

Survey of Individuals Deprived of Liberty:

Caribbean 2016–2019

Trinidad and Tobago Country Report

**Institutions for
Development Sector**

**Innovation in Citizen
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Prepared for the Inter-American Development
Bank by:

The University of the West Indies Trinidad
and Tobago

Researcher: Randy Seepersad, Ph.D.

Editors: Dana Michael King, Viviana Vélez-
Grajales, and Lina Marmolejo

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Survey of Individuals Deprived of Liberty Caribbean (2016–2019)

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Abstract

This report provides the findings from an inmate survey that was used to collect data on the prison system in Trinidad and Tobago. The results were used to identify the steps needed to improve the country's correctional system, with a view to strengthening its efficiency and rehabilitative capabilities. The survey included questions regarding the inmates' childhoods and upbringing, their crimes and associated factors, due process, and prison conditions. There were several important findings, some of which require more research to understand what kinds of policies would improve the criminal justice and correctional systems in Trinidad and Tobago. Overall, the results suggest that more effort needs to be put into programs and policies that support rehabilitation, including drug treatment programs and wider access to effective education within the prison system to reduce recidivism and criminality in the country.

JEL codes: H59, H76, K14, K42, N46

Keywords: criminal career, Caribbean, Trinidad and Tobago, incarcerated women, incarcerated men, crime prevention, prisoners, prisons, intrafamily violence, prison system

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Acronyms

CELIV	Center for Latin American Studies on Insecurity and Violence (Centro de Estudios Latinoamericanos sobre Inseguridad y Violencia)
CSO	Central Statistical Office
ECRC	Eastern Correctional and Rehabilitation Centre
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
NGO	Non-governmental organization
TT	Trinidad and Tobago
UWI	University of the West Indies

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The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) financed the survey, provided technical oversight, and commented on draft versions of the report. Dana Michael King, Senior Specialist, IDB Modernization of the State, led the design and implementation of the regional project that financed this survey and provided technical support and oversight. The team gratefully acknowledges her support and leadership. The Centro de Estudios Latinoamericanos sobre Inseguridad y Violencia (Center for Latin American Studies on Insecurity and Violence, or CELIV), led by Prof. Marcelo Bergman, Dr. Ana Safranoff, and Dr. Hernán Manzelli, visited Trinidad on several occasions to train the interviewers and offer technical support. They also lent support throughout the data collection and analysis phases and were instrumental to the successful completion of the study. Special thanks to QURE Ltd., particularly Mr. Joel Joseph, who programmed the software required for data collection. Nirmala Sookoo and Melissa Mohamed, who supervised the survey team and served as research assistants, ensured efficiency and accuracy with the data collection process and provided ongoing support to the team. The data collection phase was carried out by 15 graduate Criminology students from the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine. They ensured the highest ethical standards and integrity in the data collection process. Their dedication and enthusiasm contributed in no small way to the success of this project.

Finally, and most importantly, 761 inmates in Trinidad and Tobago gave generously of their time and provided full access to their experiences and life stories. The inmates were open and honest in their contributions. This study is based entirely on their input.

Executive Summary

- The Trinidad and Tobago Inmate Survey, financed by the IDB, was conducted in Trinidad and Tobago from July to August 2018. A total of 761 inmates (712 males and 52 females) from the eight adult prisons in Trinidad were surveyed. This report presents the findings of the inmate survey.

Sociodemographic Profile, Childhood, and Life History

- Respondents ranged in age from 18 to 79 years, with an average of 35.7 years (males, 35.7 years; females, 35.8 years). Convicts were older (average=37.4 years) than inmates on remand (average=34.1 years).
- Of the respondents, 45.6 percent said that their parents or guardians used alcohol frequently when they were a child and 25.6 percent said that their parents or guardians used illegal drugs such as marijuana or cocaine.
- Of the respondents, 52.8 percent had family members who had been in prison at some point and 20.9 percent currently had a family member in prison.
- Of the respondents, 43.6 percent grew up in neighborhoods with gangs.
- Of the sample, 21.4 percent were previously incarcerated in a juvenile detention center.
- Of the inmates, 76.3 percent had used marijuana one or more times within their lifetime, with the average age of first use being 15, and 10.8 percent had used cocaine or crack cocaine within their lifetime, with the average age of first use being 24.

Criminal Careers and Inmate Profiles

- The most prevalent crime in the sample was intentional homicide/murder, with 38.8 percent of respondents imprisoned for this crime and a higher percentage of the males (39.4 percent) than females (30.8 percent) imprisoned for this crime. The findings also show that 60.0 percent of the people on remand and 16.3 percent of the convicts were being held for this crime.
- The next most prevalent crimes were drug related (13.5 percent of the respondents) and possession of illegal weapons (13.5 percent).
- Of the sample, 11.3 percent were being held for theft or aggravated theft, 8.9 percent for robbery or aggravated robbery, and 3.3 percent for burglaries/break-ins. Another 3.8 percent were imprisoned for kidnapping and 2.9 percent for sexual offenses. Other crimes included manslaughter (1.7 percent); injuries (1.6 percent); scams, misappropriation, fraud (1.2 percent); and extortion (0.3 percent).
- Drugs or alcohol were used most commonly prior to burglaries/break-ins (used in 52.0 percent of all such offenses), injuries (50.0 percent), robberies (41.2 percent), drug offenses (37.9 percent), possession of illegal weapons (36.9 percent), sexual offenses (36.4 percent), and theft (36 percent). The use of drugs or alcohol was less frequent during kidnappings (17.2 percent) and manslaughter (15.4 percent).
- The data show that 31.7 percent of the inmates carried unlicensed firearms while committing the crime for which they were incarcerated, followed by knives (6.4 percent) and machetes (3.4 percent).
- Of the sample, 27.7 percent said that they had engaged in other crimes (not necessarily arrested) in the six-month period before they were incarcerated, with a greater proportion of males (29.1 percent) found to be recidivists than females (9.6 percent).

- Of the respondents, 47.7 percent had previously been arrested for a crime apart from the one for which they were currently incarcerated (no time period specified).
- Of the respondents, 45.7 percent had previously owned a firearm, with a larger proportion of males (48.7 percent) having owned firearms than females (5.8 percent).
- Of the sample, 39.6 percent said that they had previously used a firearm and 18.0 percent had injured or killed someone with a firearm. Males (19.2 percent) were more likely than females (1.9 percent) to have injured or killed someone with a firearm.
- The data indicate that 7.0 percent of the sample belonged to gangs (males, 7.3 percent; females, 1.9 percent). Of the various prisons, Carrera had the highest level of gang membership (24.3 percent), followed by the Eastern Correctional and Rehabilitation Centre (ECRC; 10.3 percent) and Golden Grove (9.5 percent). The Women’s Prison had the lowest level (1.9 percent).

Legal Procedures and Criminal Process

- Of the respondents, 35.2 percent said that their trial had not yet begun, 16.3 percent said that they were currently on trial, and 47.0 percent had been sentenced.
- On average, inmates had been in prison for 4.4 years, with those on remand having been in prison for an average of 4.2 years, those on trial in prison for an average of 4.6 years, and inmates who were already sentenced having spent an average of 4.7 years in prison.
- Of the respondents, 30.5 percent said that force was used to coerce them to testify or change their statement at a police station.
- Of the respondents, 31.9 percent claimed that police officers attempted to elicit bribes from them, 13.8 percent made the same claim with respect to prison staff, 2.2 percent regarding Defence Force staff, 1.7 percent for court staff, and 1.6 percent for prosecutors. Overall, 37.7 percent of inmates claimed that they were approached for bribes at some point while in custody.
- On average, inmates were able to present their statements to a magistrate or judge within 12.7 days of arrival at the prison.

Prison Conditions

- Of the respondents, 37.2 percent said that they resided in overcrowded cells (the number of people who slept in the specified cell exceeded the number that the cell was designed to accommodate) while 62.8 percent said the cells were not overcrowded. On this basis, Remand had an 83.2 percent overcrowding rate, Carrera had a 52.9 percent rate, and Port of Spain had a 52.7 percent rate.
- Overcrowding was also assessed by asking respondents how many people in their cell did not have a bed. On this basis, 33.4 percent of respondents were housed in overcrowded cells, with Remand having an 80.5 percent overcrowding rate, Carrera a 52.9 percent rate, and Port of Spain a 47.7 percent rate.
- Of the respondents, 62.4 percent said that they received medical care from the prison when they got sick, while 36.0 percent said that they did not get such care when it was needed. Based on responses, when an inmate got sick it took an average of 2.3 days before they got to see a doctor or nurse.
- Of the respondents, 1.2 percent said that the healthcare in prison was very good, 4.5 percent said it was good, and 14.1 percent said it was normal. However, 22.6 percent said healthcare was poor and 18.4 percent said it was very poor.

