

# Research New Zealand

## Long-term Insights Briefing The Future of Imprisonment in New Zealand

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## 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Public service chief executives have a statutory requirement to engage with the general public in order to conduct a Long-term Insights Briefing. The justice sector public service agencies (Ministry of Justice; Ara Poutama Aotearoa; Oranga Tamariki; Crown Law and the Serious Fraud Office) have proposed to work together on a Long-term Insights Briefing on the future of imprisonment in New Zealand. To complete phase one of this engagement, the justice sector:

1. Completed an opinion survey with a nationally representative sample of New Zealanders, 18 years and over. The survey was completed online, between 5 November and 3 December 2021, with a sample of 1,347 people. Māori were over-sampled so that their results could be examined separately, with confidence. Please refer to Section 3.5.

Results based on the total sample of this survey are subject to a maximum margin of error of plus or minus 3.0% (at the 95% confidence level).

2. Completing an opt-in survey, through Citizen Space, hosted on the Ministry of Justice website. The survey was 'open' between 2-30 November 2021 and was completed by 176 people.

Both surveys contained similar questions. This report presents the results of the surveys.

## Key findings

### Population survey

The key findings from this survey are as follows:

1. **Three quarters of the people interviewed stated they had a low level of knowledge of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand.**

- Most people interviewed stated they **knew ‘a little’ (60%) or ‘nothing at all’ (18%)** about the current use of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand. In comparison, 13% stated they knew ‘quite a bit’ or ‘a lot’ (5%).
- Twice as many of the people interviewed believed imprisonment was **currently used ‘too little’ (35%)** compared with the percentage believing that it was used ‘too much’ (15%). Almost one-third said that imprisonment was used ‘about right’ (31%), while a reasonably significant percentage ‘didn’t know’ (19%).
- Other than the fact that most people interviewed believed people entered the prison system because they had ‘committed a serious crime’ (84%), many believed people entered prison because **‘they had drug (47%) and/or mental health issues’ (35%)**.
- Most frequently, the people interviewed felt people returned to prison because they continued to offend (64%).

In addition, almost one-third (31%) stated people returned to prison because they **failed to ‘complete rehabilitation opportunities in prison’**. However, related to this, 32% stated it was because of the **‘failure of the imprisonment system to provide adequate rehabilitation’**.

Over one-half of the people interviewed stated people returned to prison because of **their addictions (57%) and/or 29% had ‘unmet mental health needs’**.

One-third stated people returned to prison because there were **‘no jobs or opportunities on the outside’ (33%)**.

- When asked about the future of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand, 16% of the people interviewed felt there should be **no** changes from the current use of prisons.

However, **almost one-half felt that they should be ‘used more’ (47%), whereas 36% felt they should be ‘used less or not at all’**. The percentage of people interviewed who felt that prisons should not be used at all was 2%.

Reflecting this result, when the people interviewed were asked what was the most important areas that needed to change, most frequently, they stated that there needed to be a change in sentencing and/or prisons because they were **too lenient** (23%).

Only one other suggestion was mentioned by more than 10% of the people interviewed when they were asked this open-ended question; namely, that there needed to be **more/better rehabilitation opportunities** (14%).

2. **When told about the justice sector's work on the future of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand, over two-thirds of the people interviewed rated all four high-level areas as important.**

The highest level of agreement was in relation to investigating, **'What helps people in the prison system not return to prison'**. Almost one-half of the people interviewed (48%) 'strongly agreed' that this should be an area of focus (i.e. the highest possible rating) and when the percentage who 'agreed' is added, the total level of agreement is 81%.

Four specific areas were identified by about one-quarter or more of the people interviewed as areas worthy of examination or investigation. In descending order, they were:

- 'Mental health and addiction and imprisonment' (49%).
- 'Young people and imprisonment' (33%).
- 'Prison-based rehabilitation' (28%).
- 'Understanding how people stop offending' (24%).

3. **There are significant differences between the results for people completing this survey who identified as Māori and those not identifying as Māori.**

To illustrate these differences, Table 1 provides a comparison of the results to four key questions. Significantly different opinions are evident in terms of the current and future use of imprisonment in Aotearoa between Māori and non-Māori:

- Māori were **more** likely to state that imprisonment is currently used ‘too much’ (32% compared with 12% of non-Māori), whereas non-Māori were more likely to say it was used ‘too little’ (36% compared with 23% of Māori).
- Māori were **more** likely to state that, in the future, imprisonment should be used ‘less’ (52% compared with 34% for non-Māori), whereas non-Māori were more likely to say it should be used ‘more’ (50% compared with 33% of Māori).
- Nevertheless, both Māori and non-Māori were in agreement with what should be the justice sector focus in terms of the future of imprisonment in New Zealand.

Over 50% of both Māori and non-Māori rated the areas as important areas of focus and in the same order.

- Furthermore, Māori and non-Māori identified the same specific areas most frequently as worthy of investigation, with ‘Mental health and addiction’ identified most frequently by almost one-half of both groups.

**Table 1: Population survey – Māori compared with non-Māori**

	Total	Māori	Non-Māori
Unweighted base =	1347	402	945
	%	%	%
<b>Current use of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand:</b>			
Too little	35	23	36
About right	31	29	31
Too much	15	32	12
Don't know	19	16	20
Total	100	100	100
<b>Use of prisons in the future:</b>			
Used more	47	33	50
Used less/not used at all	36	52	34
I don't wish to see any changes/Not answered	16	15	17
Total	100	100	100
<b>Areas for justice sector to focus on for the future of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand (% agreeing):</b>			
What helps people in the prison system not return to prison	81	78	82
What prevents people from entering the prison system in the first place	74	72	75
What the future of imprisonment might look like	73	70	74
How the prison population has changed over time and why	68	68	71
Total	**	**	**
<b>Possible areas of investigation in justice sector's work:</b>			
Mental health and addiction and imprisonment	49	49	49
Young people and imprisonment	33	41	32
Prison-based rehabilitation	28	21	29
Understanding how people stop offending	24	16	25
Total	**	**	**

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

\*\* Total may exceed 100% because of multiple response.

## 'Opt-in' survey

The key findings from this survey are as follows:

1. **People interviewed completing this survey have a different profile compared with those completing the population survey.**

Although no demographic information was collected by the Ministry of Justice hosted opt-in survey, the responses to questions point to the fact that they probably have a very different profile. For example, just 29% stated they had no direct or indirect experience of the prison system compared with 49% of people completing the population survey.

