

Roads to recovery: Exploring UK prison rehabilitation and its alternatives

BRIEFING PAPER

November 2023

SMF

Social Market
Foundation

By Jake Shepherd, Senior Researcher, and Niamh O Regan, Researcher

One of the primary purposes of the UK prison system is to facilitate offender rehabilitation. However, inadequate support and high reoffending rates mean it is failing to live up to that ideal. Drawing upon lessons from the Netherlands and Norway, this briefing highlights the potential benefits of alternative approaches to rehabilitation.

KEY POINTS

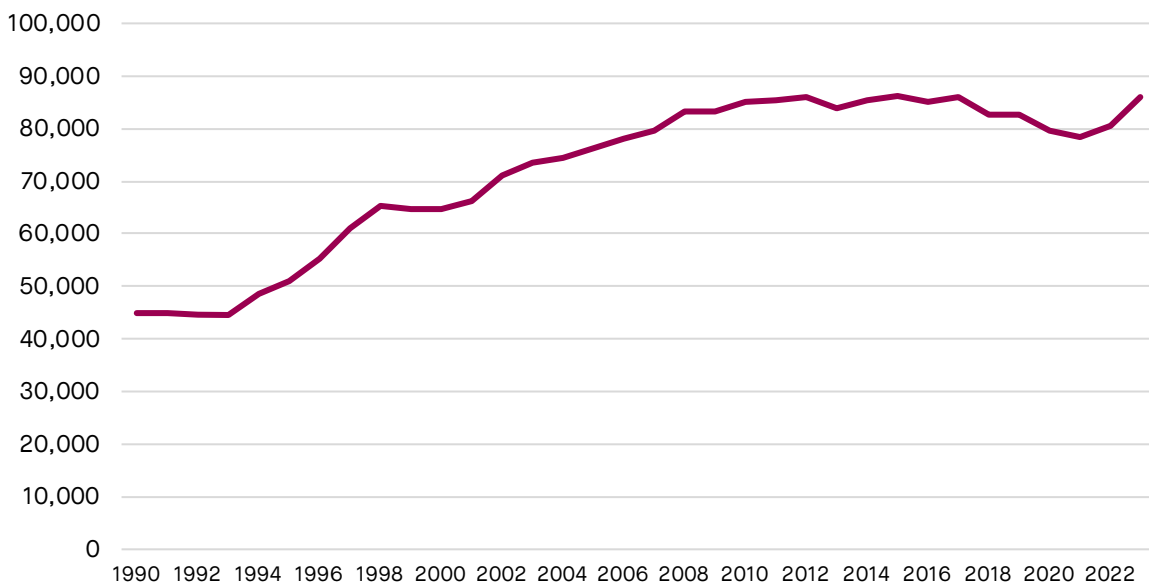
- UK prisons face several challenges, including a rising prisoner population and reports of understaffing, overcrowded facilities, and inadequate services.
- In light of these problems, experts are calling for penal reform and placing stronger emphasis on rehabilitation and resocialisation principles.
- Rehabilitation is already a core purpose of the UK prison system, but it appears to be falling short of its own standards.
 - According to inspectors, the majority of prisoners lack work and training opportunities.
 - 53% of prisoners are in their cell for more than 22 hours a day – rising to 69% during weekends.
 - Only 35% of those with mental health issues receive help, while 32% finish addiction treatment programmes in prisons and secure settings.
 - Reoffending – 39% within the first year of release and 75% within nine years – amounts to £18.1 billion in economic and social costs every year.
- Other countries can help provide valuable insights into improving incarceration and rehabilitation in prisons.
 - The Norwegian approach actively encourages inmates to lead a fulfilling life after their time in prison, and reforms have led to a dramatic decrease in reoffending rates.
 - The Netherlands offers specialist mental health treatment and has allocated greater prison resources to rehabilitation. Changes in the justice system have led to less reoffending, a significantly smaller prison population, and fewer prisons.
 - Other potential measures deployed internationally include greater use of non-custodial sanctions, rehabilitation training for prison staff, and restorative justice practices.

INTRODUCTION

The prison population of England and Wales currently stands at almost 86,000 people, with the annual average almost doubling in size since 1990.¹¹ The incarceration rate per 100,000 people has also seen a significant increase, growing almost twofold between from 82 in 1961 to 159 in 2021. World Prison Brief dataⁱⁱ (Figure 2) indicates England and Wales have the highest imprisonment rate in Western Europe, surpassing the continent-wide average of 129.²

As well as having a relatively large population, UK prisons are characterised by reports of subpar conditions and services. This includes “dangerously low” staffing levels,³ limited capacity,⁴ overcrowded and ill-equipped facilities,⁵ and inadequate care and gaps in monitoring.⁶ The recent high-profile escape of prisoner Daniel Khalife has drawn sharp attention to these structural challenges,⁷ particularly the impact of under-resourcing within the prison service.⁸

