

# Summary and conclusions

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## I Background and research questions

### BACKGROUND

In the Netherlands approximately 30.000 adult criminal offenders are imprisoned on an annual basis. This is 0,25 percent of the Dutch adult population. When offenders are released from prison they often face a number of problems that make it difficult for them to find their way in society again. They have often lost their job and their home. If they do not immediately have an income and a home when they step out of prison, the temptation to contact their former criminal partners for help will be high. This will often lead to renewed involvement in criminal activities. However, building up a new life without crime may also be hampered by other factors. Ex-detainees have a history in crime, which is difficult to hide for employers during job application procedures. In many cases their criminal behaviour goes hand in hand with drug addiction. Furthermore, a considerable percentage are low skilled and/or have a mental disorder. All these factors make reintegration in society a complicated process. As a result there is a high risk of unemployment and of criminal recidivism. The social costs involved in terms of costs of crime ( including costs of imprisonment) and unemployment benefits are high. For that reason the government has developed several policies helping ex-detainees rebuild their lives. In fact, these policies already start during detention and continue thereafter. That is why we speak of policies for (ex-) detainees.

The government's philosophy is that offenders have the highest chance of building up a new life after detention when five basic conditions are met when they leave prison. These conditions are: 1) they have a valid identity card, 2) they have shelter, 3) they have work and income, 4) they are debt-free and 5) they are in good health and without addiction. Given the background and history of many former offenders it may not always be possible to provide work immediately after detention. Also conditions 4) and 5) will not always be completely realised at that moment. Therefore, the government also wants to ensure that offenders have access to active labour market measures, debt counseling and health care after their detention.

The aforementioned basic conditions first of all apply to adults, but largely also to juveniles. However, an important difference is that for juveniles education is compulsory. This holds for every person up to the age of 16. For those between 16 and 18 it is compulsory to obtain at least a so-called 'starter's qualification'. This qualification level is equal to a two-year course in secondary vocational education or a different education at a similar level. For young people between 18 and 23 who still do not have such a 'starter's qualification', education is not obligatory, but the government does stimulate it. As a consequence, in policies aimed at young offenders, the mandatory element is much more pronounced.

Given the fact that most adult offenders were already at adult age at the time of imprisonment, rehabilitation programs are basically about *re*integration. For juveniles, it is more logical to talk about integration. When we refer to both groups we use the term (re)integration. However, the term 'aftercare' is still often used (even in official documents). In our study people who are eligible for (re)integration are sometimes referred to as 'aftercare candidates'.

The responsibility for (re)integration is divided between the central government and the municipalities. Broadly speaking, in case of adults the government is responsible for reintegration activities during detention, while the municipality of residence takes over after detention. This applies both to content and delivery of the reintegration. The agreements on the reintegration of adult (ex-) detainees between the Association of Dutch Municipalities (Vereniging van Nederlandse Gemeenten; VNG) and the Ministry of Safety and Justice (Ministerie van Veiligheid en Justitie) are set out in a covenant. For juveniles, integration during detention is organised in a similar way as for adults: the central government is responsible for both content and delivery. However, an important difference with adults is that the central government plays a significant role in determining the content of the integration for juveniles after detention. The municipality of residence is mainly responsible for its implementation.

It is only recently that municipalities play such an important role in the (re)integration of (ex-) detainees. Furthermore, as a result of the introduction of the new Youth Act (Jeugdwet) on January 1, 2015 major changes occurred recently mainly in the policies of integration aimed at young (ex-) detainees. This means that municipalities are still in the process of developing their role in (re)integration of (ex-) detainees. For municipalities this is a major policy change. However, also the central government has to adapt to the new situation, which requires increased cooperation between central and local government.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The principal aim of this study is:

*To gain insight into the costs and benefits of social (re)integration of both adult and juvenile (ex-) detainees, to enable municipalities, central government and partner organizations to make a reasoned decision about investments and efforts in this regard.*

This central goal is elaborated in the following research questions:

1. What was the size of the outflow from detention for adults and juveniles in recent years?
2. What efforts are carried out by municipalities, central government and partner organizations in relation to (re)integration of (ex-) detainees, both adults and juveniles, and what are the associated costs?
3. What are the benefits for municipalities, central government and other partner organizations with respect to the (re)integration of (ex-) detainees?
4. How can the resources available for the (re)integration of (ex-) detainees, both adults and juveniles, be allocated as effectively and efficiently as possible?
5. How do the costs and benefits of the (labor) (re)integration of (ex-) detainees compare to the costs and benefits of the (labor) (re)integration of non-offenders? The goal is not to provide a benchmark, but to gain a global frame of reference.

