of substance abuse and mental health specialists in the IOM resulted in better outcomes for service users in these areas.

With respect to locality, evidence on the systematic review of IOM notes that each multi agency initiative was tailored to local needs and as a result differed slightly in each area (Hadfield et al., 2021). As a result, in some regions the IOM worked both with statutory clients and had expanded its provision to include those who had been involved in the criminal justice system on a voluntary basis both in terms of early interventions and voluntary participation after statutory supervision had ended.

Finally, the review noted how susceptible the not-for-profit sector was financially as a result of payment by results funding mechanism in a mixed economy of service provision (Hadfield et al., 2021). The voluntary sector's involvement was problematic in terms of the level of capital required to take part in these multi-agency arrangements with funding only forthcoming should targets be met sometime after the project had started.

5.4.2 "Mixed economy" model of service provision

McSweeney and Hough's (2006) research summarises the lessons from working with offenders with multiple needs that derive from a five-year evaluation of a demonstration project in London called 'From Dependency to Work' (D2W). The programme targeted offenders with drug problems who needed help to find work. The novel feature of the programme was its recognition that many such offenders had multiple needs linked to human, social, and structural capital. These included not only drug dependence and unemployment, but also mental health problems, illiteracy, and housing needs that had to be met in a coordinated multi-agency approach. D2W was described in the research as forward-thinking and ambitious, in that it tried to coordinate the work of statutory and voluntary agencies to ensure speedy access to appropriate services and promote multi-agency partnership by designing an integrated process for dealing with multiple needs.

The D2W programme was launched in January 2000 and was gradually rolled out across the 12 Inner London boroughs until March 2004. It was a large-scale and ambitious multi-agency enterprise culminating in the participation of 26 different agencies providing a range of interventions, totalling 120 practitioners across the fields of drug, alcohol, mental health, employment, and literacy needs. The intention was to coordinate the work of statutory and voluntary agencies to ensure speedy access to appropriate services and to promote effective collaboration between partner agencies that offered a multi-disciplinary range of support.

Evaluating D2W

Despite the high level of participation from a range of not-for-profit providers and the ambition of the scheme, McSweeney and Hough (2006) highlight some negative findings centred upon considerable implementation failure which significantly compromised the effectiveness of the multi-agency arrangements and subsequent outcomes for service users. Most prominent was a lack of leadership from the main statutory player London Probation Trust who was described as more concerned with internal reorganisation than the success of the programme. In terms of failure of leadership from the statutory sector, referral rates were substantially lower than originally planned. To a large degree this was because the original sponsor, the London Probation Service, failed to use the programme to the expected extent.

In terms of the success of multi-agency arrangements to maximise service user outcomes, the programme was also much less successful than expected in delivering multi-disciplinary support. Most notably, although referred offenders typically had multiple needs, half of all D2W clients engaged with only one service. This in part reflected a lack of clarity about the sequencing of different forms of support for clients, in part resistance to the multi-disciplinary assessment procedure and in part a funding regime that eroded mutual trust and did too little to foster joint-working. Finally, very few of those who engaged with D2W ended up in long-term stable employment as a direct result of the programme. Stability and perceived quality of employment was identified earlier in this RER as important to desistance. This demonstrates that a clarity of clarity about how to support people in multi-agency working may harm desistance.

D2W was unusual in being led by a voluntary sector organisation, and in relying on a large network of voluntary sector providers. These organisations were all less financially robust than statutory sector bodies, most leading a ‘hand-to-mouth’ existence on short-term grants, and they were inevitably very focused on their own financial survival. McSweeney and Hough (2006) note how tensions emerged between the central management team and its partners or subcontractors. On the one hand, the funding arrangements served to reward single-agency work, but not partnership work. Not surprisingly, agencies invested their effort where the rewards were to be found.

On the other hand, the accountancy procedures worked in a way that destabilised partnership working and rewarded silo thinking. The mutual trust and commitment needed to pursue shared long-term benefits often proves fragile. In D2W’s case, management of performance and contract compliance seriously eroded trust between partners. It proved very hard to get agencies to work in genuine partnership, which requires a degree of altruism in support of their partners’ objectives. The spirit of altruism withered on the vine in the face of the chill winds of managerialism; in deciding their priorities partners kept their eye firmly on the financial bottom line.