Figure 1: Prison population of England and Wales, 1990-2023



Source: House of Commons Library

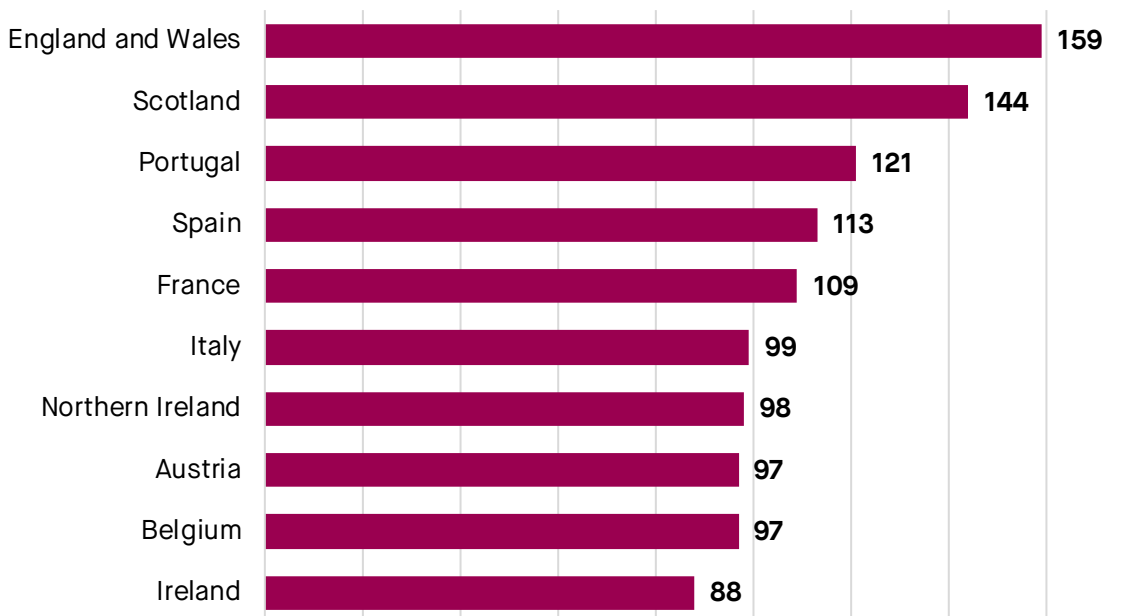
In light of these problems, many experts and commentators are advocating for penal reform. Central to that debate is whether an alternative system, one that places stronger emphasis on principles of restitution and reconciliation, can help people to change for the better, rather than subjecting them to the harsh conditions observed today.⁹

ⁱ The prison population of England and Wales was 85,851 on 30th June 2023, the average population for the previous 12 months was 83,128

ⁱⁱ There is a discrepancy between House of Commons (159) and World Prison Brief (146) imprisonment rate data for England and Wales. This is likely caused by the latter not incorporating most up-to-date statistics in its analysis of prison populations in different countries.

The public also believe the prison system requires more attention. Representative polling from 2022 shows that 61% of British adults do not think the government is effective at punishing offenders, while 73% of UK adults think the criminal justice system needs reform. 71% believe the criminal justice system should give at least equal weight to rehabilitation and punishment.¹⁰

Figure 2: Prison population rate, Western Europe



Source: *World Prison Brief, Institute for Crime & Justice Policy Research*; accessed 12 October 2023.
 Note: England and Wales has been updated with most current House of Commons data.

The exposure of inmates to repressive environments and the loss of human capital can contribute to increased recidivism – when a convicted criminal reoffends – and other poor post-release outcomes. However, prison time can also be used to deter reoffending and be rehabilitative through education and other programmes, improving prisoners’ lives and benefitting wider society. The challenge is that rehabilitation appears to be an ideal the UK is struggling to realise – a troubling situation, especially given that it holds one of Europe’s largest prison populations.

REHABILITATION IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE PRISON SYSTEM

The purpose of prisons is manifold. According to the Ministry of Justice’s Prisons Strategy White Paper, it exists to protect the public, securely holding individuals who may pose a threat to society to prevent them from committing further crimes, whilst serving punishment handed down to them. Another key purpose is to “ensure good order and discipline” among those detained, promoting prison safety while sanctioning prisoners for misconduct.¹¹

It also has the aim of preventing future crimes and reducing reoffending, achieved by rehabilitating and changing the behaviour of offenders.¹²

This is a complex task that involves multiple factors.¹³ Secure accommodation, family support, visitation, mentoring, education, mental health and addiction treatment, and employment opportunities can all help to reduce reoffending. In particular, the Prisons White Paper highlights employment and education as a core focus of the government's rehabilitation strategy.¹⁴ Official data shows that those who find employment after release from prison are nine percentage points less likely to reoffend.¹⁵

Rehabilitation schemes are designed to encourage "purposeful activity", including opportunities for education and work. Such development is said to be encouraged from the very first day of prison, and is supported by personal learning plans. Employment support also includes in-prison work coaches and work experience with employers.¹⁶

To help prisoners reintegrate back into the community, towards the end of a sentence some individuals can be granted release on temporary license. This allows them to undertake training or work (this can be paid or unpaid) with local employers outside of the prison estate.¹⁷ Timpson is well-known for its involvement in this initiative, with many Timpson shops employing offenders that leave prison every day in order to work, returning in the evening.¹⁸

Those in the prison system tend to have lower levels of educational attainment and may have large gaps in their learning. Educational programmes in prisons can focus on developing literacy and numeracy, as well as more subject-specific programmes and apprenticeships. The government recognises that prison education is an important part of any prison, as it gives prisoners vital opportunities for personal development and helps them build the skills they need to get jobs after release, ultimately reducing the risk of reoffending.¹⁹

But the UK appears to be failing to live up to its own standards

If one of prison's aims is genuinely to reintegrate offenders into society, it seems the UK is falling short of that objective.

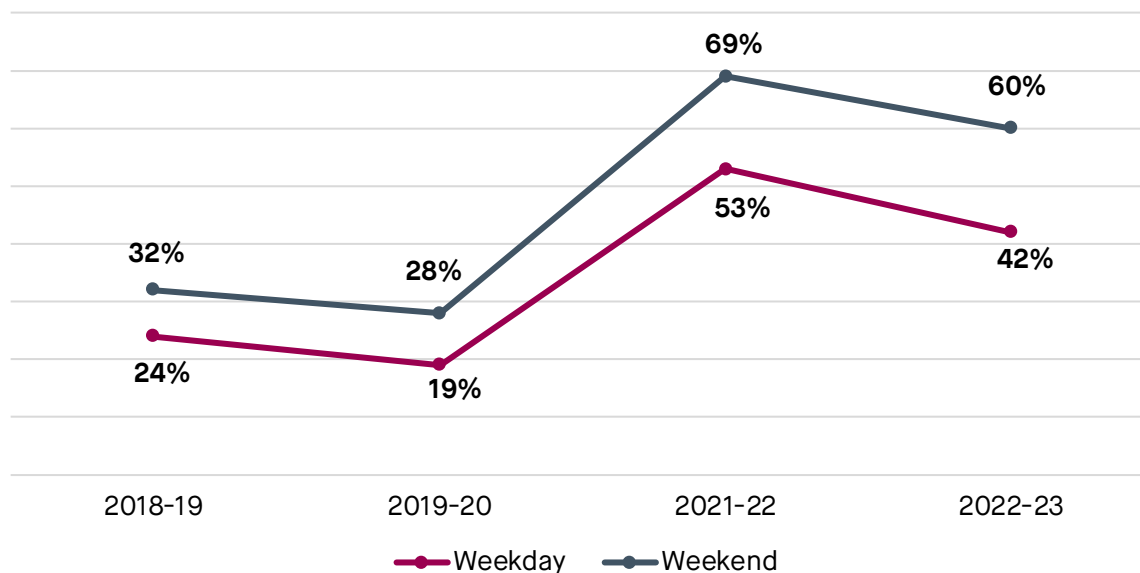
Inspectors have found the provision of purposeful activity in prisons to be poor, highlighting a lack of education and work opportunities for the majority of prisoners. In particular, they say rehabilitation work has been hampered by low staffing levels as well as high numbers of inexperienced staff.²⁰

