



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

Barred from employment? A study of labor market prospects before and after imprisonment

Ramakers, A.A.T.

Citation

Ramakers, A. A. T. (2014, June 19). *Barred from employment? A study of labor market prospects before and after imprisonment*. Meijers-reeks. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/26890>

Version: Corrected Publisher's Version

License: [Licence agreement concerning inclusion of doctoral thesis in the Institutional Repository of the University of Leiden](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/26890>

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

Cover Page



Universiteit Leiden



The handle <http://hdl.handle.net/1887/26890> holds various files of this Leiden University dissertation.

Author: Ramakers, Anke Antonia Theodora

Title: Barred from employment? A study of labor market prospects before and after imprisonment

Issue Date: 2014-06-19

Practically all prisoners eventually return to free society. Considering their high rates of subsequent recidivism, more insight into various post-prison circumstances is vital, as well as effective strategies to improve the reintegration of ex-prisoners. Such knowledge is scarce, and it also remained unclear thus far to what extent imprisonment caused these individuals to lose their integration with the community.

Labor market participation might work as an effective crime reduction strategy among ex-prisoners. Scholars and professionals as well as prisoners themselves note that the path to a successful reentry critically depends on the transition to employment. Yet, imprisonment bars offenders from employment during their time in prison and might also limit their post-prison employment prospects.

Using data of the Prison Project – a longitudinal study of almost 2,000 prisoners – this thesis examines men's labor market experiences before and after imprisonment and examines whether recidivism risks are lower among employed versus unemployed ex-prisoners.

By addressing ex-prisoners' labor market experiences and recidivism risks, this thesis connects to two punishment goals, rehabilitation and specific deterrence. The findings could inform and help stimulate debates about (effective) punishment policies, and equip policy makers better to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of changes regarding imprisonment and reentry programs.

The results show first of all that most prisoners face a severe human capital deficit even long before they enter prison. Furthermore, among prisoners facing spells of less than six months, longer confinement is largely uncorrelated with employment. In contrast, spells exceeding six months seem to worsen employment prospects. Those who find employment often find it soon and many seem able to hold on to this low-level job within the first crucial six months following release. While not all post-prison jobs seem to affect recidivism risks, stable employment seems to reduce this risk.

This is a volume in the series of the Meijers Research Institute and Graduate School of the Leiden Law School of Leiden University. This study is part of the Law School's research program Criminal Justice: Legitimacy, Accountability and Effectivity



Barred from employment?

*A study of labor market prospects before
and after imprisonment*

A.A.T. RAMAKERS