It is clear from this important piece of evidence that the mere presence of partnership and interagency arrangements is no guarantee of success of effectiveness. Clearly how such multi-agency arrangements are operationalised are crucially important for success. Overall, the research provides evidence as to just how difficult it is to hold an extensive network of partners together with fragile funding mechanisms, power relations, and professional defensiveness all contributing to implementation failure to the detriment of service users.

5.4.3 Partnership and Innovation

A study by Halford and Smith (2022) reports on the initial results of a multi-agency pilot programme implemented to improve the safeguarding of victims of intimate partner violence and subsequent effectiveness of criminal investigations. Conducted in the North West of England the pilot programme partnered independent domestic abuse and sexual violence advocates from the voluntary sector with patrolling

uniformed police officers, in a dedicated domestic abuse police response unit. The findings are considered significant as it begins to evidence the fact that the police and partner agencies are far more likely to be able to safeguard a victim if they also focus upon their immediate needs, as opposed to a focus on merely gathering evidence and zero tolerance towards domestic abuse. Multi-agency working focusing on safeguarding may be particularly important for women who offend as earlier this RER demonstrated that violent victimisation can serve as a pathway for women's offending and experiences of victimisation can constrain women's desistance. The research above identifies the effectiveness of investment in partnering with independent services to increase the capacity to conduct this function alongside the police.

Evaluating partnership and innovation

Halford and Smith (2022) claim to provide one of the first empirical examinations of the response by agencies regarding the effectiveness of efforts to help support victims of intimate partner violence. More importantly for the focus of this RER, the use of partnership arrangements between the statutory sector and not for profit advocacy agencies increased survivor engagement with the criminal justice system and increased prosecutions thereby offering victims greater possibilities for both support and justice. As Halford and Smith (2022) state it is specifically "the presence of organisations from different sectors which serves to increase capacity to support and investigate." As such the evidence presented suggests that partnerships with appropriate expertise from the not-for-profit sector served to transform the police response, offer victims new levels of support and increased the likelihood of vulnerable victims engaging in the intervention.

5.4.4 Partnership and the penal voluntary sector

A priority for the state (England and Wales) appears to be developing a network of new actors in offender rehabilitation which affords an increasingly central role to the voluntary sector. As Tomczak (2014) notes, intermediate bodies which sit between the state and the market have increasingly been given a mandate to become involved in restructured social welfare services. Taking England and Wales as a case example, both Breaking the Cycle (2010) and Transforming Rehabilitation

(2013) strategies posit an increasing role for charities and non-profit making organisations in the penal system and offender rehabilitation services.

However, this recent government ambition to pluralise the offender rehabilitation field reflects a historical continuity whereby charities have often been involved with aiding offenders in prison and the community. Moreover, the penal voluntary sector (Tomczak, 2017) has only recently been seen as worthy of research and academic attention and as such there is a dearth of research on the voluntary sector's involvement in offender rehabilitation than in the more obvious fields of voluntary practice such as housing and social care.

Evaluating partnership and the penal voluntary sector

What research exists with respect to the voluntary sector operating in offender management and rehabilitation markets has often been centred on scoping the extent of voluntary sector involvement (Gojkovic, Mills and Meek, 2011; Mills, Meek and Gojkovic, 2011), conceptualising the penal voluntary sector (Tomczak 2017), discussions of ethical considerations around the charity and punishment nexus (Benson and Hedge, 2009), and warnings about co-option and mission creep by state funding and human service delivery markets (Corcoran, 2009; 2011; Silvestri, 2009). Indeed Tomczak's (2017: 148) pathbreaking and appreciative research goes as far as to state that despite recent penal policy changes in England and Wales to emphasise a role for the voluntary sector,there is not an evidence base to support the alleged beneficial effects of charitable work perhaps because the symbolic value of the voluntary sector status seems to confer a kind of immunity which protects the non-profit sector from scrutiny. Worse still, academics have often critiqued the voluntary sector's involvement in the penal system in negative terms as representing a shadow state, or as net widening and extending the reach of the penal system (Tomczak, 2018).