While rehabilitation support should be available in all prisons across the country, the reality is that access is limited. In its 2022/23 annual report, the Chief Inspector of Prisons in England and Wales found that many prisons had failed to return to their pre-pandemic regimes in supporting prisoner rehabilitation. As a result, prisoners often do not have sufficient opportunities to engage with rehabilitation support.²¹

Where they do, the quality of the support varies significantly. For example, a post-release survey conducted by the prison leavers charity Unlock in 2016 found 68% of those who participated in education or training programmes while in prison thought they were of no help in securing employment after release.²² As a result of these shortcomings, inmates are leaving prison without addressing their offending behaviour – "a wasted opportunity and a failure to deliver the will of the court".²³

Similarly, the Prison Reform Trust²⁴ has highlighted Ofsted data which reveals only a quarter (25%) of male prisons received a positive rating for purposeful activity in 2021-22.²⁵ It also cites Prisons Inspectorate figures showing that up to 53% of prisoners are in their cell for more than 22 hours a day – rising to 69% during weekends.²⁶ This raises serious doubts about the effectiveness of rehabilitation support within the prison system.

Figure 3: Percentage of those in men’s prisons who usually spend less than two hours a day “unlocked” out of their cell



Source: HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for England and Wales Annual Report 2022–23

In addition to education and training, there are programmes to help address long-term health issues, such as supporting those with mental health issues. There is limited data on the number of prisoners suffering from mental illness. However, research by the Prison Inspectorate indicates that only around a third (35%) of those with mental health issues receive help.²⁷

Similarly, an estimated third of people in prison have a serious drug addiction.²⁸ But support is mixed, with a higher proportion of women (75%) than of men (52%) saying they have been helped with their drug problem while in prison.²⁹ Treatment completion in prisons and secure settings is also low, with only 32% finishing these programmes in 2021.³⁰

Reoffending is high

These statistics paint a negative picture of rehabilitation support in UK prisons, highlighting several areas of concern. But there are some positive trends. For instance, since 2020, employment rates six weeks after release have increased from 10% to 17%, and for six months they have increased from 14% to 25%.³¹

Nonetheless, recent figures show that 96% of prisons are failing to meet their employment on release targets.³² This reflects concerns made in a 2022 report by the House of Commons Education Committee that prison education has suffered a long decline and is in a poor state, with the number of prisoners taking part in education activities down at all levels.³³

Meanwhile, reoffending rates, a key measure of the performance of the criminal justice system,³⁴ are high. Analysis led by the University of Birmingham in collaboration with government entities, including HM Prison Service and the Ministry of Justice, shows a 39% recidivism rateⁱⁱⁱ within the first year of release, with 75% of ex-inmates reoffending within nine years of leaving prison.³⁵ This is a staggering proportion, suggesting a large majority of former prisoners will commit a criminal offence at some point.

The overall proven reoffending rate, a narrower measure of reoffending that refers to offences proven in court and result in convictions, was 24.4% in the year following inmates' release for the second quarter of 2021.³⁶ It is important to note that cohort period overlaps with operational restrictions imposed because of the COVID-19 pandemic and, as a result, recent figures are considered volatile. With that being said, since 2010, the overall proven reoffending rate has fluctuated between 23.1% and 31.8%, suggesting that the while it may be volatile, 24.4% is not a complete outlier.³⁷

Available evidence suggests the UK's reoffending rates exceed those of other developed countries. Data is patchy, but academic analysis of worldwide recidivism rates, as summarised by World Population Review, suggests England and Wales ranks among the highest globally.³⁸ A six-year systematic review of reconviction rates places all UK devolved nations at a high level compared to their international peers.³⁹

This not only affects the future prospects of prisoners but it also has implications for society as a whole, with the annual total estimated economic and social cost of reoffending amounting to £18.1 billion. This financial burden, as well as the shortcomings mentioned above, indicates the need to explore alternative approaches to rehabilitation.⁴⁰

OTHER COUNTRIES HAVE DIFFERENT APPROACHES

Prison dynamics are nuanced, and vary significantly by location. Some systems emphasise retribution, while others prioritise rehabilitation. These differing philosophies are reflected in prison conditions, profoundly shaping the lives of prisoners not only during incarceration but also after their release.

ⁱⁱⁱ Recidivism can refer to the rearrest, reconviction, or reimprisonment of an individual over different follow-up periods. Definitions of recidivism therefore vary, and they may include or exclude low-level offences such as fines or traffic violations. Meanwhile, many countries have insufficient recidivism data, and recidivism rates are determined by many underlying factors, many of which are not necessarily associated with the effectiveness of rehabilitation. For these reasons, the precise meaning of 'recidivism' may not always be clear, and comparing it across contexts can be challenging. Recidivism data in this blog should be interpreted with caution.