The study does not claim to offer a full social cost-benefit analysis of the (re) integration policy aimed at (ex-) detainees, taking all relevant costs and benefits into account. Right from the start it was already clear that this would not be possible. Our research is to be regarded as a first step. Research questions 2) and 3) could only be answered partially. With respect to question 4) we could only identify a number of implementation problems based on qualitative information provided by the eight municipalities involved in the study <sup>1</sup>. Solving these problems could lead to improvement in (re)integration policies. We note that because of the recent system changes, that significantly increased the role of municipalities in (re)integration, teething problems may be at play.

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that of the five largest municipalities in terms of the number of ex-detainees, four are involved in the study (of which three provided information about costs). These municipalities, together with the smaller ones involved in the study, still represent more than 20percent of the total number of ex-detainees in the Netherlands.

## II Outline of a full cost-benefit analysis and what we could do in this study

There are a number of potential benefits of (re)integration measures policies for (ex-) detainees. As a result of these measures, former offenders may have a higher chance of getting a job and a reduced chance of recidivism in crime and detention. Furthermore, as the measures also include access to specific health care, also positive health effects may occur. These effects would lead to higher income, savings on costs in the judicial system, a reduction in the costs for victims of crime and a reduction in (future) health costs. The effects on the use of unemployment benefits are more ambivalent. One of the objectives of (re)integration policy is to provide former offenders who are released from prison and do not immediately have a job, with a benefit. The initial effect may thus be more spending on benefits. However, if access to unemployment benefits leads to a more stable situation of ex-detainees, it could eventually lead to increased job entry chances and reduced recidivism. Depending on the size of the latter effects, savings on benefits could be achieved in the long-run.

A long cost-benefit horizon is needed to give a complete picture of the benefits of (re)integration measures. This holds particularly for juveniles. For them, measures are primarily aimed at education, and returns to education must be determined on a life-long basis.

It is likely that costs, effects and benefits of reintegration measures depend on the characteristics of the detainees and the types of measures taken. With respect to characteristics of the detainees, length of imprisonment, number of earlier detentions, type of offense and age seem to be particularly relevant. It would be important to know how these factors affect costs, effects and benefits. This information would be vital for recommendations about re-allocating the resources for reintegration between types of detainees and types of measures.

This is more or less what an ideal cost-benefit analysis would look like. However, owing to data limitations, this study must be seen as a first step in the direction of a more comprehensive cost-benefit analysis. The main limitations of our study are:

- We could only calculate benefits of reintegration for adults;
- For only two types of benefits we were able to make estimates: savings on detention costs and on unemployment benefits. Assumptions on the effects of reintegration are based on scientific studies in this field;
- The estimates of the (re)integration costs made by municipalities should be viewed with caution given the small number of municipalities involved in the study and the lack of reliable data at the municipal level. At the central level, reliable information on costs is available, but there is uncertainty about who among the prison staff is involved in reintegration and to what extent this is the case;
- There is not enough information to differentiate costs and benefits with respect to sub-groups of (ex-)detainees;
- As the existing scientific literature does not contain information about the long-term effects of (re)integration, we used a horizon of five years when making the calculations for adults. This might lead to an underestimation of the benefits.

### III Research design

#### RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

As the policies aimed at (re)integration of (ex-) detainees contain both a national and a local component, our research is also conducted at both national and local level. At both levels, the following main aspects are dealt with: outflow from detention, content of (re)integration and its costs, benefits of (re)integration efforts, implementation aspects and possibilities for improved implementation and a comparison between labour market reintegration of ex-detainees and non-offenders.

The following table shows which research activities provide information to answer each of the five research questions. Below, the research activities are described in more detail.