However, the research agenda and evidence base continue to develop since Tomczak's (2017) study and perhaps it is more accurate to state that the evidence base for the effectiveness of charitable involvement in offender rehabilitation is somewhat generalised and lacking nuance as to "what specifically works" about voluntary sector involvement in programmes or service delivery. Highlighting positive

contributions from the penal field, the turn to charitable organisations and philanthropy is often justified by a range of commonly associated inherent qualities. The evidence base can be summarised in terms of the voluntary sector's abilities to build social and human capital by being more innovative, by broadening service provision, by voluntary engagement with service users offering greater accessibility to meet needs, and overall have an important contribution to make in desisting from crime.

5.4.5 Innovative provision

Innovation in terms of provision and multi-agency working will be discussed in various different ways in this section.

Family relationships and prisons

The voluntary sector's independence and sense of agency in provision has long been associated with a greater sense of innovation and creativity in terms of provision. Pioneering new approaches to social problems has therefore been seen as a key feature of the voluntary sector (Benson and Hedge, 2009; Corcoran and Hucklesby, 2013). As a result, such innovation can either broaden the range of provision in offender rehabilitation or target more specific and detailed approaches for hard to reach groups. As an example, the charity Safe Ground "Father's Inside" project provides gender specific work on imprisoned fathers through drama, fiction and group discussion (Safe Ground, 2022). Apart from offering rehabilitation which is far removed from the emphasis on security and punishment, the intervention has also proven effective. According to the (MoJ, 2016) the one-year proven reoffending rate for 51 offenders who received the intervention was 24%, compared with 40% for a matched comparison group of offenders from England and Wales.

Education

Similarly, interventions provided by Prisoners Education Trust led to a reduction in reoffending of between 6 and 8 percentage points when prisoners received a grant related to employability (MoJ, 2015). For the specific types of awards, the analyses demonstrate that receiving a grant from the Prisoners Education Trust to undertake an academic course in custody led to a reduction in reoffending of between 4 and 8 percentage points whilst receiving a grant for merely Arts and Hobby Materials

provided by Prisoners Education Trust in custody led to a reduction in reoffending of between 0.3 and 10 percentage points.

Court assessments

Tomczak (2017) highlights that virtually all social democratic and neoliberal economies have sought to mainstream the voluntary sector in recent years including Canada, Australia (Ransley and Mazerolle 2017) and France (Herzog-Evans 2014). Herzog Evans (2014) was discussed earlier in the RER in relation to desistance and judicial rehabilitation and this is important in relation to multi-agency working as the voluntary sector is virtually responsible for all court assessments of those to be subjected to punishment and indeed of supporting offender's reentry and rehabilitation. Such mainstreaming has occurred in the absence of a strategic imperative to privatise previously statutory work. The French example is important as it demonstrates how smaller and more localised charitable organisations have been effective multi-agency partners which is in stark contrast to the experience of contracting out rehabilitative services to multinational corporations via Community Rehabilitation Companies in England and Wales (Herzog-Evans 2014).

Alternatively, the landscape of voluntary sector provision in offender rehabilitation in France emerges from the existing "Fédérations" or significant networks of charitable provision. As such the Fédération Citoyen et Justice provide a network for associations providing court assessments, supervision, and community service whilst the Fédération National des Associations d'Accueil et de Reinsertion Sociale (National Federation of support, care, and social rehabilitation associations) provide housing, employment or access to training.

Whilst the culture of evaluation is limited in the French criminal justice system according to Herzog-Evans (2014), Fédérations have been considered as important arenas for organisational networking in order that the voluntary sector remains characterised by smaller, more localised delivery models. Evidence from the French jurisdiction is that the criminal justice associations undertake tasks which were traditionally the remit of the French Probation Service. However, their remit and scope of practice is described by the author as "truly remarkable" due to their abundance in scale and nature. To illustrate, voluntary sector provision in Brittany

incorporates new fields of activity such as provision of services for prisoners' families, victims, addiction specialism, budget management, 24/7 counselling, employability and training, and the provision of welfare advice and broader help or social work. Overall, Herzog-Evans (2014: 50) described the localised voluntary sector organisations in the criminal justice system in France as "complementary pioneers" emphasising both the innovation and synergy with existing provision elsewhere.