In the first category, we would expect to see prisons akin to those found in the United States, a country notorious for its high incarceration rate. According to World Prison Brief, the US has one of the highest incarceration rates in the world; 531 prisoners for every 100,000 people.⁴¹ It retains the death penalty, with around 2,300 people currently on death row awaiting execution.⁴² In other words, America leans heavily on prisons and tough sentencing when responding to crime. A byproduct of this approach, along with other societal factors, is a high recidivism rate, which is 44% within inmates' first year⁴³ and 70% within five years of release⁴⁴.

Some countries have more oppressive prison systems. These are brutal in their own right, characterised by poor conditions, corruption, discrimination, scarce resources, severe overcrowding, inadequate medical services, and torture. In places like Iran,⁴⁵ Russia,⁴⁶ Thailand,⁴⁷ El Salvador,⁴⁸ and Saudi Arabia,⁴⁹ rehabilitation is unlikely.

In the second category are prisons with more progressive approaches. Typically found in Northern Europe, countries renowned for having well-developed public welfare systems, with a strong emphasis on rehabilitation, and an approach to incarceration more focused on addressing the root causes of criminal behaviour and reintegrating offenders back into society. These places tend to have better outcomes, and as such serve as exemplary models, and can provide valuable insights into different approaches to incarceration and rehabilitation.

The Netherlands offers specialist mental health treatment

The Netherlands is a country renowned for its social liberalism. It also embraces a humane philosophy within its prison system, which is organised around rehabilitation principles. The Netherlands' "exceptional" prison culture⁵⁰ is considered to be a potential solution to UK prison reform by Justice Committee Chair, Bob Neill.⁵¹

The Netherlands' rehabilitation objectives are enshrined in law. The core aim of the 1998 Penitentiary Principles Act is the resocialisation of prisoners. The legislation actively promotes positive relationships in and outside of prison, and emphasises association rather than isolation as a means to achieve successful rehabilitation.⁵²

Another distinctive element to the Dutch criminal justice system, setting it apart from English law, is that crimes are assessed on a multiple-point scale – from full responsibility to zero, with three intermediate levels. As such, mental illness and other potential mitigating factors are taken more into account than in other countries.⁵³

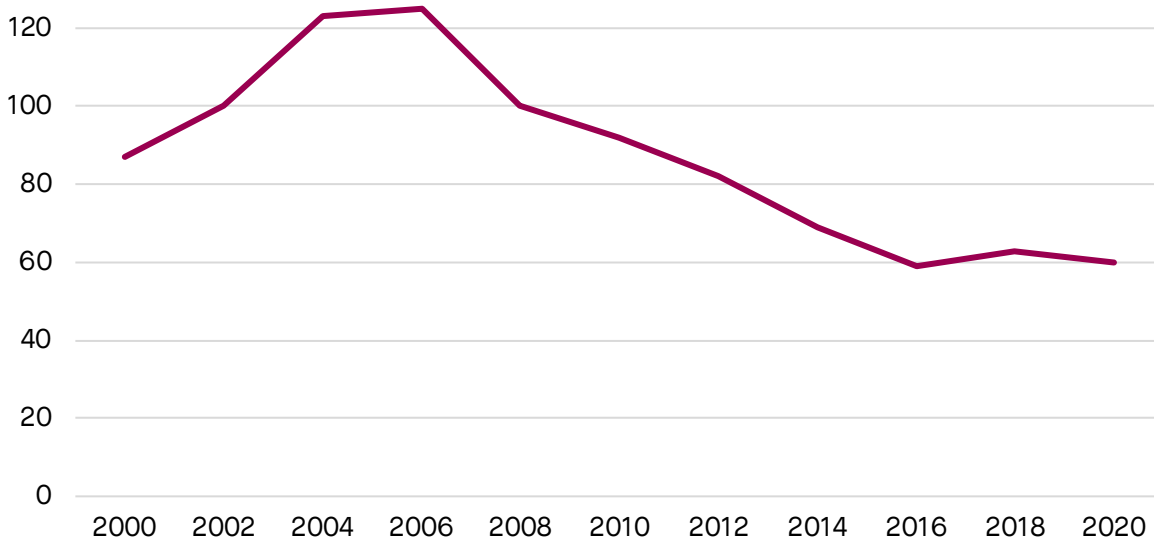
Defendants can be declared entirely or partially unaccountable for an offense and directed to specialised clinics for treatment, depending on the circumstances.⁵⁴ Under this system, vulnerable people with depression, psychotic vulnerability, autism, severe learning difficulties, personality disorders, financial problems, trauma, and addiction can be treated.⁵⁵ The Dutch system locks fewer offenders up and makes greater use of community sentencing, such as fines, to allow for a greater allocation of prison resources to rehabilitation.⁵⁶

The Netherlands’ specialised approach has led to lower reoffending rates. Between 2002 and 2008, the two-year reconviction rate for ex-prisoners dropped from 55% to 49%.⁵⁷ That rate has since remained stable, decreasing to 47% for prisoners released in 2017.⁵⁸

Together with plunging crime rates,⁵⁹ with registered offences declining by 40% between 2008 and 2018, changes in the Dutch justice system have also resulted in smaller prison populations. Between 2000 and 2020, the prison incarceration rate decreased from 87 to 60 per 100,000 – a decline of 24%.⁶⁰ This change is even more pronounced when compared to its peak in 2006, since when the population rate more than halved, and sits in stark contrast to England and Wales’ growing prison population.