2. **A large majority of the people completing this survey (88%) believed that imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand was used 'too much'.**

- About three-quarters or more stated that people entered the prison system because (in descending order):
  - 'They have unmet **mental health needs**' (84%).
  - 'They were **deprived of opportunities as children and young adults**' (75%).
  - 'The **system is racist**' (72%).
  - 'They have **drug addictions**' (70%).
- The people completing this survey provided two main reasons for why people returned to prison:
  - 'The prison system **failed to provide adequate rehabilitation**' (83%).
  - 'They had **unmet mental health needs**' (80%).
- When asked about the future of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand, almost all of the people completing this survey stated that prisons should be '**used less**' or '**not at all**' (93%). Forty percent stated that prisons should not be used at all.
- Relatedly, when people completing this survey were asked to identify what **could** change about imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand in 20-30 years' time, over one-half stated that, within this timeframe, there could be 'alternatives to prisons or prisons could be abolished or used for only those committing very serious crimes' (53%).

Forty-one percent stated that there could be more focus on 'rehabilitation, support services and reintegration'.

- When asked to identify what might be the most significant challenge, almost one-half of the people completing this survey identified **‘racism and inequality’** as the most significant **challenge** (46%).

‘Changing public attitudes’ (28%) and ‘political barriers’ (20%) were also frequently mentioned.

- On the other hand, when asked about the most significant **opportunity**, over one-third of the people completing this survey stated that the greatest opportunity relating to the changes would be a ‘more positive, equitable, supportive and productive society’ (36%).

Twenty-eight percent also stated that New Zealand would be ‘seen as a world leader, with a ground-breaking justice system, notable for its prison reform’.

**3. When told about the justice sector’s work on the future of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand, over one-half of the people completing this survey gave all four high-level areas the highest possible rating of agreement (i.e. ‘strongly agree’ that it should be an area of focus).**

In descending order:

- ‘What helps people in the prison system not return to prison’ (78% agreement).
- ‘What prevents people from entering the prison system in the first place’ (76%).
- ‘What the future of imprisonment might look like’ (66%).
- ‘How the prison population has changed over time and why’ (52%).

The area highest level of agreement (‘What helps people in the prison system not return to prison’) is the same as for the population survey. Almost one-half of the people completing that survey (48%) ‘strongly agreed’ that this should be an area of focus.

Three specific areas that were identified by about one-half as worthy of examination and investigation:

- ‘Alternatives to prison’ (52%).
- ‘Mental health and addiction and imprisonment’ (48%).
- ‘Racism in the criminal justice system’ (46%).

The focus on, ‘Mental health and addiction and imprisonment’, is also shared with people completing the population survey.

## 2.0 Introduction

Under the Public Service Act 2020, public service agencies are required to develop and share insights with the general public on the trends, risks and opportunities that affect, or may affect, Aotearoa New Zealand. These are referred to as '**Long-term Insights Briefings**'.

The justice sector's current Briefing is on imprisonment.

### 2.1 Public engagement

In order to engage with the general public on the future of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand, the justice sector decided to complete **two** streams of work:

1. **A population survey with a nationally representative sample of New Zealanders, 18 years and over.** This survey was completed online, between 5 November and 3 December 2021, with a sample of 1,347 people sourced from Dynata, New Zealand's largest panel provider. Māori were over-sampled so that their results could be examined separately, with confidence. Please refer to Section 3.5.

The survey sample is representative in terms of its basic demographic characteristics, as well as geographically. The achieved survey sample has been weighted in order to ensure the survey results are truly representative, with the weighting parameters sourced from the most recent Census of Population and Dwellings.

Results based on the total sample of 1,347 are subject to a maximum margin of error of plus or minus 3.0% (at the 95% confidence level). This means, for example, that had we found that 50% of the people completing this survey felt they 'knew a lot' about the use of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand, we could be 95% sure that we would have got the same result – give or take 3.0% - had we interviewed everyone in the population.

2. **An opt-in survey, through Citizen Space, hosted on the Ministry of Justice website.** The survey was 'open' between 2-30 November 2021 and was completed by 176 people.

Given that this was an opt-in survey, the results only reflect the opinions of those people responding (i.e. they are not representative of the opinions of adult New Zealanders, which was the purpose of the population survey above).

Furthermore, as no information was collected describing who the people completing this survey were, it is not possible to explain whose opinions they reflect, even in the broadest of demographic terms.

## 2.1.1 Demographic profile of people completing the population survey

Table 2 provides a demographic profile of the achieved sample of 1,347 for the nationally representative survey of New Zealanders.

**Table 2: Total sample - Demographic profile – Population survey**

Unweighted base =	Total sample 1347 %
<b>Age:</b>	
18-24	11
25-34	16
35-54	40
55+	33
Total	100
<b>Gender:</b>	
Male	49
Female	51
Total	100
<b>Ethnicity:</b>	
NZ European/ Pākehā	66
Māori	13
Pasifika	2
Asian	13
Other	5
	**
<b>Region:</b>	
North North Island	55
South North Island	22
South Island	23
Total	100
<b>Experience of imprisonment:</b>	
I have been in prison or known someone who was or is in prison	37
I have worked or volunteered in a prison	
I have worked in probation	7
Lawyer, worked in court, MOJ employee	3
Other experience	4
No, I have no experience of imprisonment	49
Total	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

\*\* Total may exceed 100% because of multiple response.

## 2.1.2 Information objectives

The information objectives relating to both surveys were as follows:

1. Perceived knowledge of the imprisonment system in Aotearoa New Zealand.
2. Beliefs about the use of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand, including:
  - a. Beliefs about the main reasons people enter the prison system.
  - b. Beliefs about why people return to prison.
3. Opinions about what people would like to see happen in terms of the use of prisons in Aotearoa New Zealand in the future.
4. Opinions about what needs to change about imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand.
  - a. Opinions about the most significant challenge to change (opt-in survey only).
  - b. Opinions about the greatest opportunity for change (opt-in survey only).
5. Opinions about what aspects the justice sector should focus on when considering the future of the prison system.

Copies of the survey questionnaires can be found in Appendix A (population survey) and Appendix B (opt-in survey) of this report.

## 3.0 Population survey

The following results relate to the population survey.

### 3.1 Perceived knowledge of the imprisonment system in Aotearoa New Zealand

At the beginning of the survey, the people completing this survey were introduced to the survey topic as follows:

*“The following questions are about imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand. Your responses will help to inform the development of the Justice Sector Long-term Insights Briefing. The proposed topic for the Briefing is the Long-term insights about imprisonment and what these tell us about future risks and opportunities. If you would like to know more about this, please click here [link to consultation document].”*

They were then asked to consider how much they knew about the current use of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand, using a four-point scale to respond:

*“How much do you know about the current use of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand?”*

Table 3 shows that most of the people completing this survey stated they knew ‘a little’ (60%) or ‘nothing at all’ (18%) about the current use of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand. In comparison, 13% stated they knew ‘quite a bit’ or ‘a lot’ (5%).