- When asked about dental care, 21.6 percent of the respondents said they received such care when they needed it but 59.8 percent did not receive it when needed.
- Of the respondents, 33.6 percent claimed that they had access to a mobile phone.
- Of the sample, 11.5 percent said they had witnessed another inmate being forced to have sexual intercourse with other people (males, 12.2 percent; females, 1.9 percent).
- Of the sample, 0.7 percent said they had been forced to have sexual relations in prison (males, 0.7 percent; females, 0 percent).
- Of the respondents, 22.2 percent said they had been attacked or beaten within the previous six months in prison, while 77.5 percent said they had not.
- Of the inmates, 38.6 percent said that they had used drugs or alcohol within the prison in the previous month. Levels of use were lowest in ECRC, with only 2.6 percent of inmates admitting to using drugs or alcohol. Levels were also low at the Women’s Prison (5.8 percent). The highest levels occurred at Carrera (55.7 percent) and Golden Grove (57.1 percent).
- When inmates were asked which drugs they used, the largest proportion said marijuana (35.7 percent) followed by alcohol (12.1 percent).
- The majority of respondents (71.2 percent) said that prison staff brings drugs into the prisons, while 4.7 percent said police officers or guards bring them in and 1.4 percent said that drugs are brought in by relatives or visitors.
- Of the inmates, 12.2 percent said that they learned a trade while in prison.
- Of the inmates, 47.2 percent pursued academic studies while in prison: 16.6 percent did elementary courses, 25.4 percent did O Level courses, and 1.6 percent did A Level courses.
- A large proportion (38.9 percent) said they had a job waiting for them once they were released, 18.5 percent said they would apply for any job, 17.6 percent preferred to apply for a job related to their trade, 3.9 percent said they would look to their friends or relatives to find a job, and 20.7 percent had not yet considered the matter.
- Of the respondents, 2.5 percent said they would most probably be rearrested after their release from prison and 10.0 percent said they probably would; however, 26.9 percent said they probably would not and 54.9 percent felt they most probably would not get rearrested.

Key Recommendations

- Deeper research is needed to better understand how criminal behaviors can be transmitted through family culture or circumstance and to find ways to break inter-generational cycles of incarceration. The findings in this report suggest that important variables to research include domestic violence, the use of punishment in the home, parental drug use, and parental incarceration.
- Consideration should be given to examining a range of drug rehabilitation programs to determine which ones are most effective and ensuring that all inmates who are addicted to drugs receive suitable drug rehabilitation treatment. Follow-up support on release is also recommended.
- The authors recommend that policymakers and legislators consider the merits of diverting drug addicts/users out of the prison system and into mandatory drug treatment programs.
- Research should be conducted to determine whether there are factors within Trinidad and Tobago’s prisons that hinder the reintegration process (e.g., labeling or socialization into values and attitudes

conducive to criminal offending). If such factors exist, measures should be taken to counteract their effects.

- The Prison Service should ensure that the assessments of the Levels of Service Case Management Inventory are used to develop individualized rehabilitation plans that adhere, as far as possible, to the principles of Andrews, Zinger, Bonta, et al. (1990).
- The authors recommend that careful consideration be given to developing and providing services that aid in reintegration when inmates are released. Such services should target the specific needs of each inmate, including employment and financial services, psychological counseling, family support, substance abuse treatment, accommodation, services for sexual offenders, and services for mentally ill offenders, among others.
- The authors also recommend that family ties be encouraged and supported while people are incarcerated. The Prison Service should welcome friends and relatives and provide spaces where families can interact with inmates.
- The authors recommend that staff be taught the importance of treating visitors with respect and dignity. Respectful and dignified interactions between staff and the public will help create a positive image for the Prison Service and encourage friends and family members to visit their loved ones.
- Change is required in the judicial system to reduce the amount of time it takes to process criminal matters.
- The authors recommend that urgent attention be given to upgrading or rebuilding the Remand facility.
- The Prison Service should inform inmates of their rights, especially as it relates to legal representation, and needs to develop links with Legal Aid so that all prisoners have proper legal representation.
- The authors recommend that dental and health facilities and services be assessed to determine where weaknesses exist and that steps be taken to remedy any problems that are discovered.
- The authors recommend that indicators of violence and problems within the prison receive careful consideration and that measures be taken to reduce these issues (e.g., sexual violence, assault, theft, and drug use) at those prisons with excessively high levels of each of the indicators.¹
- The authors recommend that the issue of illegal drugs and alcohol in prison receive serious attention and measures taken to reduce the supply of such substances. Measures may include the use of sniffer dogs at points of entry and strict enforcement of laws related to bringing illegal substances into prisons.
- The authors recommend that female inmates be encouraged to learn a trade since trades can provide an important means of earning income on release. They also recommend that the Prison Service develop links with various organizations that provide tertiary education and offer online degrees so that inmates can access university-level education more readily while in prison.

¹ See Appendix 2 for a summary of the main indicators of violence and problems within the prisons. Findings are disaggregated by prison.

Introduction

Over the past five years, the IDB has launched an ambitious project to collect data on citizen security and criminal justice in the Caribbean, a region for which crime and violence remain key development constraints and where limited baseline information on the subject matter existed. The various projects aim to collect evidence necessary to develop a nuanced and specific vision of the causes and results of citizen insecurity in the Caribbean and to provide evidence that can be used to develop policy to improve security across the region. Through loan and grant financing, the IDB has supported the first gender-based violence surveys in five Caribbean countries, published a series of national studies on crime and violence, and conducted impact evaluations on citizen security programs in the Caribbean. This report is the product of a regional grant project, *Strengthening Data Generation for Correctional Management in the Caribbean* (RG-T2551), that seeks to collect data on prison systems in four Caribbean countries and to identify the steps needed to improve the correctional systems in those countries, with a view to strengthening their efficiency and rehabilitative capabilities. Under the project, the IDB financed inmate surveys and correctional system diagnostics in Jamaica, Suriname, Barbados, and Trinidad and Tobago. In parallel with this work, the IDB also supported prison surveys in the Bahamas and Guyana.²

This report provides the findings of the Trinidad and Tobago Inmate Survey, conducted in July and August 2018. A total of 761 inmates from the eight adult prisons in Trinidad were surveyed. Tobago was excluded since the number of inmates at that location was very small (n=61). The survey instrument was developed by the IDB and has been used in several countries, including Guyana, Suriname, Jamaica, and Barbados. It is important to note at the outset that, while this report presents responses related to a range of elements of inmates' lives and offers recommendations and suggestions for the Trinidad and Tobago Prison Service, the findings are based on the opinions and information provided by inmates. While there is always the potential for bias when interviewing inmates, every effort was made to encourage them to be as truthful as possible.

The survey instrument collected data in several areas:

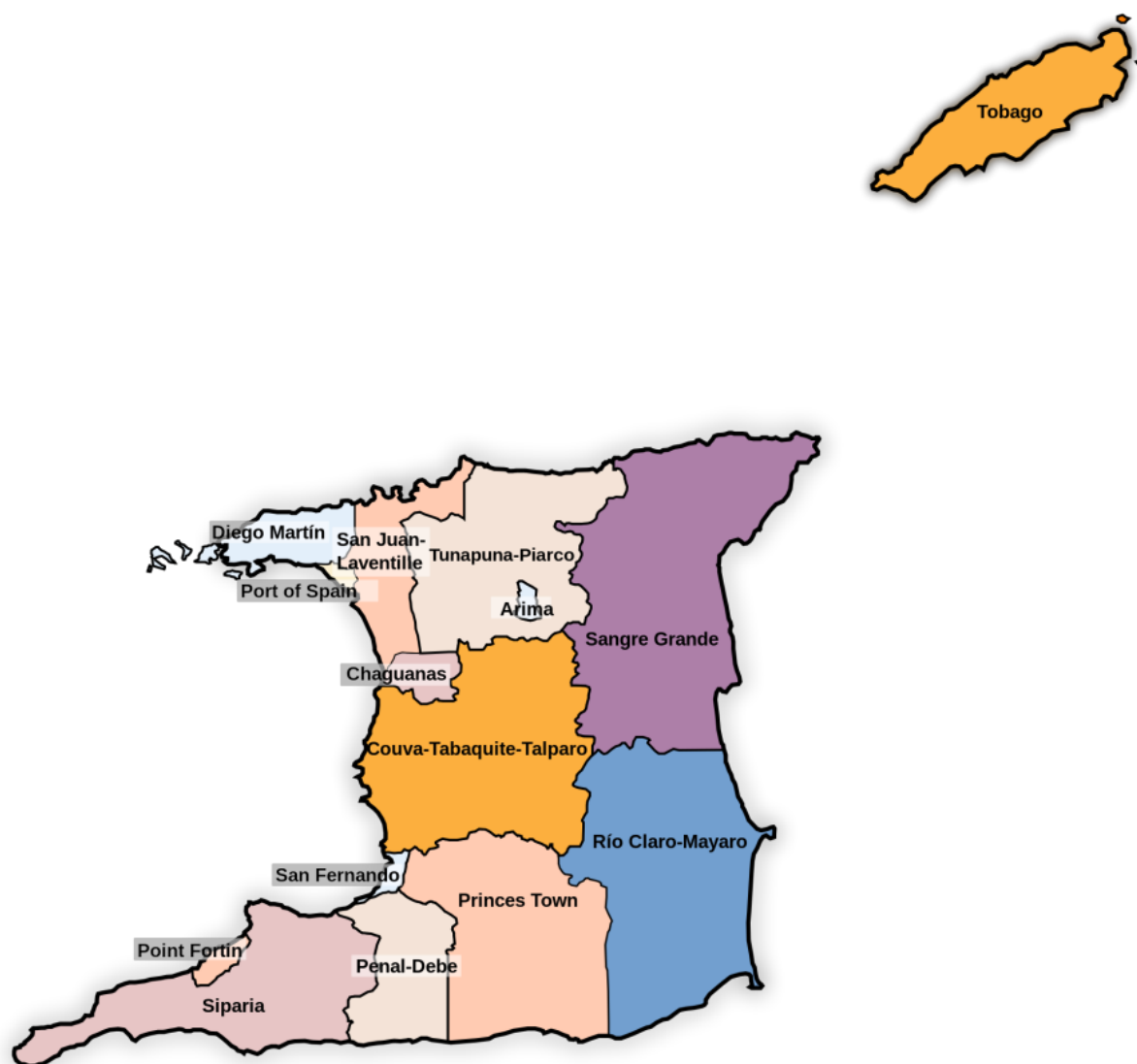
- Sociodemographic profile, such as upbringing, education, and work before arrest
- Patterns and characteristics of crimes, such as the crime that led to the current arrest as well as previous offenses, recidivism, drugs, and firearms
- Due process from arrest to sentencing, such as police behavior, access to legal defense, and length of the legal process
- Prison conditions and life in confinement, such as services, violence and gang activity, and preparation for re-entry to the community

² The Bahamas and Guyana survey reports are available at <https://publications.iadb.org/en/our-prisoners-collection-papers-arising-2016-survey-inmates-bahamas-department-correctional> and <https://mops.gov.gy/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Guyana-Report-13-april-2018.pdf>.

Country Information

Trinidad and Tobago is an English-speaking, twin island state that gained independence in 1962 and became a republic in 1976. It is situated between 10° 2' and 11° 12' N latitude and 60° 30' and 61° 56' W longitude. At the closest point, Trinidad is just 11 kilometers (6.8 miles) off the Venezuelan coast. The country has a total surface area of 5,128 square kilometers (1,980 square miles). There are three major municipalities in Trinidad: Port of Spain (the capital), San Fernando, and Chaguanas. The capital of Tobago is Scarborough. Trinidad is split into 14 regional corporations and municipalities, consisting of nine regions and five municipalities (Figure 1) and administered by the *Municipal Corporations Act 21* of 1990 and its amendments.

Figure 1: Regional Corporations and Municipalities in Trinidad and Tobago



Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regional_corporations_and_municipalities_of_Trinidad_and_Tobago.

The Central Statistical Office (CSO), in its *2011 Population and Housing Census, Preliminary Count*, enumerated the population of Trinidad and Tobago at 1,324,699, with 1,267,889 people in Trinidad and 56,810 in Tobago. The CSO estimates that the average household size is 3.24 people.

The *Trinidad and Tobago Human Development Atlas* (CSO and UNDP, 2012) indicates that in 2010 the labor force participation rate—the proportion of the population aged 15 to 64 who are employed—ranged from a low of 41.2 percent in Princes Town to a high of 78.3 percent in Chaguanas. Overall, as of 2010, the labor force participation rate in Trinidad and Tobago was 50.9 percent for females and 73.5 percent for males.

The percentage of the population with at least a secondary school education ranges from a low of 22.6 percent in Sangre Grande to a high of 57.4 percent in San Fernando. With very few exceptions, the proportion of females (43.1 percent) who have at least a secondary school education is higher than the proportion of males (36.4 percent) who have a similar level of education across the range of administrative areas in Trinidad and Tobago. Despite this, the percentage of children between the ages of 6 and 16 years who have attained at least a primary or secondary education is high in all administrative areas within Trinidad and Tobago. The area with the lowest primary and secondary education attainment rate is Rio Claro/Mayaro (males, 57.6 percent; females, 72.9 percent); however, many other areas in the country have a 100 percent rate for both males and females, including Tobago, Diego Martin, and Point Fortin. Overall, the country has a primary and secondary education attainment rate of 91.4 percent.

According to the *Human Development Atlas* (CSO and UNDP, 2012), the life expectancy in Trinidad and Tobago ranges from a low of 67.7 years in Port of Spain to a high of 76.8 years in Tobago. The average life expectancy as of 2010 was 73.22 years, with an average of 70.17 years for males and 76.5 years for females.

It is important to understand the crime context to understand imprisonment in Trinidad and Tobago. The number of serious crimes in the country for the period 1990 to 2018 is shown in Appendix 1 and is graphically represented in Figures 2 and 3. Sexual offenses exhibited an upward trend from 1990 to 2006, with 367 offenses reported in 1990 and 903 offenses reported in 2006, followed by a downward but fluctuating trend from 2006 to 2018. From 2013 to 2018, there was an average of 648 reported sexual offenses per year.

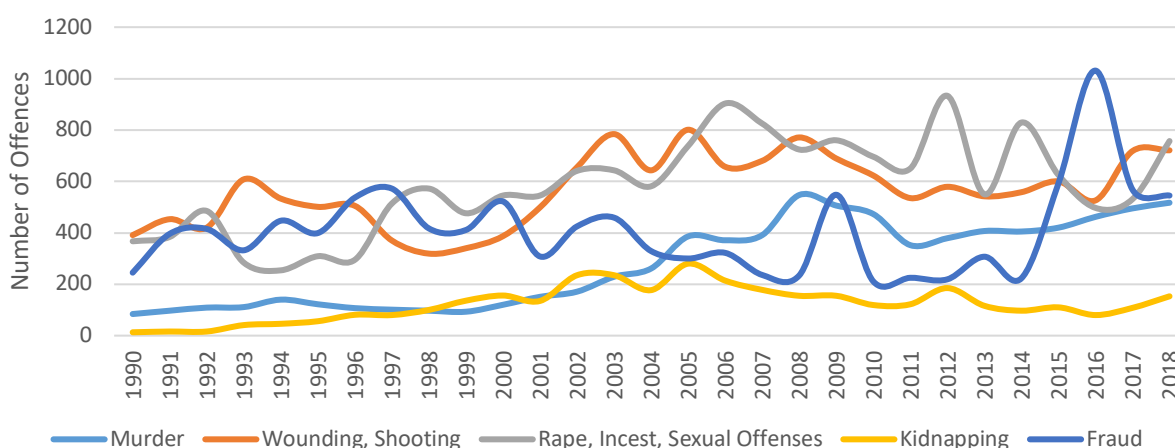
There was relative stability in the number of murders from 1990 to 2000, with an average of 107 murders per year. The number of murders increased consistently from 2000 to 2018, reaching an average of 460 murders per year between 2013 and 2018, or 34 murders per 100,000 inhabitants.

Woundings and shootings showed a generally increasing trend from 1990 to 2018, with dips in the late 1990s and some stability at a lower level from 2010 to 2015. Trends in murders and woundings/shootings are similar since a large proportion of murders are committed with firearms (thus the relationship with shootings, which are not disaggregated from woundings in the police service data). From 2000 to 2013, for example, 72.6 percent of all murders were committed with firearms (Seepersad, 2015).