Some experts wonder if the Netherlands’ low prison population can also be attributed to other factors such as failures in policing and crime detection or lower drug addiction rates.⁶¹ Either way, these trends have presented the Netherlands with a happy problem: it no longer has enough inmates to fill its prisons, and has actually leased prison spaces to other countries who have run out of space in their own prisons (something the UK is considering taking up to resolve its own overcrowding issues).⁶² Between 2014 and 2018, 23 prisons closed, turning into public assets such as asylum centres, housing, and hotels.⁶³

Figure 4: Prison population rate (per 100,000 population), the Netherlands



Source: *World Prison Brief*

The Netherlands’ criminal justice system appears to be a success, but its lenient approach has raised some doubts. For example, there has been some public concern regarding the post-conviction freedoms given to potentially dangerous psychiatric patients, resulting in accusations of the government failing to protect society.⁶⁴

The government remains steadfast in its commitment to its rehabilitation mission. In June 2023, the Dutch cabinet allocated an additional €5 million for the education and retraining of prisoners.⁶⁵

Norway's criminal justice system is world-leading

Norway's prison system is recognised as one of the most effective models in the world.⁶⁶ But things haven't always been that way. Before its reforms of the 1990s, 70% of all released prisoners reoffended within two years – a recidivism rate similar to that of the US today.⁶⁷

Then Norway overhauled its prison system. Remarkably, its recidivism rate has decreased to 20%, one of the world's lowest.⁶⁸ Norway ranks 196th out of 223 countries for prison population rates, with only 53 prisoners for every 100,000 people. It has banned life sentences.⁶⁹

According to the Borgen Project, a global poverty non-profit, the main reason for Norway's transformation is that it places prisons in the same category as rehabilitation facilities.⁷⁰ This includes using small, community-based, and occasionally open facilities, rather than central jails. Inmates are often placed closer to their families, placing a strong emphasis on relationships and providing them with social support for after release.⁷¹

Along with its innovative architectural system, which aims to keep life in prison as similar to outside living conditions as possible, Norway also ensures prisoners have greater access to educational programmes and courses. Initiatives include paid work, gym and training, social welfare services, healthcare, and drug rehabilitation.⁷² All prisons in Norway offer such programmes.⁷³ Academic research published in 2016 has revealed that, among previously unemployed inmates, there is a 34% increase in those taking part in job training courses and a 40% increase in post-release employment rates within five years.⁷⁴

The Norwegian approach encourages inmates to lead a fulfilling life after their time in prison. But this progress does come at a financial cost. For example, a place at Halden Prison, a "radically humane" maximum security prison,⁷⁵ is said to cost around £98,000 per year.⁷⁶ In comparison, the housing an inmate in England and Wales for a year can cost up to £60,000, on average. In the United States in 2015,^{iv} the average cost per inmate was £27,230.⁷⁷

Despite higher investment, Norway's low reoffending rates have a profound impact on prisoners' lives – and on the economy. Inmates that undergo rehabilitation and receive education are more likely to contribute positively to the economy upon their release, translating to long-term economic benefits for the country. Economists' calculations suggest its high rehabilitation expenditures are more than offset by the corresponding societal benefits.⁷⁸

^{iv} This survey was distributed to every state's department of corrections in May 2016, but only 45 states completed and returned the survey.

TOWARDS BETTER REHABILITATION POLICIES

The global consensus has moved from punitive to rehabilitation-based systems, with several other countries opening prisons based on the ideals of rehabilitation and resocialisation,⁷⁹ including Germany,⁸⁰ Portugal,⁸¹ New Zealand,⁸² and Singapore⁸³.

Better rehabilitation does not necessarily require a complete overhaul of the system. There are smaller, targeted measures prisons can implement to improve the post-release prospects of inmates.

For instance, as put forward by the United Nations, the judicial system can increase use of non-custodial sanctions such as such as community service orders, particularly for less serious crimes.⁸⁴ Penal Reform International recognises the crucial role of prison staff in rehabilitation efforts,⁸⁵ pointing to targeted training and support provision that promotes rehabilitation in Ghana⁸⁶ and Italy⁸⁷.

Research by the Council of Europe has highlighted the use restorative justice practices, such as victim awareness and responsibility acceptance courses and induction and sentence planning. These initiatives are said to help prisoners use their time in prison to reflect on the harm they have caused to society, ensuring that, upon release, they are less prone to engaging in further harmful crimes.⁸⁸

Along these lines, the SMF is working with AIG to explore ways of helping prisoners reintegrate into society and enabling them to thrive once released, with a specific focus on policies related to education and employment. We have already published a paper discussing some of the issues facing ethnic minorities in the criminal justice system, and how policymakers might improve their outcomes.⁸⁹

Policymakers should pay attention to other countries' experiences

We acknowledge that the prison system is complex, and understanding the full impact of imprisonment is a difficult task. Resourcing constraints are a significant challenge which, together with overstretched staff and overcrowded prisons, can relegate rehabilitation to a secondary concern.⁹⁰

That said, the Norwegian experience serves as a testament to the potential benefits of increased investment in rehabilitation, demonstrating that such efforts can bring net economic advantages as well as improving prisoners post-release outcomes.⁹¹ In the Netherlands, changes in the system have allowed prisons – bleak places, no matter how well-intentioned or well-implemented a country's rehabilitative policies may be – to be transformed into productive public assets.⁹²