**Table 3: Perceived knowledge of the current use of the imprisonment system – Population survey**

*Q1 How much do you know about the current use of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand?*

	RNZ
Unweighted base =	1347
	%
Know nothing at all	18
Know a little	60
Know quite a lot	13
Know a lot	5
Don't know	3
Total	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

### 3.1.1 Profile of Informed and Non-informed

As a result of the answers to the question about the current use of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand, we have created two groups of people for analysis and reporting purposes as follows:

- Group 1 – 12% of the people completing this survey (251), on the basis that they stated they knew ‘quite a bit’ or ‘a lot’. They are referred to as ‘Informed’.
- Group 2 – 78% of the people completing this survey (1,096), on the basis that they stated they knew ‘a little’ or ‘nothing at all’. They are referred to as ‘Non-informed’.

Table 4 (overleaf) provides a profile of each of the Informed and Non-informed groups of people. Note that over one-third (37%) stated they had had direct or indirect experience of the prison system, and this was more likely the case for those who felt they were informed (44% compared with 36% for those who felt themselves to not be informed).

**Table 4: Demographic profile of Informed and Non-informed – Population survey**

Unweighted base =	Total sample 1347 %	Informed 251 %	Non-informed 1096 %
<b>Age:</b>			
18-24	11	9	12
25-34	16	18	16
35-54	40	42	39
55+	33	32	33
Total	100	100	100
<b>Gender:</b>			
Male	49	63	46
Female	51	37	54
Total	100	100	100
<b>Ethnicity:</b>			
NZ European/ Pākehā	66	67	67
Māori	13	13	13
Pasifika	2	2	2
Asian	13	13	13
Other	5	63	6
	**	17	**
<b>Region:</b>			
North North Island	55	14	56
South North Island	22	4	21
South Island	23	22	23
Total	100	100	100
<b>Experience of imprisonment:</b>			
I have been in prison or known someone who was or is in prison	37	44	36
I have worked or volunteered in a prison	7	16	5
I have worked in probation	3	7	2
Lawyer, worked in court, MOJ employee	2	5	1
Other experience	4	5	4
No, I have no experience of imprisonment	49	27	54
Total	**	**	**

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

\*\* Total may exceed 100% because of multiple response.

## 3.2 Beliefs about the current use of imprisonment system in Aotearoa New Zealand

People completing this survey were asked to comment on the current use of imprisonment in New Zealand; that is, whether it was used too much or too little. Table 5 shows that more than twice as many believed imprisonment was currently used ‘too little’ (35%) compared with the percentage believing that it was used ‘too much’ (15%). Almost one-third believed imprisonment was used ‘about right’ (31%), while a reasonably significant percentage ‘didn’t know’ (19%).

There are significant differences between people who considered themselves informed and those who felt non-informed. For example, people who considered themselves informed were significantly more likely to state that imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand was used ‘too much’ (24% compared with 13% for those who felt non-informed).

**Table 5: Beliefs about the current use of imprisonment – Population survey**

*Q3 Do you think imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand is used ...*

	Total	Non-informed	Informed
Unweighted base =	1347	1096	251
	%	%	%
Too little	35	34	39
About right	31	30	33
Too much	15	13	24
Don't know	19	23	3
Total	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

### 3.2.1 Beliefs about why people enter prison

People completing this survey were also asked to comment on why they believed people entered prison. Table 6 (overleaf) shows why they believed people enter prison. Other than the fact that most believed it was because they had ‘committed a serious crime’ (84%), many believed people entered prison because they ‘had drug (47%) and/or mental health issues’ (35%).

Over one-quarter of the people completing this survey also commented that people entered prison because of ‘poor upbringings’ (27%), while 23% believed it was because they were ‘deprived of opportunities as children and young adults’.

Ten percent stated that people entered prison because the ‘system is racist’.

There are significant differences between the people completing this survey who considered themselves informed and those who felt non-informed. For example, people who considered themselves informed were significantly more likely to state that people entered the prison system because of 'mental health issues' (43% compared with 33% for those who felt non-informed). On the other hand, people who felt non-informed were more likely to state they entered the system because they 'committed serious crimes' (85% compared with 75% for those who considered themselves informed).

**Table 6: Reasons for entering prison – Population survey**

*Q4 What do you think are the main reasons people enter the prison system in this country in the first place?*

	Total	Non-informed	Informed
Unweighted base =	1347	1096	251
	%	%	%
They've committed serious crimes	84	85	75
They have drug addictions	47	46	50
They have unmet mental health needs	35	33	43
They had poor upbringings	27	27	28
They were deprived of opportunities as children and young adults	23	23	23
The system is racist	10	10	11
Other reasons	6	6	8
Total	**	**	**

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple response.

### 3.2.2 Beliefs about why people return to prison

In addition to being asked about why people enter prison, the people completing this survey were also asked to comment on why they returned to prison. A range of reasons was given.

Table 7 (overleaf) shows that, most frequently, they felt people returned to prison because they 'continued to offend' (64%).

Almost one-third (31%) stated people returned to prison because they failed to 'complete rehabilitation opportunities in prison'. However, related to this, 32% stated it was because of the 'failure of the imprisonment system to provide adequate rehabilitation'.

In addition, over one-half stated it was because of 'their addictions' (57%) and/or 29% had 'unmet mental health needs'.

One-third stated people returned to prison because there were 'no jobs or opportunities on the outside' (33%).

The results are reasonably similar for people who considered themselves informed and those who felt non-informed. However, consistent with the reasons why they felt people entered the prison system in the first place, people completing this survey who considered themselves informed were significantly more likely to state that people re-entered the prison system because they failed to 'complete rehabilitation opportunities in prison' (37% compared with 30% for those who felt non-informed).

On the other hand, people who felt non-informed were more likely to state they re-entered the system because they 'continued to offend' (65% compared with 57% for those who considered themselves informed).

**Table 7: Reasons for returning to prison – Population survey**

*Q5 In your view what are the main reasons people return to prison?*

Unweighted base =	Total	Non-informed	Informed
	1347	1096	251
	%	%	%
They choose to continue offending	64	65	57
Addictions to alcohol and other drugs	57	57	58
No jobs or opportunities on the outside	33	32	33
Failure of the prison system to provide adequate rehabilitation	32	32	31
Failure to complete rehabilitation opportunities in prison	31	30	37
Unmet mental health needs	29	29	29
Other reasons	6	6	6
Total	**	**	**

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple response.

### 3.3 Opinions about the use of prisons in the future

Having established their beliefs about the current use of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand, people completing this survey were asked for their opinions about the future use of prisons.

Table 8 shows that 16% felt there should be no changes from the current use of prisons.