Sexual offenses exhibited an upward trend from 1990 to 2006, with 367 offenses reported in 1990 and 903 reported in 2006, followed by a downward but fluctuating trend from 2006 to 2018. From 2013 to 2018 there was an average of 648 reported sexual offenses per year.

Kidnappings exhibited a steady increase from 1990, when 13 kidnappings were committed, to 2005, when 280 kidnappings occurred, and steadily declined thereafter. From 2013 to 2018, there was an average of 110 kidnappings per year, with an average of 7.2 of them being kidnappings for ransom.

Figure 2: Serious Crimes in Trinidad and Tobago (1990–2018)

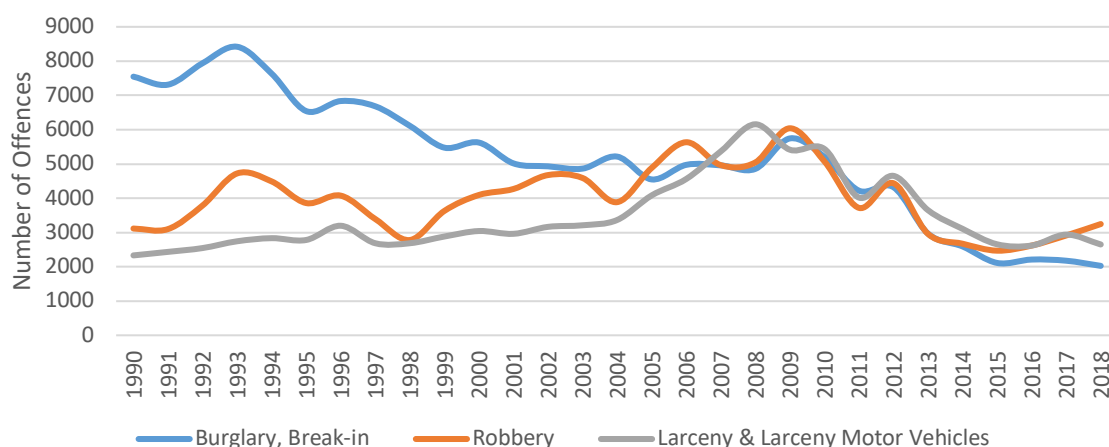


Source: Trinidad and Tobago Police Service.

Robberies and larcenies and larcenies of motor vehicles exhibited a consistent upward trend from 1990 to 2008/09, thereafter both crimes declined steadily until 2018. In 1990, there were 3,115 reported robberies, increasing to 6,040 in 2009 and then declining to 3,246 in 2018. Between 2013 and 2018, there was an average of 2,784 robberies per year. In 1990, there were 2,331 larcenies (including motor vehicles), increasing to 6,157 in 2008 and declining to 2,650 in 2018. Between 2013 and 2018, there was an average of 2,794 larcenies (including motor vehicles) per year.

Burglaries and break-ins are the only serious crimes to have exhibited a consistent decline from 1990 to 2018. In 1990, 7,546 burglaries and break-ins were reported compared to 2,026 in 2018.

Figure 3: Serious Crimes in Trinidad and Tobago (1990–2018)



Source: Trinidad and Tobago Police Service.

In general, official crime data show that the majority of serious crimes exhibited some stability from 1990 to 2000. Subsequent to 2000 there was a general increasing trend for several major crimes. The one notable exception to the above trend was burglaries and break-ins, which exhibited a consistent decline from 1990 (7,546) to 2018 (2,026).

While official crime data for Trinidad and Tobago represent crimes known to the police, other data sources indicate that a large proportion of offenses is not reported. For example, a comparison of official crime data and victimization survey data for 2009 (UNDP, 2012) showed that the rate of break-ins and burglaries was 4.1 times higher than reported in official crime statistics and the rate of sexual offenses was 6.6 times higher. In addition, Seepersad (2015) showed that the rate of domestic violence was 6.3 times higher and financial crimes were 7.2 times higher. Unfortunately, victimization surveys have not been done in Trinidad and Tobago with any regularity so it is not possible to assess crime trends based on such data. Notable high-quality surveys include the UNDP (2012) survey and the Latin American Public Opinion Project surveys.³

The Prison System in Trinidad and Tobago

The Trinidad and Tobago Prison Service, initially a product of Spain's colonization of the West Indies in the 15th century, was established in St. Joseph (the then capital of Trinidad and Tobago) in 1592. In 1757, the Prison Service was relocated to the new capital, Port of Spain, at the corner of George and King Streets, now Independence Square, but it was destroyed by fire in 1808. In 1812, the prison, now known as the Port of Spain Prison, was completed at its present location at 103a Fredrick Street.

In time, the Prison Service expanded to include district prisons throughout the country. The Carrera Convict Island Prison was established in 1877 off the coast of Chaguaramas. The Young Offenders' Institute, established in 1926 in St. James, was relocated in 1949 to a 17-acre site on the western side of Golden Grove Road, opposite the present site of the Golden Grove Prison. It was declared an Industrial Institution and renamed the Youth Training Centre (T&T Prison Service, 2010).

During Colonial times, Her Majesty's Royal Navy occupied the compound on which the Golden Grove Prison currently sits. In 1947, the site was formally converted to a penal institution for men. Golden Grove Prison stands approximately 4.4 kilometers from the Piarco International Airport and 20.9 kilometers from Port of Spain. The Remand Prison was opened at the Golden Grove Prison Complex in 1974, while the Maximum Security Prison (MSP) was built at the Complex and finally occupied in 1998 (T&T Prison Service, 2002).

Earliest records show that the Women's Prison was first housed at the St. James Police Barracks in the late 1960s to 1970s and that the facility was specifically for female prisoners. It was moved to the Port of Spain Prison in the 1970s and later relocated to the Golden Grove Prison Complex.

³ <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/raw-data.php>

As of 2019, the Trinidad and Tobago Prison Service comprises eight prisons and one juvenile facility:

- Golden Grove Prison
- Carrera Convict Prison
- Women’s Prison
- Remand Prison
- Maximum Security Prison
- Port of Spain Prison
- Tobago Prison
- Eastern Correctional and Rehabilitation Centre
- Youth Training Centre⁴

The number of people housed at the adult institutions from 1992 through 2001 is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Daily Average Prison Population (1992–2001)

Prison	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Carrera	483	493	529	567	575	570	583	561	501	524
Golden Grove	1,097	1,053	1,023	1,073	1,284	1,407	1,443	1,456	1,341	1,189
MSP	—	—	—	—	—	—	116	413	772	815
Port of Spain	916	978	1100	1052	1076	1236	1327	1114	873	884
Remand	437	405	676	922	944	908	837	814	863	795
Tobago	42	49	49	48	50	59	46	59	70	56
Women’s	115	114	126	123	128	148	162	155	154	142
Total	3,090	3,092	3,503	3,785	4,057	4,328	4,514	4,572	4,574	4,405

Source: The Trinidad and Tobago Prison Service, Administrative Report, 2001.