In this country, achieving such outcomes currently seem as challenging as breaking out of prison itself. The UK appears to be falling short of its rehabilitation ideals, let alone the standards of other nations. As we have shown, other approaches are possible and there are different roads to recovery that it can learn from. If policymakers are genuinely concerned about rehabilitating British prisoners, they should be taking note.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Georgina Sturge and Helena Carthew, 'UK Prison Population Statistics', *House of Commons Library*, 20 October 2023, <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn04334/>.
- ² 'Highest to Lowest - Prison Population Rate', World Prison Brief, accessed 20 October 2023, https://www.prisonstudies.org/highest-to-lowest/prison_population_rate?field_region_taxonomy_tid=14.
- ³ 'Prison and Probation Staffing Dangerously Low', *BBC News*, 7 August 2023, sec. UK, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-66431061>.
- ⁴ Catherine Baksi | Jonathan Ames Editor Legal Editor | Matt Dathan, Home Affairs, 'Judges Told Not to Jail Rapists as Prisons Are Full', 20 October 2023, sec. news, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/judges-told-not-to-jail-rapists-as-prisons-are-full-2tfgb2czs>.
- ⁵ Rajeev Syal and Rajeev Syal Home affairs editor, 'One in 10 Prisons in England and Wales Should Be Shut down, Watchdog Says', *The Guardian*, 25 September 2023, sec. UK news, <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/sep/25/one-in-10-prisons-in-england-and-wales-should-be-shut-down-watchdog-says>.
- ⁶ Chaminda Jayanetti, 'Staff Shortages an Issue amid "Deeply Worrying" Prison Deaths in England', *The Observer*, 16 September 2023, sec. Society, <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/sep/16/staff-shortages-prison-deaths-coroners-inquests-suicide>.
- ⁷ 'Wandsworth Prison Life: Decay, Drugs and Drudgery', *BBC News*, 7 September 2023, sec. UK, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-66739300>.
- ⁸ Alex Hewson, 'Report Reveals "Perfect Storm" of Staffing and Funding Crises Affecting People in Detention', *Prison Reform Trust* (blog), 18 April 2023, <https://prisonreformtrust.org.uk/report-reveals-perfect-storm-of-staffing-and-funding-crises-affecting-people-in-detention/>.
- ⁹ 'Locked In? Achieving Penal Change in the Context of Crisis and Scandal', *Prison Reform Trust* (blog), accessed 20 October 2023, <https://prisonreformtrust.org.uk/publication/locked-in-achieving-penal-change-in-the-context-of-crisis-and-scandal/>.; Simon Jenkins, 'Why the Collapse of Britain's Prison System Is Good News', *The Guardian*, 16 October 2023, sec. Opinion, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/oct/16/collapse-britain-prison-system-good-news-jails>.; 'The Prison System Is Failing Inmates and the Public Alike', *The Guardian*, 16 October 2023, sec. Society, <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/oct/16/the-prison-system-is-failing-inmates-and-the-public-alike>.; 'Wandsworth Prison Escape Highlights the Need for Penal Reforms', *The Guardian*, 11 September 2023, sec. Society, <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/sep/11/wandsworth-prison-escape-highlights-the-need-for-penal-reforms>.
- ¹⁰ 'Majority of UK Public Believe Rising Poverty Will Lead to Increase in Crime – and This Shouldn't Lead to Prison - Revolving Doors', *Revolving Doors* (blog), 30 November 2022, <https://revolving-doors.org.uk/majority-of-uk-public-believe-rising-poverty-will-lead-to-increase-in-crime-and-this-shouldnt-lead-to-prison/>.
- ¹¹ 'Prisons Strategy White Paper' (Ministry of Justice, December 2021), <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/61af18e38fa8f5037e8ccc47/prisons-strategy-white-paper.pdf>.
- ¹² 'Prisons Strategy White Paper'.
- ¹³ Russell Taylor, 'Crime and Rehabilitation: An Overview', *House of Lords Library*, 23 June 2022, <https://lordslibrary.parliament.uk/crime-and-rehabilitation-an-overview/>.

¹⁴ 'Prisons Strategy White Paper'.

¹⁵ 'Not Just Another Brick in the Wall: Why Prisoners Need an Education to Climb the Ladder of Opportunity: First Report of Session 2022–23' (House of Commons Education Committee, 11 May 2022), <https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/22218/documents/164715/default/>.

¹⁶ 'Prisons Strategy White Paper'.

¹⁷ 'Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL)', *Prison Reform Trust* (blog), accessed 20 October 2023, <https://prisonreformtrust.org.uk/adviceguide/release-on-temporary-licence-rotl/>.

¹⁸ 'Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL)', Timpson Group, accessed 20 October 2023, <https://www.timpson-group.co.uk/timpson-foundation/release-temporary-licence-rotl/>.

¹⁹ 'Prison Education Statistics April 2019 to March 2020' (Ministry of Justice, 5 August 2021), https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1008850/Prisoner_Education_2019_20.pdf.

²⁰ 'The Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on the Criminal Justice System – a Progress Report' (Criminal Justice Joint Inspection, May 2022), <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/cjji/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2022/05/CJ-Covid-19-recovery-progress-report-web-2022.pdf>.

²¹ 'Annual Report 2022–23', HM Inspectorate of Prisons, 5 July 2023, <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/inspections/annual-report-2022-23/>.

²² 'Support for Ex-Offenders Inquiry – Results and Analysis of Our Survey' (Unlock, September 2016), <https://unlock.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/misc/Support-for-ex-offenders-inquiry-%E2%80%93-Results-and-analysis-of-our-survey.pdf>.

²³ 'The Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on the Criminal Justice System – a Progress Report'.

²⁴ 'Bromley Briefings Prison Factfile' (Prison Reform Trust, January 2023), <https://prisonreformtrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/January-2023-Bromley-Briefings.pdf>.

²⁵ 'Further Education and Skills Inspections and Outcomes as at 31 August 2022', Ofsted, 24 November 2022, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/further-education-and-skills-inspections-and-outcomes-as-at-31-august-2022>.

²⁶ 'HM Chief Inspector of Prisons Annual Report: 2021 to 2022', HM Inspectorate of Prisons, 13 July 2022, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hm-chief-inspector-of-prisons-annual-report-2021-to-2022>.

²⁷ 'HM Chief Inspector of Prisons Annual Report'.

²⁸ 'Review of Drugs: Phase One Report', Home Office, 27 February 2020, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-drugs-phase-one-report>.

²⁹ 'HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for England and Wales: Annual Report 2021–22' (HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, 13 July 2022), https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1089500/hmip-annual-report-2021-22.pdf.

³⁰ 'Alcohol and Drug Treatment in Secure Settings 2020 to 2021: Report', Office for Health Improvement & Disparities, 27 January 2022, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/substance-misuse-treatment-in-secure-settings-2020-to-2021/alcohol-and-drug-treatment-in-secure-settings-2020-to-2021-report>.

³¹ 'Improving Resettlement Support for Prison Leavers to Reduce Reoffending', National Audit Office (NAO), 12 May 2023, <https://www.nao.org.uk/reports/improving-resettlement-support-for-prison-leavers-to-reduce-reoffending/>.