However, almost one-half felt that they should be ‘used more’ (47%), whereas 36% felt they should be ‘used less or not at all’. The percentage of people who felt that prisons should not be used at all was 2%.

There are significant differences between people who considered themselves informed and those who felt non-informed. For example, people who considered themselves informed were significantly more likely to state that in the future prisons should be ‘used more’ (53%) or ‘used less’ (42%), compared with those who felt non-informed (46% and 35% respectively).

In other words, people who considered themselves informed were divided in their opinion. On the other hand, people who felt non-informed were more likely to state they did not want to see any changes (19% compared with those who considered themselves informed).

**Table 8: Opinions about the future use of prisons – Population survey**

*Q6 What would you like to see happen to the use of prisons in the future?*

	Total	Non-informed	Informed
Unweighted base =	1347	1096	251
	%	%	%
Used more	47	46	53
Used less/not used at all	36	35	42
I don't wish to see any changes/Not answered	16	19	5
Total	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Table 9 compares opinions about the future use of prisons (vertical axis of the table) with beliefs about their current use (horizontal axis). This shows that there is a strong relationship between current beliefs about the use of prisons and their future use.

For example, 92% of those people who believe there is currently too much use of prisons, are of the opinion that they should be used less or not at all in the future. In comparison, 88% of those who believe that there is currently too little use of prisons, are of the opinion that they should be used more in the future.

**Table 9: Opinions about the future use of prisons by beliefs about current use**

*Q6 What would you like to see happen to the use of prisons in the future?*

	Total	Too little	About right	Too much	Don't know
Unweighted base =	1347	436	403	255	253
	%	%	%	%	%
Used more	47	88	31	6	32
Used less/not used at all	36	8	39	92	38
I don't wish to see any changes/Not answered	16	3	29	2	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

### 3.4 Opinions about what the justice sector should focus on with regard to the future prison system

People completing this survey were told about the justice sector's work on the future of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand, including the four high-level areas that the justice sector was considering or investigating as part of this work.

They were then asked to comment on whether they agreed or disagreed that these areas were the 'right areas' to focus on. The main findings shown in Table 10 (overleaf) are:

- Over two-thirds agreed that all four areas should be an area of focus.
- However, with that in mind, the highest level of agreement was in relation to investigating, 'What helps people in the prison system not return to prison'. Almost one-half of the people completing this survey (48%) 'strongly agreed' that this should be an area of focus (i.e. the highest possible rating) and when the percentage who 'agreed' is added, the total level of agreement is 81%.
- The results are the same for people who considered themselves informed and those who felt non-informed.

**Table 10: Agreement or disagreement with the justice sector's areas of focus – Population survey**

*Q7 The work will look at the following aspects. To what extent do you agree or disagree that these are the right things to be looking at?*

	Total	Non-informed	Informed
Unweighted base =	1347	1096	251
	%	%	%
<b>What helps people in the prison system not return to prison:</b>			
Strongly agree	48	48	50
Agree	33	34	31
Neither agree nor disagree	16	17	15
Disagree	1	1	2
Strongly disagree	1	0	2
Total	100	100	100
<b>What prevents people from entering the prison system in the first place:</b>			
Strongly agree	33	33	35
Agree	41	41	42
Neither agree nor disagree	22	22	18
Disagree	3	3	4
Strongly disagree	1	1	2
Total	100	100	100
<b>What the future of imprisonment might look like:</b>			
Strongly agree	26	25	29
Agree	47	48	45
Neither agree nor disagree	23	24	18
Disagree	3	2	7
Strongly disagree	1	1	1
Total	100	100	100
<b>How the prison population has changed over time and why:</b>			
Strongly agree	22	21	28
Agree	46	47	43
Neither agree nor disagree	26	28	20
Disagree	4	3	8
Strongly disagree	1	1	2
Total	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

### 3.4.1 Opinions about important areas to include in the justice sector work

People completing this survey were presented with a list of possible areas of examination and investigation and asked to identify up to three that they considered important.

Table 11 identifies four specific areas as being identified by about one-quarter or more. These are consistent with some of the earlier results reported. In descending order, they were:

- 'Mental health and addiction and imprisonment' (49%).
- 'Young people and imprisonment' (33%).
- 'Prison-based rehabilitation' (28%).
- 'Understanding how people stop offending' (24%).

The results are the same for people who considered themselves informed and those who felt non-informed.

**Table 11: Most important areas to include in the justice sector’s work – Population survey**

*Q9 The work will look at some of the following areas. Please indicate the areas (up to three) you think are most important to include.*

Unweighted base =	Total 1347 %	Non- informed 1096 %	Informed 251 %
Mental health and addiction and imprisonment	49	49	49
Young people and imprisonment	33	34	31
Prison-based rehabilitation	28	28	28
Understanding how people stop offending	24	25	19
Reintegration into the communities	21	22	20
Crime rates	19	20	14
The court system	17	17	16
Socio-economic drivers of imprisonment	16	15	19
Ethnicity and imprisonment	13	13	17
Community-based rehabilitation	13	13	11
Alternatives to prison	13	13	14
Racism in the criminal justice system	11	11	9
Policing	8	8	7
Women's imprisonment	6	5	8
How changes in the law have affected imprisonment rates	5	5	7
Indigenous justice processes	3	3	4
Custodial remand	3	2	5
Other	2	2	2
Total	**	**	**

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses.

### 3.4.2 Opinions about the most important area that needs to change

People completing this survey were asked to identify the most important area that needed to change. The qualitative response to this open-ended question was thematically analysed and Table 12 shows that, most frequently, people stated that there needed to be a change in sentencing and/or prisons because they were too lenient (23%).

Only one other suggestion was mentioned by more than 10% of people; namely, that there needed to be more/better rehabilitation opportunities (14%).

There are no statistically significant differences between people who considered themselves informed and those who felt non-informed.

**Table 12: Most important area that needs to change about imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand – Population survey**

*Q10 What is the most important thing you think needs to change about imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand?*

	Total	Non-informed	Informed
Unweighted base =	1347	1096	251
	%	%	%
NZ sentencing/prisons are too soft/lenient	23	22	26
More/better rehabilitation opportunities	14	14	12
More support for those with Mental health and addiction	6	5	6
The court/justice system/laws	6	5	8
Stop people offending/re-offending	6	6	4
Reintegration/support to re-enter society	4	4	4
Alternatives to prison	4	4	7
Safer/more productive use of prisoners' time (incl. education and training)	4	4	5
Understanding why people offend/reoffend	3	4	1
Racism in the criminal justice system	3	2	4
Imprisonment of Māori and Pasifika	2	2	1
Gangs	2	2	3
Prevent youth offending	1	1	0
Other	9	8	12
Nothing needs to change	6	6	8
Don't know	15	16	8
Total	**	**	**

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses.