Table S.1 Relation between research questions and research activities

<b>Research question/ Research activity</b>	<b>Quantitative analysis</b>	<b>In-depth interviews on central and local level</b>	<b>Document- and literature review</b>
Outflow from detention	X		
Content of (re)integration efforts and its costs	X	X	X
Benefits of (re)integration efforts	X	X	X
Implementation aspects and possibilities for improvement		X	X
Comparing costs-benefits of labor market reintegration between (ex-) detainees and non-offenders	X		X

#### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

##### *Selection of municipalities*

In our study four out of the five largest municipalities are involved: Amsterdam, The Hague, Utrecht and Groningen. In addition four municipalities with smaller numbers of aftercare candidates are included: Deventer, Helmond, Roermond and Rheden. The latter municipalities were selected in such a way that they vary with respect to geographic location and the number of ex-detainees (although a minimum of 50 aftercare candidates in 2014 was used).

##### *In-depth interviews*

Interviews were conducted in order to get answers to the research questions 2, 3 and 4. With respect to research questions 2 and 3, the interviews were aimed at identifying what efforts the central government, municipalities and chain partners make in the field of social (re)integration of (ex-) detainees at both national and municipal level: what are the costs involved and which benefits are achieved. With respect to research question 4, the results of the interviews throw light on bottlenecks in the implementation process and point to solutions that can contribute to more effective and efficient (re)integration of (ex-) detainees.

### ***In-depth interviews on central level***

At the central level, interviews were carried out with officials from the Ministry of Security and Justice with respect to both adult and youth (ex-) detainees. Both qualitative and quantitative information was provided. In addition, interviews were held at the central level with representatives of four national organizations that are involved in (re)integration of (ex-)detainees: the Association of Dutch Municipalities, the national offices of the three probation services: Rehabilitation Netherlands (Reclassering Nederland; RN), the Rehabilitation of Addicts Foundation (Stichting Verslavingsreclassering GGZ; SVG) and the Salvation Army Department for Youth Care and Rehabilitation (Leger des Heils Jeugdbescherming en Reclassering). Specifically for juveniles, interviews were conducted with representatives of the Council for Child Protection (Raad voor de Kinderbescherming; RvdK) and the Juvenile Probation Service (Jeugdreclassering; JR).

### ***In-depth interviews at the municipal level***

In each of the eight municipalities involved in the study, we have spoken with officials who are involved in the implementation of the municipal policies aimed at (re)integration of adult and juvenile (ex-) detainees. In the eight municipalities we also carried out an interview with one or more employees of the Safety House (Veiligheidshuis). This is an institution in which municipalities cooperate with other organisations dealing with safety issues in general, including aftercare for (ex-) detainees. A Safety House has a regional function. For some of the municipalities in our study it is located in a different town.

### ***Review of relevant documents and studies***

As the organisation of after-care for (ex-)detainees is quite complicated and has gone through considerable changes, official documents have proved important in describing legal aspects, content and implementation of (re-)integration of (ex-)detainees. Furthermore, a review of the international literature about the effects of re-integration of adult (ex-)detainees played a vital role for estimating the benefits of re-integration.

### ***Quantitative analyses***

The following quantitative analyses have been carried out:

- An analysis of the outflow of detainees at both national and local level: this analysis is based on data (national data as well as data of the eight municipalities) provided by the Custodial Institutions Agency (Dienst Justitiële Inrichtingen; DJI).
- An analysis of the position of ex-detainees during and after detention regarding the five basic conditions mentioned earlier. The data for this analysis is obtained from the Monitor of Aftercare for Former Prisoners (Monitor Nazorg). Unfortunately, this data is not available for individual municipalities. The information from the Monitor of Aftercare refers to the second half of 2011 and the second half of 2012.
- An analysis of the costs associated with the reintegration efforts by municipalities, government and partner organisations in the field of (re)integration of (ex-) detainees. This analysis is based on data made available by the Ministry of Security and Justice, data provided by the eight municipalities involved in the study and data obtained from chain partners. Finally, we have used data from official documentation of the eight municipalities, budgets and annual reports (from Safety Houses for example).
- An analysis of the benefits associated with (re)integration of adult offenders based on a mathematical transition model. When detainees are released from prison, they may still have their old job. However, most of them have to start again from a position of non-employment. Of the latter group, some will have a benefit and others will be out of work without a benefit. Then, over time, many transitions may take place. Former detainees who had a job directly after release from prison may lose their job. In that case they may obtain a benefit or they may neither have a job nor a benefit. It is also possible that a transition takes place to renewed detention. A person who is not employed with a benefit after release from prison may find work after some time, may move to a