5.5 Conclusion

The findings from the desistance research agenda have presented the penal voluntary sector with a recent boon to their work. As outlined here the process of desistance or leaving crime behind is attributed to change to a combination of subjective, social, and structural capital. It is also important to recognise the meaning the person attributes to their priorities and motivations. As the voluntary sector has an ethical tradition to its work of being person centred, holistic, embedded in specific localities and social contexts, much of its approach within multi-agency or partnership arrangements has deep synergy with desistance research findings in chapter 2.

The multi-agency section of this RER so far has thus analysed mechanisms for multi-agency working (see table 2 above in the RER) and reviewed multi-agency programmes themselves. Key points are summarised about the effectiveness of multi-agency programmes in table 3 below.

Table 3

Evaluation of multi-agency programmes

Multi-agency programme	Strength	Limitation
Integrated Offender Management (IOM)	1. Small amount evidence that IOMs can reduce reoffending for prolific and other priority offenders. 2. Increases collaboration between the police and probation. 3. Increases involvement of the not-for-profit sector. 4. Initiatives tailored to local needs.	1. No systematic understanding about IOM's effectiveness 2. Issues with the not-for-profit sector in terms of the level of capital required to take part in IOM arrangements.
Mixed economy models of service provision	1. Recognise that service users have multiple needs linked to wider human, social, and structural factors. 2. Coordinates the work of statutory and voluntary agencies. 3. Efficient access to appropriate services	1. Lack of leadership from statutory agencies. 2. Low referral rates 3. Lack of clarity about the order of different types of support available for service users. 4. Funding regime did not encourage joint working. 5. Lack of trust and commitment between partners.
Innovative partnerships	1. In terms of victim support - partnership working is more effective at safeguarding when focusing on the victim's immediate needs. 2. Presence of partnership from different sectors beneficial in supporting victim and investigating crime.	1. Partnerships less likely to be successful in safeguarding victims when focusing on gathering evidence and zero tolerance policies.
Partnerships using the penal voluntary sector	1. Penal voluntary sector involvement allows for more innovation. 2. Penal voluntary sector characterised by more localised delivery models. 3. Holistic approach to multi-agency working	1. No robust evidence base. 2. No clear conclusions about "what specifically works" in relation to partnerships using the penal voluntary sector.

6.0 Partnership, new actors, new expertise, and the activation of the service user.

Earlier in section 5 of this RER it was noted how considerations of multi-agency or partnership working can transform policy makers conceptualisation of the crime problem firstly, in terms of reoffending it is to be effectively addressed and secondly, by opening up considerations as to who is best placed to contribute to reduce recidivism. As Rumgay (2003) noted earlier it can move penal authorities from thinking about offender rehabilitation as one of individualised treatment to fix problems or eradicate criminogenic needs to an appreciative understanding of both the social context of criminal behaviour and the ways in which complex needs such as mental disorder, employment and housing may interrelate and require complex solutions. In a similar transformation in thinking, the value afforded to the expertise and skills of organisational actors in the penal voluntary sector such as welfare and benefits specialists, substance misuse counsellors, advocates, and volunteers, has more recently been extended to the contribution of service users themselves. The RER will now consider the value of the service user in multi-agency working arrangements.

6.1 Activation of the service user

One of the most interesting aspects of the move to partnership arrangements and the incorporation of actors beyond the statutory professional has been the activation of the service user. Conceptualised as moving from being a passive recipient of rehabilitative services, to part of the active network of those with knowledge and skills, previous service users have been encouraged to become active in their own rehabilitative endeavours by taking on peer mentor roles whilst helping those who are about to embark on the desistance journey in the community. Peer mentoring is important in a multi-agency context as service users become involved in the multi-agency network of delivery and can enhance the legitimacy of various services based on their own lived experiences.