### 3.5 Results for Māori

In this sub-section, we compare the survey results for Māori with the results for all other people who did not identify as Māori. Māori were over-sampled for the survey, to the extent that 30% of the total sample interviewed (or 402) identified as Māori and the remaining 70% (or 945) as non-Māori. Note that this over-sampling was corrected by a ‘weighting’ process, post-interviewing, so that any result based on the total sample is representative of the total population.

Results based on the total sample of 402 Māori are subject to a maximum margin of error of plus or minus 4.9% (at the 95% confidence level). This level of accuracy is within the threshold usually accepted by government agencies for population surveys.

The maximum margin of error means, for example, that had we found that 50% of Māori felt they ‘knew a lot’ about the use of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand, we could be 95% sure that we would have got the same result – give or take 4.9% - had we interviewed all Māori in the population.

#### 3.5.1 Experience of the prison system

By way of context, Table 13 shows the extent to which Māori reported having direct and indirect experience of the prison system in Aotearoa New Zealand. This shows twice as many Māori as non-Māori stating they have either been in prison or know someone who has or is in prison (66% and 33% respectively).

**Table 13: Experience of the prison system – Population survey – Māori compared with non-Māori**

*Q3 Do you think imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand is used ...*

	Total	Māori	Non-Māori
Unweighted base =	1347	402	945
	%	%	%
I have been in prison or known someone who was or is in prison	37	66	33
I have worked or volunteered in a prison	7	12	6
I have worked in probation	3	7	2
Lawyer, worked in court, MOJ employee	2	2	2
Other experience	4	3	4
No, I have no experience of imprisonment	49	16	54
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

### 3.5.2 Beliefs about the current use of prisons

Table 14 shows that significantly more Māori than non-Māori stated that imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand was used 'too much' (32% and 12% respectively). While similar percentages felt it was used 'about right', reflecting the above result, non-Māori were more likely than Māori to state it was used 'too little' (36% and 23% respectively).

**Table 14: Beliefs about the current use of imprisonment – Population survey – Māori compared with non-Māori**

*Q3 Do you think imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand is used ...*

	Total	Māori	Non-Māori
Unweighted base =	1347	402	945
	%	%	%
Too little	35	23	36
About right	31	29	31
Too much	15	32	12
Don't know	19	16	20
Total	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

### 3.5.3 Beliefs about why people enter prisons

Table 15 shows that, to a certain extent, Māori and non-Māori had different opinions about why people entered prison.

For example, Māori were significantly more likely to state that it was because of mental health issues (40% of Māori identified this as a reason compared with 34% of non-Māori), deprivation (30% and 22% respectively) and that the prison system was racist (22% and 8% respectively).

**Table 15: Reasons for entering prison – Population survey - Māori compared with non-Māori**

*Q4 What do you think are the main reasons people enter the prison system in this country in the first place?*

	Total	Māori	Non-Māori
Unweighted base =	1347	402	945
	%	%	%
They've committed serious crimes	84	71	86
They have drug addictions	47	42	48
They have unmet mental health needs	35	40	34
They had poor upbringings	27	32	26
They were deprived of opportunities as children and young adults	23	30	22
The system is racist	10	22	8
Any other reasons	6	6	6
Total	**	**	**

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple response.

### 3.5.4 Beliefs about why people return to prison

As was the case with the question about why people enter prison, Table 16 shows that Māori and non-Māori had different opinions as to why people returned.

This was particularly in relation to the lack of jobs and opportunities on the outside (45% of Māori identified this as a reason compared with 31% of non-Māori) and the failure of the prison system to provide adequate rehabilitation (39% and 31% respectively).

**Table 16: Reasons for returning to prison – Population survey - Māori compared with non-Māori**

*Q5 In your view what are the main reasons people return to prison?*

Unweighted base =	Total	Māori	Non-Māori
	1347	402	945
	%	%	%
They choose to continue offending	64	50	66
Addictions to alcohol and other drugs	57	56	57
No jobs or opportunities on the outside	33	45	31
Failure of the prison system to provide adequate rehabilitation	32	39	31
Failure to complete rehabilitation opportunities in prison	31	25	32
Unmet mental health needs	29	31	29
Any other reasons	5	6	5
Total	**	**	**

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple response.

### 3.5.5 Opinions about the use of prisons in the future

Table 17 shows that, compared with non-Māori, Māori were significantly more likely to state that prisons should be used less or not at all (52% and 34% respectively).

On the other hand, non-Māori were more likely than Māori to say they should be used more (50% and 33% respectively).

**Table 17: Opinions about the future use of prisons – Population survey - Māori compared with non-Māori**

*Q6 What would you like to see happen to the use of prisons in the future?*

	Total	Māori	Non-Māori
Unweighted base =	1347	402	945
	%	%	%
Used more	47	33	50
Used less/not used at all	36	52	34
I don't wish to see any changes/Not answered	16	15	17
Total	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

### 3.5.6 Opinions about what the justice sector should focus on with regard to the future prison system

Table 18 (overleaf) shows that both Māori and non-Māori recorded relatively high levels of agreement with all four areas of focus.

However, the degree to which two particular areas should be focused on were different:

- A significantly higher percentage of Māori 'strongly agreed' that an area of focus should be on 'what the future of imprisonment might look like' (34% compared with 25% for non- Māori).
- A significantly higher percentage of Māori 'strongly agreed' that an area of focus should be on 'how the prison population has changed over time and why' (33% compared with 20% for non- Māori).

**Table 18: Agreement or disagreement with the justice sector's areas of focus – Population survey - Māori compared with non-Māori**

*Q7 The work will look at the following aspects. To what extent do you agree or disagree that these are the right things to be looking at?*

	Total	Māori	Non-Māori
Unweighted base =	1347	402	945
	%	%	%
<b>What helps people in the prison system not return to prison:</b>			
Strongly agree	48	49	48
Agree	33	29	34
Neither agree nor disagree	16	19	16
Disagree	1	2	1
Strongly disagree	1	1	1
Total	100	100	100
<b>What prevents people from entering the prison system in the first place:</b>			
Strongly agree	33	37	33
Agree	41	35	42
Neither agree nor disagree	22	23	21
Disagree	3	3	3
Strongly disagree	1	2	1
Total	100	100	100
<b>What the future of imprisonment might look like:</b>			
Strongly agree	26	34	25
Agree	47	36	49
Neither agree nor disagree	23	26	23
Disagree	3	3	3
Strongly disagree	1	1	1
Total	100	100	100
<b>How the prison population has changed over time and why:</b>			
Strongly agree	22	33	20
Agree	46	34	48
Neither agree nor disagree	26	29	26
Disagree	4	3	4
Strongly disagree	1	1	1
Total	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

### 3.5.7 Opinions about important areas to include in the justice sector work

Table 19 shows that both Māori and non-Māori identified (to the same extent) that mental health and addiction should be included as important areas to include in the justice sector's work.