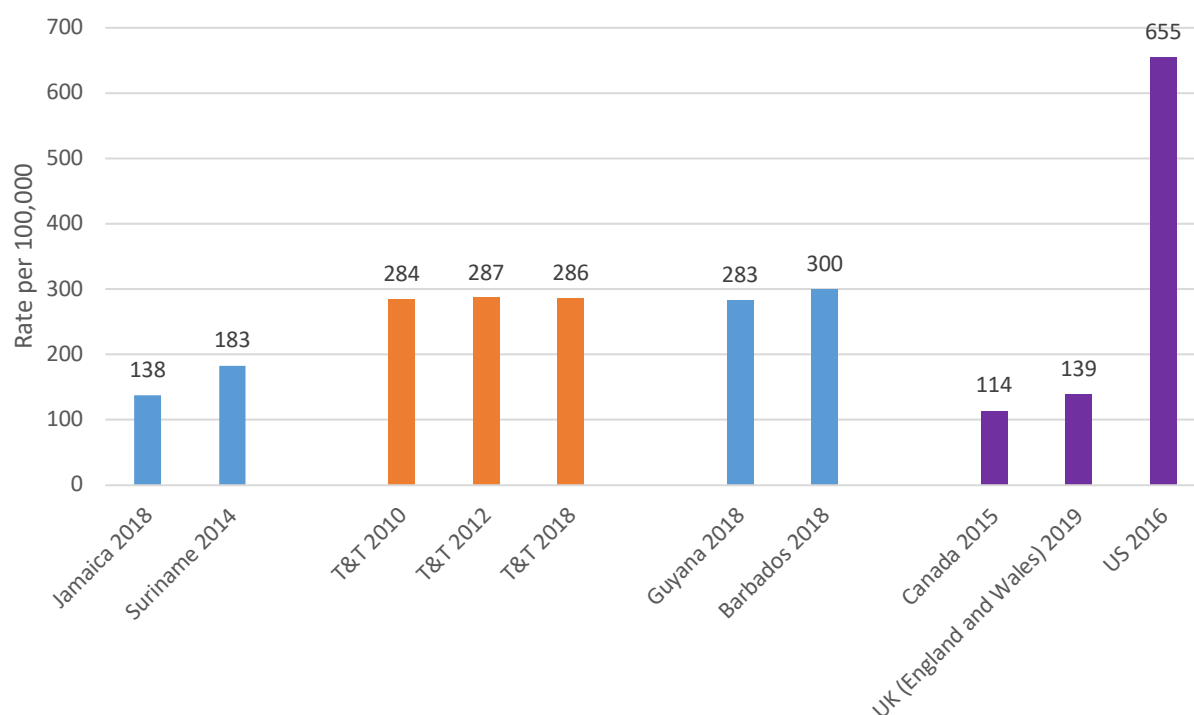
In 2002, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago appointed a task force to review the penal system. The task force was headed by then Commissioner of Prisons Cipriani Baptiste. A report was submitted for cabinet approval listing more than 40 recommendations. One of the key recommendations was to implement a restorative justice philosophy throughout the criminal justice system. Under a restorative justice system, offenders are held accountable and responsible for offenses and are provided mentors, teachers, and coaches; they are empowered and encouraged. A restorative justice approach based on compassion, support, and patience aims to rehabilitate and reintegrate ex-offenders into society. Offenders are encouraged to admit their wrongdoing, seek forgiveness, and make reparation to victims. While the Prison Service and successive governments have indicated a willingness to shift to a more restorative approach, operationalizing and putting it into effect has proven difficult.

The history of the Prison Service indicates that the structure and philosophy have changed over time. While the current system has shortcomings, many changes and improvements have taken place over the

⁴ This facility houses males between the ages of 16 and 18 years. The Prison Service does not house younger male juveniles or female juveniles.

years. Figure 4 compares international incarceration rates. The imprisonment rate in Trinidad and Tobago stood at 276 per 100,000 inhabitants in 2010, rising slightly to 281 in 2012 and 292 in 2018. This compares to 114 in Canada for 2015, 139 for England and Wales in 2019, and 655 for the United States in 2016. Figure 4 also shows the rates for other Caribbean countries where IDB's prison survey was conducted. As of 2018, Jamaica's incarceration rate was 138 per 100,000 inhabitants, Suriname's was 183 in 2014, Guyana's was 283 as of 2018 (similar to that of Trinidad and Tobago), and Barbados's was 300 as of 2018 (slightly higher than that of Trinidad and Tobago).

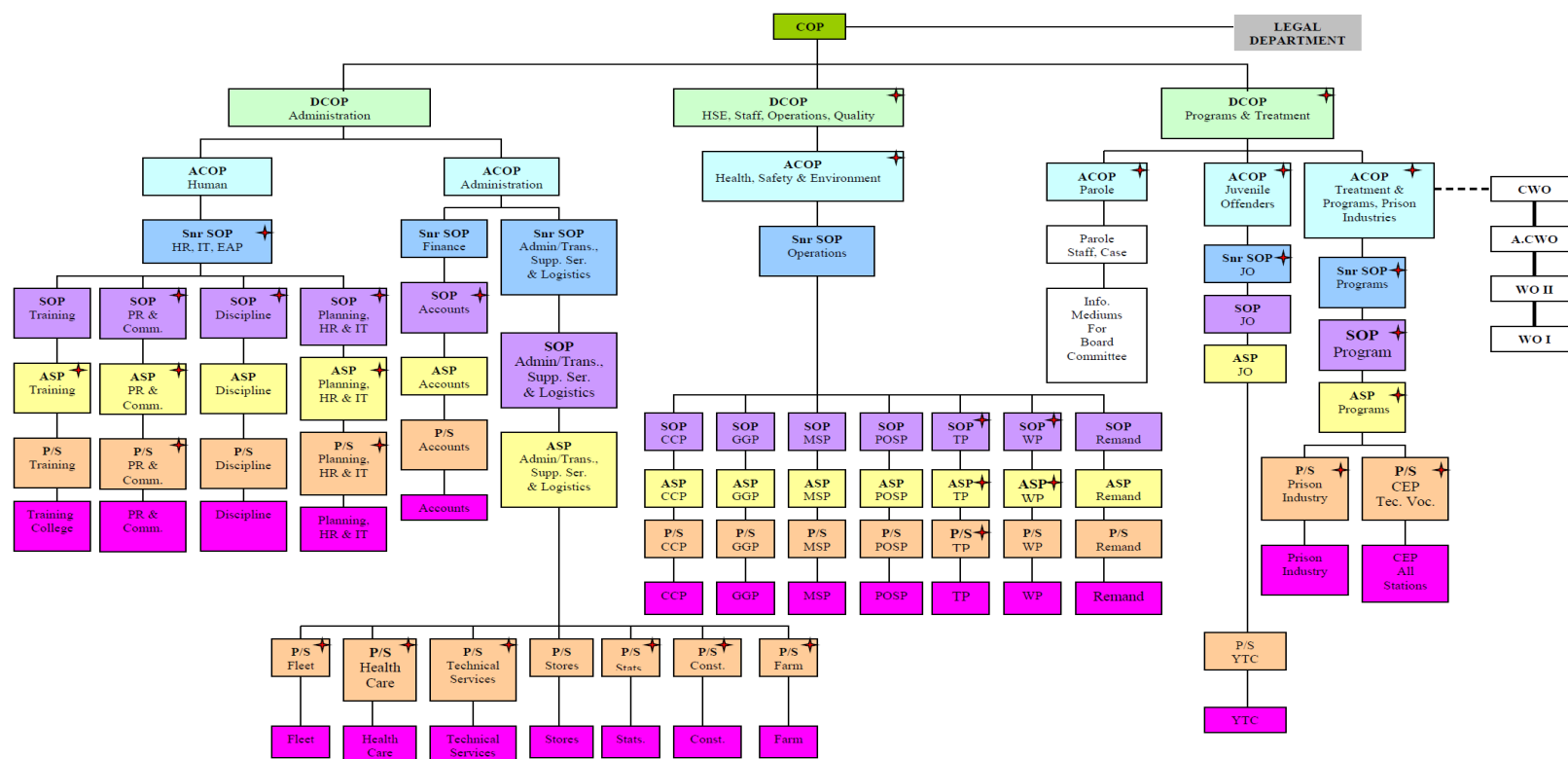
Figure 4: Imprisonment Rates for Selected Countries



Source: World Prison Brief.

Figure 5 shows the current organizational structure of the Trinidad and Tobago Prison Service.

Figure 5: Organizational Chart for Trinidad and Tobago Prison Service (2018)



Source: Trinidad and Tobago Prison Service, July 2018.

The Inmate Survey in Trinidad and Tobago

Survey data from incarcerated people present a unique opportunity to gain an understanding of issues relevant to crime and security from the perspective of the people who have committed or have been accused of committing offenses. These people can provide a wealth of information on why they committed offenses, on their backgrounds (including demographics and family background), on the conditions in the prison and their experiences while in prison, on the legal process, and on a range of other issues. Such data complements more official sources of information, such as crime data, but offers useful insights that official data cannot provide into the nature and extent of specific problems. Survey data can also be used to infer information on associations among variables of interest; a good example is the analysis that looks at risk factors for criminal offending. Survey data can also provide information on the effectiveness of various interventions, such as rehabilitation approaches. Finally, surveys, if administered periodically, can be used to monitor changes over time within the prison service.

Over the years, the prison system in Trinidad and Tobago has been plagued with numerous problems, including overcrowding, unsanitary conditions, high recidivism rates, challenges shifting to a more restorative approach, violence, the security and safety of prison officers, financial challenges, and excessive delays in the legal system. Despite an awareness of these issues, there has been little systematic research conducted to precisely diagnose the nature and extent of the problems. The inmate survey uses a rigorous methodology and very systematically analyzes information from a representative sample of inmates to derive an understanding of various issues. The information that is uncovered provides an unbiased basis for intervention geared at improving the Prison Service. It can be argued that prisoners are the clients of the Prison Service and, due to their familiarity with their own situations and the conditions of the prison system, they are in a particularly good position to provide information that may be useful for improving the prison system. In the present context, therefore, the findings from the IDB Trinidad and Tobago Inmate Survey provides important information that will aid in understanding the issues that currently face the Prison Service and will provide suggestions to improve it.

