



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Spending Review 2021 – Review of the Programme of Work and Training in the Irish Prison Service

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Spending Review 2021 – Overview, Aims & Objectives



Overview

- Work and vocational training forms a vital component of the rehabilitation of prisoners, with training activities aiming to give as much employment as possible in prison and providing opportunities to acquire skills that help secure employment on release. It is widely agreed that employment, and particularly quality of employment, contributes to desistance from crime upon release

Aims and Objectives

- The key objectives of this paper are:
 - to outline the model of work and training service delivery across the prison estate;
 - to review the potential labour market relevance of the programme;
 - to examine key stakeholder perspectives on the effectiveness and efficiency of work and training; and
 - to examine the model of work training delivery in other jurisdictions.

Spending Review 2021 – Key Findings



Key Policy Relevant Findings

- In 2020, costs associated with Work and Training, including staffing costs, gratuities and consumables, accounted for **€23.85 million**, or **5.8%** of the IPS budget.
- Approximately **30% of the prison population take part in Work and Training** at any given time, though this is not the only structured activity available in prisons
- To address **data gaps**, it is recommended that IPS put in place measures to ensure the **systematic and centralised collation of Prisoner IDs for all persons engaged in work and training; work and training activities attended; duration of engagement; and accreditation detail**, where relevant.
- IPS should explore options to **leverage existing administrative data through the NDI** led by the CSO and the **inclusion of a Work and Training indicator in the Prison Re-Offending Series** published by the CSO to explore the potential impact of engagement in Work and Training on recidivism.

Spending Review 2021 – Key Findings



Key Policy Relevant Findings

- It is recommended that IPS **leverage labour market intelligence** to ensure the work and training programme in prisons is flexible and responsive to labour market need
- There is scope for **greater integration and alignment of the Work and Training function delivered by IPS and the Prison Education Service delivered by ETBs** to provide a programme of education and skills that is flexible and responsive to labour market demand.
- There is a need for **clarity and alignment on performance indicators**, underpinned by a clear purpose and mission of Work and Training.
- There is a growing need to **expand programmes around digital literacy** and competence as core employability skills.