

Building Pathways Together



Criminal Justice Reintegration Through Employment Strategy 2025-2027



Vision

To increase recruitment opportunities and long-term secure employment retention for individuals with criminal convictions, contributing to a decrease in the likelihood of reoffending and leading to a fairer, safer Ireland.



About the strategy

This strategy builds on previous strategies by integrating existing programmes and focusing on practical steps to boost employment in this group. It aims to provide effective support to help people who have stopped offending, or are seeking stability to avoid offending, find the opportunities and resources needed to succeed.

Thematic pillars



People with Criminal Convictions

Identify opportunities to address barriers in practical ways which support them on their journey out of offending lives and towards desistance.



Employers

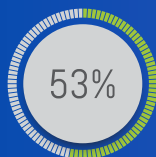
Identify specific provisions which, once achieved, will provide dedicated supports to employers of all sizes, including social enterprises.



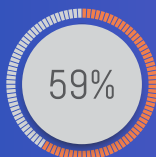
Promotion and Knowledge Sharing

Seek to advance our understanding of this cohort and the positive contribution they may make to the State's economy, and to increasing public safety, as valuable parts of the workforce.

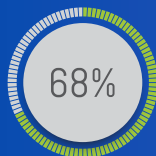
Results of survey commissioned by SOLAS in 2019



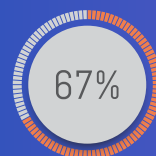
of respondents said it wouldn't bother them to work alongside someone who has a previous criminal conviction.^[1]



of employers / decision-makers surveyed said they were unaware of any education programmes undertaken that aim to make those serving sentences more employable on completion of their sentence.



of respondents said it wouldn't bother them to be served by someone who has a previous criminal conviction in a customer-service setting.



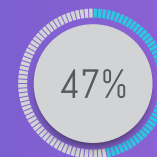
of employers said the fact that an applicant had completed education programmes while serving their sentence would encourage them to hire someone who has a previous criminal conviction.

Despite this generally positive perspective on hiring and working with people with criminal convictions, and research which underlines that individuals with criminal records have a much longer tenure and are less likely to quit their jobs voluntarily than other workers,^[2] the low rate of employment indicates there remain key issues to those individuals obtaining secure employment.

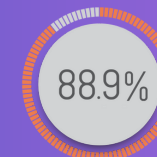
[1] SOLAS, [02_09_2019 Over 60 per cent of employers would hire an ex-offender if supported to do so](#).

[2] Minor, Dylan and Persico, Nicola and Weiss, Deborah M., [Criminal Background and Job Performance](#) (September 4, 2018) IZA Journal of Labor Policy (2018) 7:8.

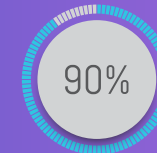
2024 research from the Irish Penal Reform Trust^[3]



of respondents with previous criminal convictions reported negative experiences when applying for employment, and 73% reported facing barriers in applying for employment.



of employers surveyed agreed or strongly agreed they would consider hiring people with convictions in the future.



of people with previous convictions responding to the survey agreed or strongly agreed that they worry about disclosing to employers their experience with the criminal justice system.^[4]

[3] Led by researchers from Maynooth University, the research provides further insight into the perspectives of employers and people with previous criminal convictions in relation to employment.

[4] Irish Penal Reform Trust "The Secondary Punishment": A scoping study on employer attitudes to hiring people with criminal convictions (2024).