Methodology

Activity 1. Modify and Adapt Survey Instrument Before and After Piloting

IDB provided the survey instrument. Consultations were held with the Commissioner of Prisons, senior administrators of the Prison Service, IDB representatives, and the expert firm (CELIV) that was hired by the IDB. Consultations were to consider modifications and identify priority areas for data collection. Meetings were held April 5 and 6, 2018. Minor adaptations were made to slightly reword a few questions given the specifics of the dialect in Trinidad and Tobago. It was important to not make significant changes in order to maintain comparability across the region. As such, the version of the questionnaire that was used in Trinidad and Tobago was virtually identical to that used in the other countries.

Activity 2. Select, Hire, Train, and Supervise Survey Staff for Data Collection

All activities related to hiring, training, and supervising staff, and collecting data were done in collaboration with CELIV, led by Professor Marcelo Bergman. The initial stages involved adapting enumerator and supervisor manuals and accompanying training and field manuals that had already been developed by CELIV and used in the countries where the survey was previously administered.

Once the training manuals were completed, survey supervisors and enumerators were trained. The training was developed together with CELIV, which conducted specific components of the training to ensure integrity of the survey methodology, safety, and ethical protocols. Experts from the University of the West Indies (UWI) and the survey programmer were also involved in training staff. The survey team was composed of staff and graduate students from UWI.

Among other things, the survey team was trained on survey administration, understanding language and specific dialect terms, cultural issues in the prisons in Trinidad and Tobago that could help or hinder successful survey administration, safety in the prisons, ethics, and other issues relevant to successfully conducting the survey. A critical issue stressed in the training was the need to interpret all questions consistently and ask all questions in the prescribed manner. Enumerators and supervisors were provided instructions and safeguards to ensure the confidentiality and privacy of the collected information as well as the safety of survey respondents. It was mandatory for data collection staff to undergo all training, so anyone who missed a training session was not included on the team.

Prior to training, information about all staff was provided to the Prison Service so that proper background checks could be conducted. Anyone who failed the prison background checks, had a criminal history, had relatives or acquaintances in the prisons, or for whom there were any other conflicts of interest were not used for this project.

Activity 3. Prepare and Administer the Inmate Survey

The survey instrument and methodology received ethical approval from UWI's Ethics Review Committee. The instrument was pre-tested with a sample of 20 inmates. The pre-test results were used to determine whether there were any issues with the questionnaire, such as complex wording, ambiguous meanings, incorrect usage of dialect words, important questions that were omitted, validity issues, etc. The pre-test

data were entered into SPSS and analyzed to check for reliability. A focus group was held to discuss the findings from the pilot. Only core team members, representatives from CELIV, and people who were specifically trained to conduct pre-testing were involved in this exercise.

The results of the pre-test and suggested alterations to the questionnaire were shared with the IDB and prison authorities. Once all parties agreed with the proposed changes, the final version of the questionnaire was produced and shared with all relevant parties for final comment. The questionnaire was then programmed using the Survey to Go software to be administered using tablets. The questionnaire is a complex instrument with many items that skip to various sections. The use of tablets to administer the questionnaire ensured accuracy in transitioning to relevant sections of the questionnaire based on respondents' responses and eliminated data capture and data entry errors. Using electronic data capture also eliminated the possibility of skipping questions in error because the programming required a response for all relevant questions before transitioning to other questions.

The study used proportionate random sampling. For all prisons, the Project Director acquired the list of all inmates currently in the prison. Random numbers were assigned to each prisoner and used to select the random sample. The sample included a proportionate number of inmates from each prison and number of people convicted and awaiting trial. The list of randomly sampled inmates was shared with prison authorities only on the morning of the interviews to reduce the possibility that prison officers would attempt to influence prisoners prior to the interview process. On the day of the interviews word spread quickly that the survey was being conducted and many inmates opted not to participate.

Of note, a larger than proportionate sample was drawn from the Women's Prison because it is a very small facility (39.8 percent of the inmates were surveyed) and the findings should be interpreted with caution because of the small number of respondents. As of April 9, 2018, there were 3,790 inmates in the Trinidad and Tobago Prison Service. A sample of 761 inmates or 19.9 percent of the prison population was interviewed (Table 2), with a margin of error of 3.2 percent and a confidence interval of 95 percent.

To protect confidentiality and guarantee anonymity, no personally identifying information was collected from any inmate. However, supervisors maintained a record that indicated the number of inmates that refused to participate and the number who consented. Issues surrounding confidentiality and anonymity were covered during interviewer training. In addition, respondents were informed of confidentiality procedures as part of the consent process. The sampling frame, which contained a list of all inmates at all prisons, was seen and used only by the project director. These lists were deleted after use so that no personally identifying information was retained by the research team.

Table 2: Total Number of Inmates in 2018* and Sample Size†

Prison	Total Number of Inmates	Total on Remand	Total Convicted	Sample on Remand	Sample Convicted	Percent Sampled
Port of Spain	580	355	225	57	53	19.0
Carrera	320	—	320	—	70	21.9
Golden Grove	275	—	275	—	63	22.9
MSP	1,217	737	480	115	117	19.1
Remand	1,085	1,085	—	190	-0	17.5
Women's	123	75	48	25	24	39.8
ECRC	145	14	131	3	36	26.9
Tobago	45	29	16	—	—	0.0
TOTAL	3,790	2,295	1,495	390	363	19.9

*Sourced from the Prison Service on April 9, 2018.

†Eight respondents did not state whether they were convicted or awaiting trial.

Activity 4. Data Entry, Cleaning, and Analysis

The Survey to Go software can upload all data to an SPSS data file. Data uploads and quality checks were conducted daily during data collection. All variable names and codings were as per the questionnaire administered and the codings were consistent with the questionnaires administered in other countries, allowing datasets from several countries to be merged. CELIV produced a regional prison survey report. The present report focuses solely on the data from Trinidad and Tobago. The dataset was examined for accuracy, missing data, and other issues during data cleaning. All data analysis was conducted using SPSS.

Sociodemographic Profile, Childhood, and Life History

Sample Characteristics⁵

Sample characteristics are shown in Table 3. Respondents ranged in age from 18 to 79 years, with an average of 35.7 years (standard deviation [SD]=11.3). The average age of the male respondents (35.7 years) was similar to that of the female respondents (35.8 years). Convicted inmates were older (average=37.4 years) than those on remand (average=34.1 years). Prisoners at the Golden Grove Prison were older than those at other prisons and ANOVA indicated that this difference was statistically significant ($F(6,752)=5.03$, $p<.001$). With respect to educational attainment, 1.4 percent of the sample did not attend school at all, 9.2 percent attended primary school but did not complete their schooling, 10.2 percent completed primary school, 39.7 percent attended secondary school but did not complete it, 24.7 percent completed secondary school, and 8.9 percent did technical/vocational training. Only 5.6 percent went to university, with 1.4 percent not completing it, compared to 4.2 percent who completed university or other advanced studies.

Table 3: Sample Characteristics (N=761)

	Average Age (years)
Sample	35.7
Males	35.7
Females	35.8
Convicted	37.4
On remand	34.1
Golden Grove	41.5
MSP	36.6
Port of Spain	35.9
Women's Prison	35.8
Carrera	35.2
ECRC	34.2
Remand	33.0
	Education (%)
Did not attend school	1.4
Incomplete primary education	9.2
Complete primary education	10.2
Incomplete secondary education	39.7
Complete secondary education	24.7
Technical vocational training/Vocational	8.9
Incomplete university education	1.4
University or further studies	4.2

⁵ Comparing the sample characteristics and other findings in this report with population data for the Prison Service would provide an estimate of the level of the generalizability of the findings. Comparing them with the general population would allow for an assessment of differences between the prison population and the general population, therefore, pointing to potential risk factors for criminal offending. Unfortunately, such comparative data do not exist.

Childhood and Life History

This section looks at factors such as upbringing, household and neighborhood patterns, the presence of violence in respondents' communities, alcohol and drug use, education and work history. These factors provide insight into conditions that may predispose people to a criminogenic lifestyle, but it is important to note that the presence of such factors cannot be taken as definitive proof that they caused criminal offending. To do this it would be necessary to compare risk factors among inmates with a sample of non-offenders to determine if offenders were exposed to a greater number or intensity of risk factors than non-offenders. Given that the present study limits its findings to a sample of incarcerated people, such comparisons cannot be made. Despite this, an examination of predisposing factors in childhood and adulthood is important as it gives insight into the developmental trajectories of inmates and suggests issues that should be considered when trying to understand why individuals may have become involved in crime.