However, in relation to other areas, there were significant differences. For example, compared with non-Māori, Māori were more likely to identify as important the following:

- Young people and imprisonment (41% of Māori compared with 32% of non-Māori).
- Racism in the criminal justice system (21% and 9% respectively).
- Ethnicity and imprisonment (21% and 12% respectively).
- Alternatives to prison (19% and 12% respectively).

On the other hand, compared with Māori, non-Māori were more likely to identify the following:

- Prison-based rehabilitation (29% of non-Māori compared with 21% of Māori).
- Understanding how people stop offending (25% and 16% respectively).
- Crime rates (20% and 8%).
- Socio-economic drivers of imprisonment (16% and 11% respectively).

**Table 19: Most important areas to include in the justice sector’s work – Population survey - Māori compared with non-Māori**

*Q9 The work will look at some of the following areas. Please indicate the areas (up to three) you think are most important to include.*

	Total	Māori	Non-Māori
Unweighted base =	1347	402	945
	%	%	%
Mental health and addiction and imprisonment	49	49	49
Young people and imprisonment	33	41	32
Prison-based rehabilitation	28	21	29
Understanding how people stop offending	24	16	25
Reintegration into the communities	21	21	21
Crime rates	19	8	20
The court system	17	17	17
Socio-economic drivers of imprisonment	16	11	16
Ethnicity and imprisonment	13	21	12
Community-based rehabilitation	13	12	13
Alternatives to prison	13	19	12
Racism in the criminal justice system	11	21	9
Policing	8	5	9
Women's imprisonment	6	6	5
How changes in the law have affected imprisonment rates	5	7	5
Indigenous justice processes	3	6	3
Custodial remand	3	2	3
Other	2	0	2
Total	**	**	**

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses.

### 3.5.8 Opinions about the most important area that needs to change

Table 20 shows that there are significant differences between the opinions of Māori and non-Māori in terms of the most important area that needs to change about imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Whereas non-Māori were more likely to state that changes needed to occur in relation to sentencing (because sentences were too lenient) and there should be more or better rehabilitation, Māori were more likely to state that changes needed to occur in relation to:

- Alternatives to prison.
- Racism in the criminal justice system.
- Imprisonment of Māori and Pasifika.

Whilst each of these on their own were not necessarily mentioned more significantly by Māori compared with non-Māori, as a group they were mentioned more significantly (17% and 7% respectively).

**Table 20: Most important area that needs to change about imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand – Population survey - Māori compared with non-Māori**

*Q10 What is the most important thing you think needs to change about imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand?*

Unweighted base =	Total	Māori	Non- Māori
	1347	402	945
	%	%	%
NZ sentencing/prisons are too soft/lenient	23	11	24
More/better rehabilitation opportunities	14	9	15
More support for those with mental health and addiction	6	6	6
The court/justice system/laws	6	7	5
Stop people offending/re-offending	6	4	6
Reintegration/support to re-enter society	4	6	4
Alternatives to prison	4	6	4
Safer/more productive use of prisoners' time (incl. education and training)	4	4	4
Understanding why people offend/reoffend	3	4	3
Racism in the criminal justice system	3	6	2
Imprisonment of Māori and Pasifika	2	5	1
Gangs	2	2	3
Prevent youth offending	1	3	1
Other	9	15	8
Nothing needs to change	6	5	6
Don't know	15	12	15
Total	**	**	**

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses.

## 4.0 Opt-in survey

The following results relate to the Ministry of Justice hosted opt-in survey. No demographic information was collected about the people completing this survey, with the exception of their experience of the prison system (Table 21).

Note that 131 provided a response to this question; that is, 45 did not. If we assume these non-responders had no experience, and the table is recalculated on the basis of the total sample of 176, the 'no experience' result becomes 29%. This is still significantly different from the 49% recorded in the population survey.

**Table 21: Experience of imprisonment – Opt-in survey**

*Q2 Do you have any experience of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand?*

Unweighted base =	Total 131* %
I have been in prison or known someone who was or is in prison	55
I have worked or volunteered in a prison	31
I have worked in probation	4
Lawyer, worked in court, MOJ employee	21
Other experience	15
No, I have no experience of imprisonment	3
Total	**

\* This table is based on 131 people. Forty-five people did not complete this question.

\*\* Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses.

## 4.1 Beliefs about the use of imprisonment system in Aotearoa New Zealand

Table 22 shows that a large majority of the people completing this survey (88%) believed that imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand was used ‘too much’. The comparable statistic from the population survey is 15%.

**Table 22: Beliefs about the current use of imprisonment – Opt-in survey**

*Q3 Do you think imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand is used:*

	Total
Unweighted base =	176 %
Too little	5
About right	5
Too much	88
Don't know	2
Total	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

### 4.1.1 Beliefs about why people enter prison

Table 23 (overleaf) shows that most frequently, people completing this survey stated that people entered the prison system because (in descending order):

- ‘They have unmet mental health needs’ (84%).
- ‘They were deprived of opportunities as children and young adults’ (75%).
- ‘The system is racist’ (72%).
- ‘They have drug addictions’ (70%).

These results are significantly different from those of the population survey. In that survey, the most frequently mentioned reason was, ‘they’ve committed a serious crimes’ (84% compared with 45% for those completing the opt-in survey).

**Table 23: Reasons for entering prison – Opt-in survey**

*Q4 What do you think are the main reasons people enter the prison system in this country in the first place?*

Unweighted base =	Total 174* %
They have unmet mental health needs	84
They were deprived of opportunities as children and young adults	75
The system is racist	72
They have drug addictions	70
They had poor upbringings	62
They've committed serious crimes	45
Other reasons	31
Total	**

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple response.

#### 4.1.2 Beliefs about why people return to prison

Table 24 (overleaf) shows that the two main reasons people completing this survey felt people returned to prison were because:

- ‘The prison system failed to provide adequate rehabilitation’ (83%).
- ‘They had unmet mental health needs’ (80%).

Other frequently mentioned reasons included:

- ‘There were no jobs or opportunities on the outside’ (71%).
- ‘They had addictions to alcohol and other drugs’ (68%).

These results are significantly different from those of the population survey. In that survey, the most frequently mentioned reason was, ‘They chose to continue to offend’ (64% compared with 17% for those completing the opt-in survey).