- ³² ‘Employment at Six Weeks Following Release’, GOV.UK, accessed 20 October 2023, <https://data.justice.gov.uk/prisons/life-after-prison/employment-on-release>.
- ³³ ‘Not Just Another Brick in the Wall: Why Prisoners Need an Education to Climb the Ladder of Opportunity: First Report of Session 2022–23’.
- ³⁴ ‘Recidivism Rates: What You Need to Know’, *Council on Criminal Justice* (blog), 1 September 2021, https://counciloncj.org/recidivism_report/.
- ³⁵ ‘Breaking the Cycle? Prison Visitation and Recidivism in the UK’, UK Research and Innovation, accessed 20 October 2023, <https://gtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=ES%2FK002023%2F1#/tabOverview>.
- ³⁶ ‘Proven Reoffending Statistics: April to June 2021’, Ministry of Justice, 27 April 2023, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/proven-reoffending-statistics-april-to-june-2021/proven-reoffending-statistics-april-to-june-2021>.
- ³⁷ ‘Proven Reoffending Statistics: April to June 2021’
- ³⁸ ‘Recidivism Rates by Country 2023’, World Population Review, accessed 20 October 2023, <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/recidivism-rates-by-country>.
- ³⁹ Denis Yukhnenko, Leen Farouki, and Seena Fazel, ‘Criminal Recidivism Rates Globally: A 6-Year Systematic Review Update’, *Journal of Criminal Justice* 88 (1 September 2023): 102115, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcrimjus.2023.102115>.
- ⁴⁰ ‘Economic and Social Costs of Reoffending: Analytical Report’ (Ministry of Justice, 2019), <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5d1de7a4e5274a08d13a684e/economic-social-costs-reoffending.pdf>.
- ⁴¹ ‘Highest to Lowest - Prison Population Rate - World’, World Prison Brief, accessed 20 October 2023, https://www.prisonstudies.org/highest-to-lowest/prison_population_rate?field_region_taxonomy_tid=All.
- ⁴² ‘Death Row Overview’, Death Penalty Information Center, accessed 20 October 2023, <https://deathpenaltyinfo.org/death-row/overview>.
- ⁴³ ‘Recidivism Rate by State 2023’, Wisevoter, accessed 20 October 2023, <https://wisevoter.com/state-rankings/recidivism-rates-by-state/>.
- ⁴⁴ First Step Alliance, ‘Reducing Recidivism: Creating A Path To Successful Reentry’, First Step Alliance, 15 July 2021, <https://www.firststepalliance.org/post/reducing-recidivism>.
- ⁴⁵ ‘Human Rights in Iran’, Amnesty International, accessed 20 October 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/middle-east-and-north-africa/iran/report-iran/>.
- ⁴⁶ ‘How Russia’s New Gulag Tries to Break Convicts like Alexei Navalny’, *Reuters*, 20 May 2021, <https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/russia-politics-navalny-gulag/>.
- ⁴⁷ ‘Thailand: Annual Report Paints Bleak Picture of Prison Conditions’, International Federation for Human Rights, 9 March 2023, <https://www.fidh.org/en/region/asia/thailand/thailand-annual-report-paints-bleak-picture-of-prison-conditions>.
- ⁴⁸ ‘El Salvador’s Secretive Mega-Jail’, BBC News, 14 July 2023, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idt-81749d7c-d0a0-48d0-bb11-eaab6f1e6556>.
- ⁴⁹ Human Rights Watch, ‘Saudi Arabia: Events of 2022’, in *World Report 2023*, 2023, <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2023/country-chapters/saudi-arabia>.
- ⁵⁰ Alison Liebling et al., ‘Where Two “Exceptional” Prison Cultures Meet: Negotiating Order in a Transnational Prison’, *The British Journal of Criminology* 61, no. 1 (1 January 2021): 41–60, <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azaa047>.
- ⁵¹ Fair Observer, ‘Do the Dutch Have a Solution to UK Prison Reform?’, *Fair Observer* (blog), 21 March 2017, <https://www.fairobserver.com/region/europe/netherlands-prison-system-uk-prison-reform-news-97712/>; ‘Do the Dutch Have the Answer to UK Prison Crisis?’, Sky News,

22 February 2017, <https://news.sky.com/story/do-the-dutch-have-the-answer-to-uk-prison-crisis-10777247>.

⁵² 'Sentencing and Prison Practices in Germany and the Netherlands', Vera Institute of Justice, 7 July 2018, <https://www.vera.org/publications/sentencing-and-prison-practices-in-germany-and-the-netherlands-implications-for-the-united-states>.

⁵³ Tim McInerney, 'Dutch TBS Forensic Services: A Personal View', Wiley, 14 March 2006, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/cbm.361>.

⁵⁴ 'Sentencing and Prison Practices in Germany and the Netherlands'.

⁵⁵ Melissa Hogenboom, 'The Unique Way the Dutch Treat Mentally Ill Prisoners', BBC, 25 April 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20180423-the-unique-way-the-dutch-treat-mentally-ill-prisoners>; Senay Boztas, 'Why Are There so Few Prisoners in the Netherlands?', *The Guardian*, 12 December 2019, sec. World news, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/dec/12/why-are-there-so-few-prisoners-in-the-netherlands>.

⁵⁶ 'Do the Dutch Have the Answer to UK Prison Crisis?'

⁵⁷ 'Recidivism Report 2002-2008 Trends in the Reconviction Rate of Dutch Offenders', U.S. Department of Justice, December 2011, <https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/recidivism-report-2002-2008-trends-reconviction-rate-dutch>.

⁵⁸ 'Recidivism among Offenders in the Netherlands: Report on the Period 2006-2018' (Dutch Ministry of Justice and Security, 2019), https://repository.wodc.nl/bitstream/handle/20.500.12832/228/Cahier_2019-10_Summary_tcm28-396009.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y#:~:text=Between%202006%20and%202012%20the,for%20those%20convicted%20in%202015.&text=%E2%80%A2-,The%20adjusted%20average%20number%20of%20new%20criminal%20cases%20per%20year,the%20research%20period%2C%20at%200.3.

⁵⁹ Boztas, 'Why Are There so Few Prisoners in the Netherlands?'

⁶⁰ 'Netherlands', World Prison Brief, accessed 20 October 2023, <https://www.prisonstudies.org/country/netherlands>.