When asked to indicate who they lived with prior to their arrest, 34.4 percent of respondents said that they lived with their partner and/or children, 31.8 percent lived with one or both parents, 23.5 percent lived alone, 13.8 percent lived with siblings, 3.0 percent lived with their grandparents, and 1.8 percent lived with friends (Table 4).

Table 4: Who Lived with before Arrest (N=761; percent)

Partner and/or children	34.4
One or both parents/guardian	31.8
Alone	23.5
Siblings	13.8
Grandparents	3.0
Friends	1.8

Respondents were also asked to indicate up to what age they lived with each of their parents. On average, they lived with their mothers to 19.5 years of age (n=680) and with their fathers to 16.8 years of age (n=500). Further, 42.0 percent indicated that their parents lived together while the respondent was living with them and 4.7 percent indicated that their parents sometimes lived together.

Of the respondents, 51.5 percent were physically punished by their parents or guardians when they were children, 12.7 percent were punished one or two times a year, and 35.3 percent were not punished (Table 5). Slightly more females (53.8 percent) were punished than males (51.3 percent), whereas slightly more convicted inmates were punished (52.3 percent) than those on remand (50.8 percent), and more of the older inmates (53.1 percent) were punished than younger inmates (48.9 percent).

Table 5: Physical Punishment by Parents/Guardians When a Child (N=761; percent)

	Sample	Males	Females	On Remand	Convicted	25 or Younger	Older than 25
Yes	51.5	51.3	53.8	50.8	52.3	48.9	53.1
In some cases*	12.7	12.8	11.5	12.1	12.9	11.1	13.8
No	35.3	35.4	34.6	36.9	34.2	38.9	33.1
DK	0.5	0.5	0.1	0.2	0.6	1.1	0.0

*1 or 2 times a year.

Of the respondents, 17.6 percent indicated that their father beat their mother, 16.7 percent indicated that it happened sometimes, and 55.7 percent said that their fathers did not beat their mothers (Table 6). By gender, 17.5 percent of males and 19.2 percent of females lived in homes where their fathers beat their mothers, and 17.1 percent of males and 11.5 percent of females lived in homes where fathers beat mothers sometimes. By trial stage, 19.3 percent of convicts compared to 15.9 percent of inmates on remand lived in homes where fathers beat mothers, and 19.3 percent of convicts compared to 14.4 percent of those on remand lived in homes where such abuse occurred only sometimes. The data also show that 19.0 percent of older and 15.2 percent of younger inmates resided in homes in which their fathers beat their mothers.

Table 6: During Childhood, Father Beat Mother (N=761; percent)

	Sample	Males	Females	On Remand	Convicted	25 or Younger	Older than 25
Yes, he beat her	17.6	17.5	19.2	15.9	19.3	15.2	19.0
Sometimes	16.7	17.1	11.5	14.4	19.3	16.7	16.7
He didn't beat her	55.7	55.4	59.6	59.0	52.1	55.6	55.8
Other/DK	10.0	10.0	9.7	10.7	9.3	12.5	8.5

When asked to indicate whether they left home before the age of 15, 25.0 percent of the respondents had. When asked at what age they left home, 0.7 percent indicated that they were younger than six years old, 8.0 percent were between the ages of 7 and 12, and 15.9 percent between the ages of 13 and 15.

Some of the reasons given for leaving home before the age of 15 were family violence (5.3 percent of the sample; 21.1 percent of those who left home before 15), abandonment or parents' separation (2.9 percent; 11.6 percent), to apply for a job (2 percent; 7.9 percent), and because they were kicked out (1.6 percent; 6.3 percent). These and other reasons are indicated in Table 7.

Table 7: Reasons for Leaving Home before Age 15 (percent)

	Sample	Left Home before 15
	N=761	n=190
Family violence	5.3	21.1
Abandonment or parents' separation	2.9	11.6
To apply for a job	2.0	7.9
Kicked out of house	1.6	6.3
Death of the parent(s)	1.3	5.3
Parents' alcoholism or drug addiction	0.4	1.6
Sexual abuse	0.4	1.6

When asked to indicate whether their parents or guardians used alcohol frequently when they were a child, 45.6 percent of respondents said yes compared to 54.0 percent who said no (Table 8). A larger proportion of males (46.0 percent) responded yes than females (40.4 percent), and more convicts (50.4 percent) responded yes than those on remand (41.3 percent). Frequent alcohol use by parents was higher for inmates older than 25 years of age (47.5 percent) than for younger inmates (42.2 percent).

Table 8: Frequent Alcohol Use by Parents/Guardians (N=761; percent)

	Sample	Male	Female	On Remand	Convicted	25 or Younger	Older than 25
Yes	45.6	46.0	40.4	41.3	50.4	42.2	47.5
No	54.0	53.6	59.6	58.5	49.0	57.0	52.3
DK	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.2	0.6	0.8	0.2

When asked about their parents or guardians using illegal drugs such as marijuana or cocaine, 25.6 percent said yes compared to 74.0 percent who said no (Table 9). By gender, 26.0 percent of males and 21.2 percent of females reported that their parents used drugs. By trial stage, 27.5 percent of convicts compared to 23.8 percent of those on remand reported that their parents used drugs. The data also show that 34.1 percent of younger inmates compared to 21.3 percent of older inmates had parents who used illegal drugs.

Table 9: Use of Drugs by Parents/Guardians (N=761; percent)

	Sample	Male	Female	On Remand	Convicted	25 or Younger	Older than 25
Yes	25.6	26.0	21.2	23.8	27.5	34.1	21.3
No	74.0	73.6	78.8	75.6	72.2	65.6	78.3
DK	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.6	0.3	0.3	0.4

Of the respondents, 52.8 percent said they had family members who had been in prison at some time (Table 10). When asked which family members, 14.5 percent said their father, 2.8 percent said their mother, 18.8 percent said an uncle, 18.3 percent said cousins, and 22.7 percent had siblings who had been imprisoned.

When asked whether they currently had a family member in prison, 20.9 percent of the sample said yes (Table 10). When asked which family members, 0.1 percent said their father was currently in prison but no respondent had a mother currently imprisoned, 2.8 percent had an uncle, 10.8 percent had a cousin, and 6.4 percent had a sibling currently in prison. Interestingly, 3.4 percent of the respondents indicated that their spouse/partner was currently in prison.

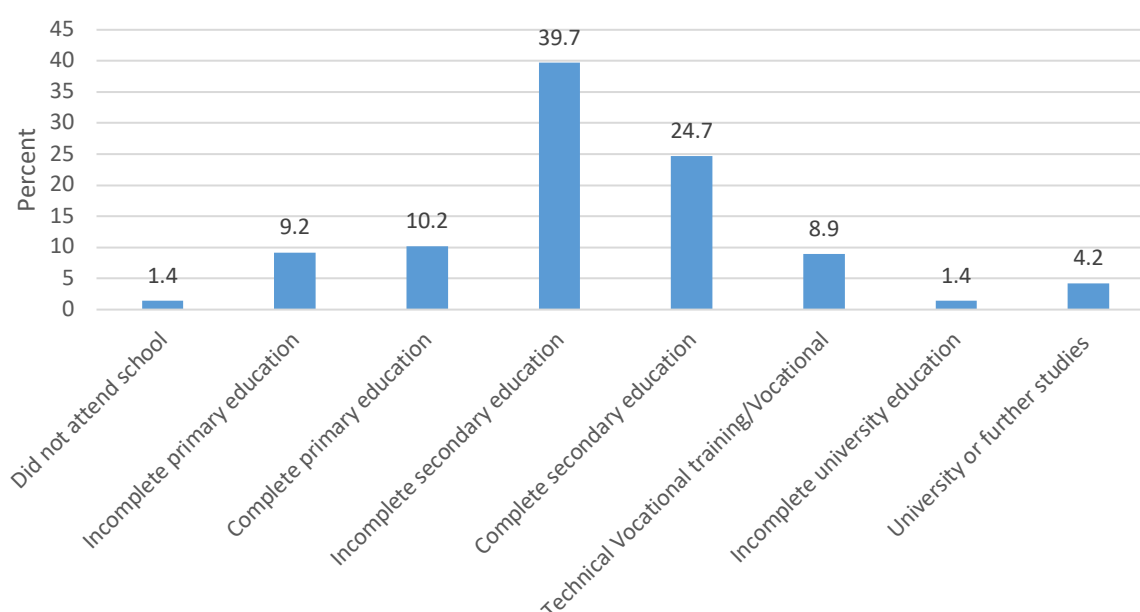
Table 10: Imprisonment of Family Members (N=761; percent)

	Ever	Currently
Father	14.5	0.1
Mother	2.8	0.0
Uncles	18.8	2.8
Cousins	18.3	10.8
Siblings or half-siblings	22.7	6.4
Father's or mother's new partner	0.8	0.0
Spouse/Partner	3.4	3.4
Other person	7.0	3.2
Total	52.8	20.9

Findings indicate that 43.6 percent of respondents grew up in a neighborhood with criminal gangs. Of the sample, 21.4 percent said that they had been in a juvenile detention center compared to 78.6 percent who had not.