Whilst, ‘The prison system failed to provide adequate rehabilitation’ was the most frequently mentioned reason given by people completing the opt-in survey (83%), this was mentioned by only 32% of people completing the population survey.

**Table 24: Reasons for returning to prison – Opt-in survey**

*Q5 In your view what are the main reasons people return to prison?*

Unweighted base =	Total 173* %
Failure of the prison system to provide adequate rehabilitation	83
Unmet mental health needs	80
No jobs or opportunities on the outside	71
Addictions to alcohol and other drugs	68
Failure to complete rehabilitation opportunities in prison	27
They choose to continue offending	17
Other reasons	30
Total	**

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple response.

## 4.2 Opinions about the use of prisons in the future

Table 25 shows that almost all the people completing this survey stated that prisons should be 'used less' or 'not at all' (93%). Forty percent stated that prisons should not be used at all.

In comparison, only 36% of people completing the population survey proposed this.

**Table 25: Opinions about the future use of prisons – Opt-in survey**

*Q6 What would you like to see happen to the use of prisons in the future?*

	Total
Unweighted base =	176
	%
Used more	6
Used less/not used at all	93
I don't wish to see any changes/Not answered	2
Total	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

### 4.3 Opinions about what the justice sector should focus on with regard to the future prison system

Table 26 shows very high levels of agreement that the justice sector briefing on imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand should focus on each of the four high-level areas. In descending order, over one-half of people completing this survey gave each area the highest possible rating of 'strongly agree':

- 'What helps people in the prison system not return to prison' (78%).
- 'What prevents people from entering the prison system in the first place' (76%).
- 'What the future of imprisonment might look like' (66%).
- 'How the prison population has changed over time and why' (52%).

While this is the same order as for people completing the population survey, the people completing that survey recorded relatively lower levels of agreement. For example, 48% of people completing the population survey 'strongly agreed' that, 'What helps people in the prison system not return to prison', should be an area of focus (compared with 78% of people completing the opt-in survey).

**Table 26: Agreement or disagreement with the justice sector's areas of focus – Opt-in survey**

*Q7 The work will look at the following aspects. To what extent do you agree or disagree that these are the right things to be looking at?*

Unweighted base =	Total 176 %
<b>What helps people in the prison system not return to prison:</b>	
Strongly agree	78
Agree	15
Neither agree nor disagree	5
Disagree	1
Strongly disagree	1
Total	100
<b>What prevents people from entering the prison system in the first place:</b>	
Strongly agree	76
Agree	17
Neither agree nor disagree	4
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	2
Total	100
<b>What the future of imprisonment might look like:</b>	
Strongly agree	66
Agree	24
Neither agree nor disagree	4
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	4
Total	100
<b>How the prison population has changed over time and why:</b>	
Strongly agree	52
Agree	28
Neither agree nor disagree	14
Disagree	5
Strongly disagree	1
Total	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

### 4.3.1 Opinions about important areas to include in the justice sector's work

As for the population survey, the people completing this survey were presented with an expanded list of areas of investigation and asked to identify up to three that they considered important.

Table 27 identifies three specific areas that were identified by about one-half:

- 'Alternatives to prison' (52%).
- 'Mental health and addiction and imprisonment' (48%).
- 'Racism in the criminal justice system' (46%).

These are consistent with some of the earlier results reported, but with the exception of one area ('Mental health and addiction and imprisonment'), they are somewhat different from the specific areas identified by people completing the population survey. For example, 13% of completing that survey identified, 'Alternatives to prison', as an important area, compared with 52% of those completing the opt-in survey.

**Table 27: Most important areas to include in the justice sector’s work – Opt-in survey**

*Q9 The work will look at some of the following areas. Please indicate the areas (up to three) you think are most important to include:*

Unweighted base =	Total 174 %
Alternatives to prison	52
Mental health and addiction and imprisonment	48
Racism in the criminal justice system	46
Socio-economic drivers of imprisonment	44
Community-based rehabilitation	35
Indigenous justice processes	33
Reintegration into the communities	24
Young people and imprisonment	23
Ethnicity and imprisonment	22
Understanding how people stop offending	19
Prison-based rehabilitation	17
The court system	17
Women's imprisonment	15
Policing	13
How changes in the law have affected imprisonment rates	13
Custodial remand	10
Crime rates	7
Other area	10
Total	**

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple response.

### 4.3.2 Opinions about what could change

People completing this survey were asked to identify what could change about imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand in 20-30 years' time.

The qualitative response to this open-ended question has been thematically analysed and Table 28 shows that over one-half of people stated that, within this timeframe, there could be 'alternatives to prisons or prisons could be abolished or used for only those committing very serious crimes' (53%).

Forty-one percent stated that there could be more focus on 'rehabilitation, support services and reintegration'.

**Table 28: What could change about imprisonment in 20-30 years' time – Opt-in survey**

*Q10: What do you think could change about imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand in 20-30 years' time?*

Unweighted base =	Total 146* %
More alternatives to prison/Abolish prisons or only use them for very serious crimes	53
More focus on rehabilitation, support services and reintegration	41
A more culturally appropriate system for Māori/fewer Māori in prison	23
Other	8
Don't know	0
Total	**

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses.

### 4.3.3 Opinions about the most significant challenge

Given their response to the question which asked people to comment on what could change about imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand in 20-30 years' time, people completing this survey were asked to identify what they thought might be the most significant **challenge**.

The qualitative response to this open-ended question has also been thematically analysed and Table 29 shows that almost one-half identified 'racism and inequality' as the most significant challenge (46%).

'Changing public attitudes' (28%) and 'political barriers' (20%) were also frequently mentioned.

**Table 29: Most significant challenge to changing imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand – Opt-in survey**

*Q11: Based on your thoughts about how imprisonment could change in 20-30 years, what do you consider is the most significant challenge this presents for Aotearoa New Zealand?*

	Weighted base =	Total 139 %
Racism and inequality, not understanding or supporting indigenous justice processes		46
Changing public attitudes towards imprisonment being the only option for offenders		28
Political barriers/politicians not wanting to lose votes		20
Funding/cost of alternative interventions		10
Attracting (enough of/the right type of) people to work with offenders		9
Other		16
Total		**

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses.

#### 4.3.4 Opinions about the most significant opportunity

Still thinking about what could change about imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand in 20-30 years' time, people completing this survey were also asked to identify what they thought might be the most significant **opportunity**.

The qualitative response to this open-ended question has also been thematically analysed and Table 30 shows that over one-third stated that the greatest opportunity relating to the changes would be a 'more positive, equitable, supportive and productive society' (36%).

Twenty-eight percent also stated that New Zealand would be 'seen as a world leader, with a ground-breaking justice system, notable for its prison reform'.