situation without work and benefit or may be detained again. For jobless persons without a benefit, transitions may take place to: a) a job, b) a benefit or c) renewed detention. As times passes, former detainees may experience more than one or even several transitions: after finding a job, they may lose it again, after renewed detention they may become unemployed with a benefit, etc. Of course, there will also be former detainees experiencing a stable position after detention. By using a mathematical transition model we can describe this process. The model looks at transitions from one month to the other. It contains 12 transition probabilities plus four probabilities denoting the chance of remaining in the same position. Given the distribution over the four positions (work, unemployment benefit, neither work nor benefit and detention (the latter is by definition zero directly after release)) directly after release from prison, we can predict how the distribution over the four positions will develop as time passes by. Suppose that we do this for a period of T months. Then, we can calculate the percentages of this T spent in employment, unemployment, inactivity (neither a job nor a benefit) and (renewed) detention.

Scientific studies from the Netherlands and from abroad suggest that (re)integration policies influence the transition probabilities. By participating in (re)integration measures a (ex-) detainee will particularly enhance his chance of finding employment and reduce his chance of renewed detention. We specified two versions of the transition model: one incorporating the effects of (re)integration and one without policy effects. By comparing the predictions of both models we can compute how much more former detainees participate in work, how much less they use benefits and how much less they are detained. With the help of these results we can then compute the benefits associated with (re)integration policies.

The model has been calibrated with the help of data from Statistics Netherlands (allowing us to measure transitions of individual ex-detainees between jobs, unemployment and inactivity) and data about recidivism in detention provided by DJI. Assumptions about the effects of (re)integration have been based on the scientific literature.

### III CONCLUSIONS

#### OUTFLOW FROM DETENTION (RESEARCH QUESTION 1)

Between 2010 and 2015 the outflow of **adults** from imprisonment varied between 32.000 and 38.000 persons. Fluctuations in the outflow are mostly due to variations in the number of people sentenced for unpaid fines. In these cases detention is of short duration. The number of detainees has decreased since 2010 and as a result the **outflow rate** has increased. At the national level, the outflow from detention as a percentage of the population aged 18 years or older level is 0,25 percent. In 2015, this percentage varies between 0,13 percent and 0,58 percent among the municipalities involved in this study.

Between 2010 and 2015 on a yearly basis 75 to 80 percent of the detainees were released after a conviction. The remaining 20 to 25 percent was released from preventive custody. The vast majority (between 2010 and 2015 on a yearly basis 80 to 85%) was detained for less than six months. For about one-third of this group the duration of detention was even less than two weeks. A considerable part of this group was sentenced for unpaid fines. The share of people that was detained for less than two weeks has increased over the past years.

More than 30 percent of the adult detainees who are released from detention return to prison within two years. Considering the history of people who have been released from prison, 57 percent of the ex-detainees already have had five or more reconstructions in their life.

Between 2010 and 2015, the outflow of **juvenile detainees (16- 23 years old)** from prison has decreased by 35 percent. This is caused by a decrease in registered youth crime and because alternative penalties are imposed more often. Annually, the outflow of juvenile detainees varies between 1.000 and 1.800 persons. The number of detained juveniles has decreased between 2010 and 2015 by about 30 percent, which means that the **outflow rate** has nearly remained the same. In 2015,

the outflow was 0,07 percent of the Dutch population between 16 and 23 years old. For the eight municipalities, this percentage varies between 0,05 and 0,19 percent in 2015.

Of all juvenile detainees who have been released from detention between 2010 and 2015, 70 percent have been released from preventive custody. The average length of imprisonment for juvenile ex-detainees is similar to that of adult detainees. Also the rate of recidivism is comparable. The vast majority of the juveniles that recidivate within two years, return to prison once.

#### **(RE)INTEGRATION ACTIVITIES OF MUNICIPALITIES (RESEARCH QUESTIONS 2, 3 AND 4, QUALITATIVE ASPECTS)**

Municipalities organize their reintegration activities for *adult (ex-) detainees* differently. Some of the municipalities involved in the study have accommodated their reintegration efforts completely or partly in the Safety House. Generally, they are satisfied with the collaboration between the municipal officials engaged in reintegration activities and the Safety House.