The concept of mentoring has some elasticity with Bozeman and Feeney's (2007) list of definitions running to 13 descriptions. However, Nellis' (2002) definition is useful, conceptualising mentoring as

someone more experienced guiding, coaching or encouraging someone less experienced in the performance of a task or role. It is more formal than befriending and less formal than supervision and more purposeful than volunteering.

The evidence base for mentoring in the highly specific field of offender rehabilitation is developing. However, there is less research evidence for peer-based mentoring programmes in offender rehabilitation thus far, as programmes are described as being “startlingly under researched” (LeBel, Richie and Maruna, 2015: 188; Buck, 2020).

6.1.1 Transformative potential of peer mentoring

One of the most consistent claims for peer mentoring is its dual transformative impact on both the mentor and mentee because of the supportive relationship developed between the two participants. Peer mentorships can help to build a person’s social capital which was demonstrated in this RER as important in the desistance process. Tolan et al.'s (2013) meta-analysis of 46 mentoring interventions between 1970 and 2011 for adolescent offenders concluded that mentoring had a modest positive effect for reducing delinquency, improving academic functioning and reducing traits of aggression and substance misuse. Larger effects were evidenced where the mentor’s motivation also incorporated their own professional development and where emotional and advocacy support was provided. This links to desistance discussed earlier in the RER where individuals build a new identity but must also perceive their new identity and their advocacy work as important for it to be meaningful and help to sustain desistance journeys.

Jolliffe and Farrington (2007) report that mentoring programmes can reduce reoffending from between 4 to 11% when it was part of a range of interventions given. Their research found that where mentoring continued to be provided during the resettlement from prison phase then the reductions in recidivism were statistically significant.

Furthermore, Bassuk et al.'s (2016) systematic review of the efficacy of peer mentoring in 9 studies noted how the evidence suggests positive benefits for the mentee in addiction and recovery settings, however more generalisable and

concrete conclusions were difficult to find. However, whilst reductions of recidivism remain the holy grail, more evidence is available with respect to the impact of peer mentoring and softer outcomes.

Brown and Ross' (2010) study of female desistance from crime in Victoria, Australia evidenced how mentoring can produce increased levels of social capital and connectedness. One particular recurring deficit in the road to desistance for female offenders was the absence of social connections or social capital. By pairing female community volunteer members with women leaving prison, their study demonstrates that relationships based on provision of practical and emotional support, often referred to by mentees as “friendship,” were important in building social capital for a select group of females leaving prison. However, caution is expressed as the researchers note that women without fundamental problems in their life such as drug or alcohol problems or structural problems such as homelessness benefited the most from mentor relationships. This illustrates the importance of considering human, social, and structural factors when it comes to supporting an individual’s desistance.

6.1.2 Peer mentor characteristics: The importance of how peer mentoring is delivered.

Peer mentoring can be considered important in multi-agency working as mentors can have a powerful influence in terms of encouraging others to engage with agencies and support services. Matthews' (2021) study of peer focused prison re-entry work found that little is known about which key characteristics of peer mentoring matter the most to service users in a transformative sense. Whilst Buck (2018: 191) contends that the core conditions of peer mentoring are rather generically “caring, listening and setting manageable goals”, such qualities do not really capture the distinctiveness and uniqueness qualities of peer mentor relationships. As such studies by Matthews (2021) and Mead and MacNeil (2004) demonstrate the importance of expertise in different ways:

1. Knowledge gained from a lived experience of the negativity and problems around incarceration and criminality.
2. Credibility or genuineness in motivation and approach and overall where the emphasis of similarity of experience and ambitions or “peerness” is essential.

3. Experiences with successfully leaving incarceration, overcoming difficulties with gaining employment or training, accessing advocacy to acquire welfare benefits.
4. Peer mentors' awareness of how to successfully access localised resources whilst modelling effective coping responses.
5. Mentors offer a legitimation to many previously professionalised services which the service user may not have been so willing to access.