**Table 30: Most significant opportunity resulting from changing imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand – Opt-in survey**

*Q12: Thinking about how imprisonment could change in 20-30 years, what do you consider is the greatest opportunity this presents for Aotearoa New Zealand?*

	Weighted base =	Total 137 %
More positive/equitable/supportive/productive society		36
NZ could be seen as a world leader/ground-breaking justice system/prison reform		28
Reduced reoffending		13
Safer communities		6
Positive step towards the Crown meeting its Treaty of Waitangi obligations		6
Better use of public funds		2
Other		8
Total		**

Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses.

## Appendix A: Population Survey Questionnaire

*Preamble:* The following questions are about imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand. Your responses will help to inform the development of the Justice Sector Long-term Insights Briefing. The proposed topic for the Briefing is: Long-term insights about imprisonment and what these tell us about future risks and opportunities. If you would like to know more about this, please [click here](#) [link to consultation document].

**1. How much do you know about the current use of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand?**

[Scale: Know nothing at all, Know a little, Know quite a lot, Know a lot, Don't know]

**2. Do you have any experience of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand?**

- a. Have you been in prison or known someone who was or is in prison?
- b. Have you worked or volunteered in a prison?
- c. Have you worked in probation?
- d. Any other experience (please specify)?

**3. Do you think imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand is used:**

[scale: Too little, About right, Too Much, Don't know]

**4. What do you think are the main reasons people enter the prison system in this country in the first place? (Up to three)**

- a. They've committed serious crimes
- b. The system is racist
- c. They had poor upbringings
- d. They were deprived of opportunities as children and young adults
- e. They have drug addictions
- f. They have unmet mental health needs
- g. Any other reasons (please specify)?

**5. In your view what are the main reasons people return to prison? (Up to three)**

- a. No jobs or opportunities on the outside
- b. They choose to continue offending
- c. Addictions to alcohol and other drugs
- d. Failure to complete rehabilitation opportunities in prison
- e. Failure of the prison system to provide adequate rehabilitation
- f. Unmet mental health needs
- g. Any other reasons (please specify)?

**6. What would you like to see happen to the use of prisons in the future?**

[Scale: Used a lot more, Used a little more, Used a little less, Used a lot less, Not used at all, I don't wish to see any changes]

- 7. The Justice sector is doing a report about the future of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand. The work will look at the following aspects, to what extent do you agree or disagree that these are the right things to be looking at?**
- **How the prison population has changed over time and why** [Scale: Strongly agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree]
  - **What prevents people from entering the prison system in the first place** [Scale: Strongly agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree]
  - **What helps people in the prison system not return to prison** [Scale: Strongly agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree]
  - **What the future of imprisonment might look like** [Scale: Strongly agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree]
- [Scale: Strongly agree, Agree, neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree]
- 8. Are there any other aspects of imprisonment that you think the report should focus on?**  
[open question]
- 9. The work will look at some of the following areas. Please indicate the areas (up to three) you think are most important to include:**
- Young people and imprisonment
  - Ethnicity and imprisonment
  - Women's imprisonment
  - Mental health and addiction and imprisonment
  - Socio-economic drivers of imprisonment
  - Racism in the criminal justice system
  - Prison-based rehabilitation
  - Community-based rehabilitation
  - Reintegration into the communities
  - Understanding how people stop offending
  - Alternatives to prison
  - Indigenous justice processes
  - Custodial remand
  - Crime rates
  - Policing
  - The court system
  - How changes in the law have affected imprisonment rates
  - Something else, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
- 10. What is the most important thing you think needs to change about imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand?** [open question]
- 11. [include ethnicity in demographics] Which of the following ethnic groups do you belong to?** [NZ European/Māori/Pacific/Asian/Other]

## Appendix B: Opt-in Survey Questionnaire

**1. How much do you know about the current use of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand?**

[Scale: Know a lot, Know some, Neutral, Know very little, Don't know anything at all]

**2. Do you have any experience of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand?**

1. Have you been in prison or known someone who was or is in prison?
2. Have you worked or volunteered in a prison?
3. Have you worked in probation?
- 96 Any other experience (please specify)?

**3. Do you think imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand is used:**

[scale: Too much, About right, Not enough, Don't know]

**4. What do you think are the main reasons people enter the prison system in this country in the first place? (up to three)**

1. They've committed serious crimes
2. The system is racist
3. They had poor upbringings
4. They were deprived of opportunities as children and young adults
5. They have drug addictions
6. They have unmet mental health needs
- 96 Any other reasons (please specify)?

**5. In your view what are the main reasons people return to prison? (up to three)**

1. No jobs or opportunities on the outside
2. They choose to continue offending
3. Addictions to alcohol and other drugs
4. Failure to complete rehabilitation opportunities in prison
5. Failure of the prison system to provide adequate rehabilitation
6. Unmet mental health needs
- 96 Any other reasons (please specify)?

**6. What would you like to see happen to the use of prisons in the future?**

[Scale: Used a lot more, Used a little more, Doesn't need changing, Used less, Not used at all]

- 7. The justice sector is doing a report about the future of imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand. The work will look at the following aspects, to what extent do you agree or disagree that these are the right things to be looking at?**
- **How the prison population has changed over time and why** [Scale: Strongly agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree]
  - **What prevents people from entering the prison system in the first place** [Scale: Strongly agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree]
  - **What helps people in the prison system not return to prison** [Scale: Strongly agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree]
  - **What the future of imprisonment might look like** [Scale: Strongly agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree]
- 8. If you think there should be different or additional areas of work looked at to the ones mentioned in the last question, please share your suggestions below?** [open question]
- 9. The work will look at some of the following areas. Please indicate the areas (up to three) you think are most important to include:**
1. Young people and imprisonment
  2. Ethnicity and imprisonment
  3. Women's imprisonment
  4. Mental health and addiction and imprisonment
  5. Socio-economic drivers of imprisonment
  6. Racism in the criminal justice system
  7. Prison-based rehabilitation
  8. Community-based rehabilitation
  9. Reintegration into the communities
  10. Understanding how people stop offending
  11. Alternatives to prison
  12. Indigenous justice processes
  13. Custodial remand
  14. Crime rates
  15. Policing
  16. The court system
  17. How changes in the law have affected imprisonment rates
  96. Something else, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
- 10. What do you think could change about imprisonment in Aotearoa New Zealand in 20-30 years' time?** [open question]
- 11. Based on your thoughts about how imprisonment could change in 20-30 years, what do you consider is the most significant challenge this presents for Aotearoa New Zealand?** [open question]
- 12. Thinking about how imprisonment could change in 20-30 years, what do you consider is the greatest opportunity this presents for Aotearoa New Zealand?** [open question]