Also the content of the reintegration efforts by municipalities differs. Municipalities make their own choices regarding the moment they start their activities (during or after detention) and the intensity of the support they offer: an active, a less active or no support. According to the respondents, this also depends on the distance to the Penal Institutions (Penitentiare Inrichtingen; PIs) where the citizen is detained. As, owing to the diminishing number of detainees, several PIs have been closed, the travel distances to detained citizens in the PIs have become larger, which takes more time and thus costs more money. As there is no (extra) money available, this might affect the quality of the efforts for detainees who are detained further away from their residence.

Officials involved in the implementation of (re)integration experience several bottlenecks in the exchange of information about (ex-) detainee, which complicates their work. Examples are:

1. For the exchange of information between municipalities and Penal Institutions a digital platform called DPAN is used, but according to municipal officials this platform does not work properly;
2. The exchange of information between municipalities and other chain partners is not optimal. This is particularly true for the collaboration with suppliers of housing facilities and housing association.

Debt problems are the 'toughest' bottleneck in creating solutions for the (ex-) detainee, because it is difficult to gain full insight in the debt situation of a former detainee. Detainees are often not aware of the amount of debt, which makes it difficult to take action. Also the lack of sufficient suitable and affordable houses is a bottleneck.

Specific problems arise in case of people placed in conditional release. Usually, conditional release goes hand in hand with mandatory requirements with respect to reintegration activities imposed by judges. Municipalities are not always notified about these requirements, the programs involved and the implementing organisations. As a result, they may approach the same ex-detainees for participation in similar reintegration activities

With the new Youth Act, the involvement of the municipality in the preparation and implementation of the aftercare for *juvenile (ex-) detainees* has become more important. Within the new context, municipalities (or representatives of municipalities) should get together with the Council for Child Protection and the correctional institution for juvenile offenders (Jeugd Justitiële Instellingen; JJI's) in an early stage. But, not all municipalities have completed this transition yet and are still adapting to the new situation.

On some aspects, the eight municipalities face similar bottlenecks regarding aftercare for juvenile (ex-) detainees as for adult (ex-) detainees: a shortage of suitable housing and inadequate information exchange between parties. Interviewees mentioned as a bottleneck that mildly disabled juveniles are not always recognised as such. As a result, they are often treated as unwilling to collaborate on their integration, while in fact, they are not able to. This was not mentioned in relation to adult (ex-) detainees although it might also be relevant for this group.

There are differences in the way municipalities organise aftercare for youth. Some of the eight municipalities have a special municipal coordinator for youth, but in other municipalities a Municipal Coordinator Aftercare (Gemeentelijke Coordinator Nazorg; GCN) serves both adult and juvenile (ex-) detainees. In other municipalities someone from the Safety House or a detached worker from a Certified Organization (Gecertificeerde Instelling; GI) is doing this. One municipality outsources the services for juveniles to a GI and is not involved in it. In some of the eight municipalities, the number of juvenile ex-detainees has declined in such a way that these municipalities do not develop a specific policy for this group anymore. In these municipalities procedures and services for juvenile ex-detainees are in most cases the same as for adult ex-detainees.

## **COSTS OF (RE)INTEGRATION ACTIVITIES AND FINANCIAL FLOWS (RESEARCH QUESTION 2, THE QUANTITATIVE ASPECT)**

The most reliable and detailed information about the costs of (re)integration activities is available about the activities during detention, that take place under the responsibility of the *national government*. This information is derived from administrative sources. It is available for adult and juvenile detainees separately, which makes it possible to estimate the costs of (re)integration on central level for both age categories. We estimate the costs of (re)integration per detainee by dividing the annual costs that can be assigned to (re)integration activities by the total number of detainees annually released from prison. This gives a reasonable approximation as the mean duration of detention is relatively short (three to four months). The data about costs are available for 2016.