Mathews (2021) notes in her research on peer mentoring in mental health interventions, that the presence of a mentor provided legitimation through enhanced levels of relatability where clients were more willing to trust the intervention they were being encouraged to receive. Thus, peer mentors can work to encourage service users to engage with statutory and professional services which affords a legitimacy to availing of multi-agency support.

As such the evidence suggests that the service user or professional "ex" imbued with tacit knowledge and high level of genuine empathy having "been there" can be a powerful influence in offender rehabilitation. The key to effective peer mentoring is to ensure that such roles remain based on independent or statutory authorities and practice such as "supervision", with the freedom to innovate and create genuine helping relationships with mentees both in terms of practical and emotional support.

7.0 Conclusion

This RER has analysed and illustrated factors relevant to reoffending and desistance while also evaluating multi-agency programmes to support desistance. This analysis is important as it may be used to inform policies and support the development of programmes in an Irish criminal justice context.

7.1 Findings

Aim 1 of this RER was to identify the primary factors linked to reoffending and understand the relationships between these factors. To this end it was found that a mixture of factors related to capital and risk can shed an in-depth light on people's reoffending. These factors are interrelated as many dynamic risk factors are relevant in relation to wider human, social, and structural capital. Analysis of factors linked to capital and risk identified that key to understanding reoffending are:

1. A person's relationships
2. An individual's capacity
3. The wider economic context surrounding that individual.

Aim 2 of this RER was to understand the factors linked to desistance. Changes to human, social, and structural capital can allow for an understanding of desistance to emerge. Analysis of changes of capital and desistance demonstrated that changes to identity, relationships, and the conquering of structural obstacles help to explain how people can sustain desistance journeys over time.

Having evaluated the factors relevant for understanding reoffending and desistance, aim 3 of the RER examined how multi-agency programmes can help to support a person's human, social and structural capital in a pro-social way. A summary of specific programme evaluations was provided in table 3. In general, multi-agency working may have the best chance of being successful when programmes have:

1. Clear leadership
2. Clarity about aims and roles
3. Clear processes and plans
4. Ability to manage conflict amongst different groups

7.2 Limitations to the RER

Whilst a systematic review was undertaken to fulfil aims 1 and 2 given the wide variety of academic research on reoffending and desistance, the scope of this search per the brief were broad. This resulted in stringent steps being taken (outlined in the methodology section) to narrow the amount of research analysed for this RER meaning that some important research published in books or PhD research available in university libraries was not included.

The methodology undertaken to fulfil aim 3 was not as systematic given the amount of relevant grey literature available in the form of government reports and evaluations of multi-agency working. This meant that the RER relied on the second author's expertise in the area alongside analysis that was narrowed to include a focus on effectiveness of multi-agency working. In addition, the exclusion of literature and research from outside of Europe means that there is a strong UK context in terms of the multi-agency programmes evaluated given the amount of reports and academic literature on multi-agency working in the UK.

Lastly, culture, political and economic factors are emerging as important contextual factors to understand in recent desistance research (Farrall, 2019) yet, culture did not emerge in the research analysed for this RER. Ireland has witnessed recent significant changes in religion and social control in recent years and this may influence men and women's values, beliefs, and understandings of their own reoffending and desistance. Changes in structural factors may thus change the value that people place in human and social capital.

7.3 Next steps

This RER has demonstrated some success for multi-agency working as a way to deal with complex problems linked to offending. The analysis of reoffending and desistance highlighted an interaction of various complex factors to explain each phenomenon which suggests that multi-agency programmes may be appropriate for addressing these factors simultaneously. However, it must be stressed that actual evaluations of multi-agency working in criminal justice are often limited or missing

from research. What is crucial is understanding how multi-agency arrangements are operationalised for success. In addition, it is important to incorporate the following:

1. A clear rationale and mechanism for applying multi-agency working.
2. A holistic approach in relation to multi-agency working to recognise complex interactions between people's human, social, and structural capital.
3. Coordinated work between different statutory agencies, and between statutory and voluntary agencies.
4. Trust and commitment between separate agencies.
5. Introduction of a funding regime that encourages joint working rather than competition between agencies.
6. Innovation must be accommodated.
7. Clarity on people's access routes to appropriate services.
8. Consideration of local needs.

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