⁶¹ Boztas, 'Why Are There so Few Prisoners in the Netherlands?'; Chris Weller, 'Dutch Prisons Are Closing Because the Country Is so Safe — and No One Really Knows Why', *Business Insider*, 26 April 2016, <https://www.businessinsider.com/no-one-can-explain-why-dutch-crime-is-so-low-2016-4>.

⁶² Day, Mark, 'Renting foreign prison places – the unanswered question', Prison Reform Trust, 10 October 2023, <https://prisonreformtrust.org.uk/blog-renting-foreign-prison-places-the-unanswered-question/>

⁶³ Boztas, 'Why Are There so Few Prisoners in the Netherlands?'

⁶⁴ Robin Pascoe, 'Prison Service, Clinic Slammed for Failures in Anne Faber Murder Case', *DutchNews.nl*, 28 March 2019, <https://www.dutchnews.nl/2019/03/prison-service-clinic-slammed-for-failures-in-anne-faber-murder-case/>.

⁶⁵ 'Netherlands Allocates Extra Money to Help Prisoners Reintegrate into Society', *NL Times*, 28 June 2023, <https://nltimes.nl/2023/06/28/netherlands-allocates-extra-money-help-prisoners-reintegrate-society>.

⁶⁶ First Step Alliance, 'Rehabilitation Lessons from Norway's Prison System', First Step Alliance, 3 January 2022, <https://www.firststepalliance.org/post/norway-prison-system-lessons>.

⁶⁷ 'Norway's Humane Approach to Prisons Can Work Here Too', *UCSF Magazine*, Summer 2021, <https://magazine.ucsf.edu/norways-humane-approach-prisons-can-work-here-too>.

⁶⁸ 'How Norway Turns Criminals into Good Neighbours', *BBC News*, 6 July 2019, sec. Stories, <https://www.bbc.com/news/stories-48885846>.

⁶⁹ 'Highest to Lowest - Prison Population Rate - World'.

⁷⁰ 'Norway's Prison System Benefits Its Economy', *The Borgen Project* (blog), 6 November 2020, <https://borgenproject.org/norways-prison-system/>.

⁷¹ Alliance, 'Rehabilitation Lessons from Norway's Prison System'.

⁷² 'Rehabilitation', Six Norwegian Prisons, accessed 20 October 2023, <https://www.sixnorwegianprisons.com/spaces/rehabilitation>.

⁷³ 'Incarceration Can Be Rehabilitative', CEPR, 24 March 2019, <https://cepr.org/voxeu/columns/incarceration-can-be-rehabilitative>.

⁷⁴ Manudeep Bhuller, Gordon B. Dahl, and Katrine V. Loken, 'Policies to Reintegrate Former Inmates Into the Labor Force', n.d., <https://econweb.ucsd.edu/~gdahl/papers/reintegration-policies.pdf>.

⁷⁵ 'The Radical Humaneness of Norway's Halden Prison', *The New York Times*, 26 March 2015, <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/29/magazine/the-radical-humaneness-of-norways-halden-prison.html>.

⁷⁶ 'How Norway Turns Criminals into Good Neighbours'.

⁷⁷ 'The Price of Prisons: Prison Spending in 2015', Vera Institute of Justice, accessed 20 October 2023, <https://www.vera.org/publications/price-of-prisons-2015-state-spending-trends/price-of-prisons-2015-state-spending-trends/price-of-prisons-2015-state-spending-trends-prison-spending>.

⁷⁸ 'Incarceration Can Be Rehabilitative'.

⁷⁹ 'Rehabilitation and Reintegration', Penal Reform International, accessed 20 October 2023, <https://www.penalreform.org/global-prison-trends-2022/rehabilitation-and-reintegration/>.

⁸⁰ 'Sentencing and Prison Practices in Germany and the Netherlands'.

⁸¹ 'Portugal Sets Plans for Friendlier Prisons with Rooms Instead of Cells', *The National*, 18 September 2019, <https://www.thenational.scot/news/17908758.portuguese-prisons-set-rehabilitation-instead-punishment/>.

⁸² Eleanor Ainge Roy and Eleanor de Jong, 'Yoga, Herbs and Sunshine: New Zealand Opens "humane" Jail for Most Violent Inmates', *The Guardian*, 29 July 2018, sec. World news, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jul/29/yoga-herbs-and-sunshine-new-zealand-opens-humane-jail-for-most-violent-inmates>.

⁸³ 'Singapore's National Strategies and Approaches Aimed at Reducing Re-Offending' (UNODC, 31 August 2022), https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/ReducingReoffending/MS/Singapore_-_Singapores_national_strategies_and_approaches_aimed_at_reducing_re-offending.pdf.

⁸⁴ 'Prison Reform and Alternatives to Imprisonment', United Nations : Office on Drugs and Crime, accessed 20 October 2023, [//www.unodc.org/unodc/en/justice-and-prison-reform/prison-reform-and-alternatives-to-imprisonment.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/justice-and-prison-reform/prison-reform-and-alternatives-to-imprisonment.html).

⁸⁵ 'Rehabilitation and Reintegration'.

⁸⁶ Thomas D. Akoensi and Justice Tankebe, 'Prison Officer Self-Legitimacy and Support for Rehabilitation and Ghana', January 2020, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0093854819879729>.

⁸⁷ 'The link between the rehabilitation of detainees and the prison staff training with regard to the management of Foreign Prisoners', B-Competent, accessed 20 October 2023, <https://www.bcompetent.eu/news/link-between-rehabilitation-detainees-and-prison-staff-training-regard-management-foreign-prisoners/>.

⁸⁸ Gerry Johnstone, 'Restorative Justice in Prisons: Methods, Approaches and Effectiveness' (Council of Europe, 29 September 2014), <https://rm.coe.int/16806f9905>.

⁸⁹ 'Earning Trust: Improving Criminal Justice Outcomes for Ethnic Minorities', Social Market Foundation, 15 December 2021, <https://www.smf.co.uk/publications/earning-trust/>.

⁹⁰ 'Rehabilitation and Reintegration'.

⁹¹ 'Incarceration Can Be Rehabilitative'.

⁹² Boztas, 'Why Are There so Few Prisoners in the Netherlands?'