As it is not always clear what percentage of their time employees in PIs and JJIs spend on (re)integration efforts, we estimated an upper and a lower bound for the costs. We estimate the costs of reintegration during detention per adult detainee in 2016 at a minimum amount of € 2.200 and a maximum of € 5.300. The difference between the upper and lower bound is mainly caused by what is assumed about the time penitentiary workers (Penitentiare Inrichtingswerkers; PIW'ers) spend on reintegration efforts. The amounts stated above are averages. The actual costs of reintegration efforts will differ strongly between detainees, due to differences in the duration of detention and the behaviour (motivation) of the detainee. What is missing, are the costs of purchased forensic care.

The *costs of integration during detention per juvenile detainee* in 2016 are estimated at a minimum amount of € 19.000 and a maximum of € 44.000. The fact that the costs are much higher than for adults is due to various factors. The most important ones are that the number of workers in FTE per detainee is clearly higher in JJIs than in PI's and that in JJI's a larger share is invested in integration. This means more investments in juvenile detainees and a larger part of this amount spent on integration. The slightly higher costs of personnel per FTE in JJI's and the slightly higher understaffing also play a role, but these factors contribute only to a limited extent to the difference.

There is much less information available about the costs *municipalities* make related to the (re)integration of (ex-) detainees. For six municipalities, we have obtained information about the costs of reintegration for adult (ex) detainees, but this information is not based on administrative data. For municipalities, we have to rely mostly on estimates. Moreover, the obtained data about costs are not complete. It is not known how many (ex-) detainees have used reintegration activities offered by municipalities. For juveniles there is hardly any information about costs on municipal level. Also at municipal level, we estimate the costs of (re)integration activities by dividing the annual costs that can be assigned to (re)integration by the total number of detainees that are released from detention annually. The data about costs on municipal level are available for 2015.

Based on the available data, we estimate the costs of reintegration activities *by municipalities* per *adult (ex-) detainee* at € 780. This amount is an average of the six municipalities and is somewhat distorted by one outlier among these municipalities. Regarding reintegration programs aimed at housing and work, only the programs that are specifically targeted at (ex-) detainees are included. We did not include the use of general reintegration programs by (ex-) detainees. There is no information available about the participation of ex-detainees in of these general programs, but it is highly doubtful whether the use of these services should be fully assigned to reintegration. Also without reintegration efforts, a part of the (ex-) detainees would receive social assistance benefits and a reintegration

program aimed at finding a job through the municipal department Work and Income. However, it is likely that because of the reintegration efforts, a larger part of the (ex-) detainees receives a social assistance benefit and therefore also a slightly larger part will receive a program aimed at obtaining work. We do not know how much more

For *juvenile (ex-) detainees* we only have information regarding the costs of a youth rehabilitation program. The standard costs of such a program are about € 11.000 per juvenile. We could not obtain information about the costs of youth support (jeugdhulp) related to aftercare and other types of aftercare for youth.

### **BENEFITS OF (RE)INTEGRATION ACTIVITIES (RESEARCH QUESTION 3, THE QUANTITATIVE ASPECT) AND COMPARISON WITH THE COSTS**

As mentioned earlier the assumptions about the effects of (re)integration are derived from the scientific literature. However, there is considerable variation in effects found. Therefore, we calculated two scenarios with the transition model: a) a high-effect scenario and b) a low-effect scenario. For each scenario corresponding estimates of the benefits were computed. The scenarios cover a period of five years after detention.

The outcomes indicate that with relatively small policy effects, the benefits are more than € 4.300 per (ex-) detainee. If we assume relatively large policy effects, the benefits are almost € 11.000 per (ex-) detainee. The calculations do not take into account that ex-detainees who find a job might displace non-detainees. However, it should be noted that the benefits of the policy are much more concerned with the reduction of recidivism than with a higher inflow in employment. For example, if we would assume that displacement occurs in half of the cases, this will have little effect on the total estimated benefits.

To compare the benefits of reintegration with the costs, we have to account for the fact that people who are released from detention can return to prison and receive reintegration again. If we account for these costs, the costs of reintegration per (ex-) detainee over the period of five years lie within the same range as the benefits. If we do not include the costs of reintegration for new detentions, the difference between the costs and benefits is more favourable.

The most important benefits that are missing are the savings related to a reduction in crime and the associated damage and disturbance, and the savings in other parts of the judicial system than PIs. There are estimates of the total costs of crime, but these costs can only partly be attributed to convicted criminals. We do not know to what extent they can (with the exception of detention costs and the costs of (re)integration). This will lead to an underestimation of the benefits. On the other hand, we probably overestimate the benefits for people who are detained for a very short period.

We also miss the costs and benefits of the use of services (particularly in the area of healthcare) to the extent that this use can be attributed to reintegration. It is likely to assume that also without reintegration at least a part of the ex-detainees would have used these services.

Based on the performed analysis we cannot draw any firm conclusions on the costs and benefits of reintegration for adult (ex-) detainees. We consider these calculations as a first step in developing a more comprehensive cost-benefit analysis.

### **COMPARISON WITH NON-DETAINEES (RESEARCH QUESTION 5)**

The government does not only help former detainees find work. Employment services are also provided to unemployed people without a criminal background. In practice, public employment services are mainly applied to adult unemployed persons with a benefit. It is hard to compare this policy with the reintegration policy for (ex-) detainees, even if we confine ourselves to the component directly aimed at finding work. A large part of the reintegration efforts for (ex-) detainees already take place during detention. Furthermore, only half of the adults who are released from detention receive a social assistance benefit. Only for the latter group we could make a comparison with non-detainees, but there are some major differences between both groups. Ex-detainees face more problems than the average unemployed, which will influence their chances of getting a job. For a good comparison, we

would have to select a group within the non-detained unemployed who are sufficiently similar to the ex-detainees who get a benefit after their release from detention. At this moment, there is not enough data available to select such a group.

What do we know about the effectiveness of reintegration of non-detained persons with a social assistance benefit or an unemployment benefit? There is a wide range of international literature about this topic. Also the situation in The Netherlands has been studied. Recently, several randomised experiments are performed in The Netherlands regarding reintegration of unemployed people with a social assistance or an unemployment insurance benefit. The general conclusion from this literature is that on average, reintegration measures lead to a reduction in the use of benefits and an increase in labour participation, but these effects are rather small. On average, the benefits are probably just enough to cover the costs of the reintegration measures. This is not too different from the results obtained with respect to the costs and benefits of (re)integration policy for adult (ex-) detainees. However, as was indicated earlier, this comparison is not appropriate as there are important differences between the two groups and the measures involved.

### **HOW CAN THE COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS BE DEVELOPED FURTHER?**

Previously, we identified a number of limitations of the cost-benefit analysis. However, there are possibilities for overcoming some – not all – of these limitations. First, this can be done by using more microdata of Statistics Netherlands. For this research, we could use a file with data on jobs and social assistance benefits that was linked to data on (ex-) detainees. In principle, Statistics Netherlands can also create links with data on recidivism, education and healthcare and data on the use of services related to work and income. These links can be created not only for adults, but also for juveniles. This could improve and extend the current mathematical model for adults with healthcare and education and would also enable us to develop a mathematical transition model for juveniles.

Further development regarding the costs is also possible. By a closer examination of the time employees within PIs and JJIs spend on reintegration activities, we could determine the costs related to these activities more accurately. For a closer determination of the costs of reintegration activities by municipalities, another step needs to be made regarding the registration of the number of employees spending time on reintegration, the personnel costs of these employees and the participation of (ex-) detainees in reintegration.

A further improvement would be to gain more insight into other categories of costs and benefits. In principle, information about the crimes for which detainees are convicted is available within the judicial system. It is also possible to make estimates of the costs of these crimes, both the costs inside the judicial system (other than detention costs which have already been taken into account) and the costs outside this system. This would provide an estimate of another potential benefit of measures aimed at reducing recidivism. Given the earlier mentioned link with data about education and health care this would enable us to make estimates of the costs of the use of education and healthcare services provided to (ex-) detainees.

On one important point it will be more difficult to make progress. This refers to the measurement of net effects. In The Netherlands, almost every (ex-) detainee receives at least some form of (re)integration during detention. As a consequence, there is no control group which does not receive (re)integration. After detention, there is more variation because municipalities have a different approach regarding (re)integration and because probably not every (ex-) detainee will participate in municipal (re)integration activities. Possibly, this can offer a starting point for an impact assessment. However, it would require a significant improvement of the data registration to establish a relation between (re)integration efforts, the extent to which the five basic conditions are met and the benefits. The difficulty to measure net effects applies to all the relevant areas of the cost-benefit analysis.