Respondents were then asked a series of questions about their educational attainment. Figure 6 shows that 1.4 percent of the sample did not attend school, 9.2 percent attended primary school but did not complete their schooling, 10.2 percent completed primary school, 39.7 percent went on to attend secondary school but did not complete it, 24.7 percent completed secondary school, and 8.9 percent did technical/vocational training. Regarding university, 1.4 percent attended but did not complete it, while 4.2 percent completed university or other advanced studies.

Figure 6: Highest Level of Education (N=761)

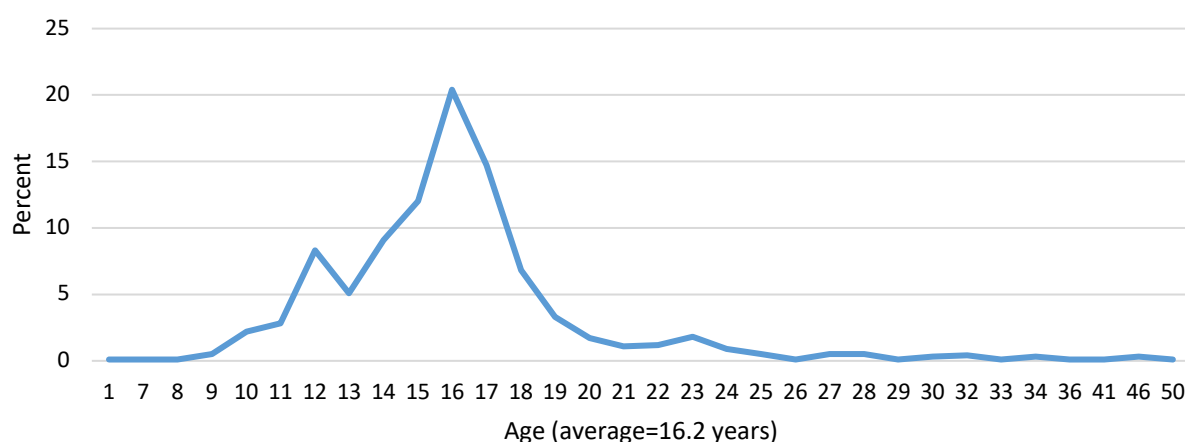


When asked to indicate why they did not complete their education, 6.2 percent said that their family pulled them from school, 8.8 percent said that they had to work, 5.8 percent left school due to poor grades, and 8.3 percent said that they did not like school (Table 11). Further, 9.3 percent were expelled and 1.3 percent were imprisoned. Of the female inmates, 11.5 percent indicated that they left school because they became pregnant. When asked at what age they last attended school (Figure 7), the average was 16.2 years. The range (1 to 50 years of age) suggests that respondents included education received while in prison when responding to this question. If education received in prison was excluded, in all likelihood, the average age at which respondents left school would have been much younger.

Table 11: Reasons for Not Completing Education (N=761; percent)

Family pulled them from school	6.2
Had to work	8.8
Had poor grades	5.8
Did not like school	8.3
Were expelled	9.3
Were imprisoned	1.3
Became pregnant*	11.5
DK/Other	20.1

*Applies to female inmates only (n=52)

Figure 7: Age Last Attended School (n=729)

When asked whether they had ever worked for pay, 92.8 percent of the respondents indicated that they had (92.5 percent of males and 96.2 percent of females). The data also indicate that similar proportions of inmates on remand (92.3 percent) and convicted inmates had worked for pay (93.4 percent), but more of the older inmates (94.8 percent) had than younger inmates (88.9 percent). On average, respondents began to work for pay at 15.9 years of age (15.8 years for males and 16.7 years for females).

In the month before their arrest, 74.5 percent of the respondents were employed. Disaggregated by gender, trial stage, and age, 74.7 percent of the male inmates were working compared to 72.0 percent of the female inmates, 78.3 percent of those on remand to 70.2 percent of the convicts, and 65.4 percent of those 25 or younger compared to 79.3 percent of older inmates. On average, respondents had been employed at their jobs for 4.3 years. Data show that inmates worked an average of 50 hours per week and earned an average monthly salary of TT\$9,875⁶ (US\$1,473). When asked what job they did, the most popular response was working construction or in a factory (25.1 percent), followed by 6.8 percent self-employed, 6.0 percent employed in companies, 3.8 percent who were farmers or fishermen, and 2.6 percent

⁶ The symbol for the Trinidad and Tobago dollar is TT\$ or \$. Throughout this report, a dollar sign on its own refers to Trinidad and Tobago dollars unless otherwise noted. The exchange rate was US\$1:TT\$6.70 on November 1, 2019.

who worked in private security (Table 12). Of note, 14.1 percent of the respondents had visited the United States, with 5.0 percent stating that they were employed while there.

Table 12: Main Job (N=761; percent)

Construction/Factory worker	25.1
Self-employed	6.8
Company employee	6.0
Farmer/Fisherman	3.8
Private security	2.6
Craftsman	2.4
Civil servant	1.4
Professional	1.3
Taxi driver	1.3
Mechanic	1.3
Laborer	1.1
Welder	1.1
Electrician	0.9
Driver	0.8
Street vendor	0.8
Stealing/selling drugs	0.4
Executive/Manager	0.3
Miner	0.3
Other/DK	42.3

In order to get further insight into inmates' work situations, they were asked to indicate whether they had sources of income apart from their main jobs (Table 13). Of the respondents, 17.1 percent indicated that they earned money from selling drugs, 10.0 percent got money from relatives, 5.7 percent sold illegal goods, 3.4 percent got money from friends, and 1.3 percent received social security. When asked to indicate whether they or their families received money from any government social program one year before their arrest, 13.1 percent of the respondents said yes.

Table 13: Income Sources Other than Salary (N=761; percent)

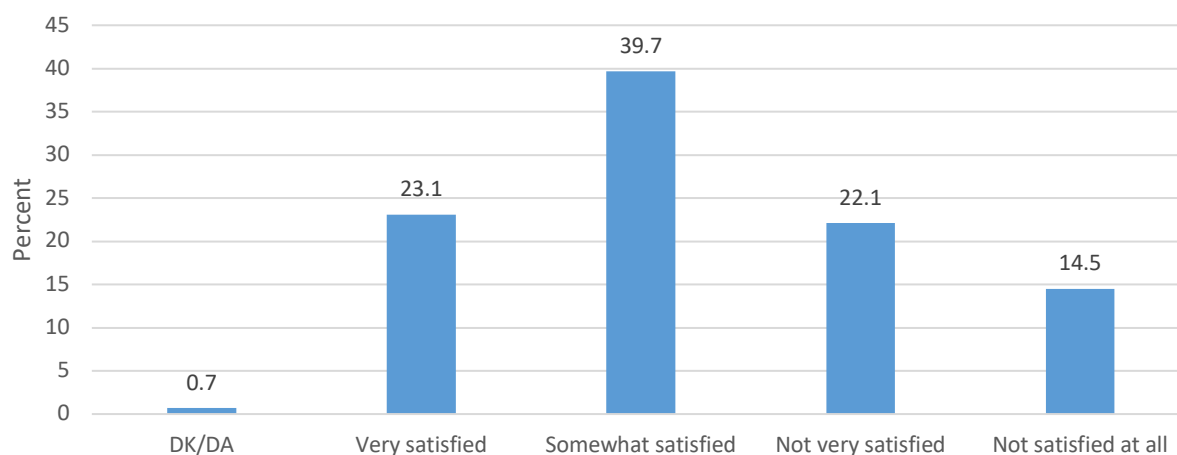
Only salary	51.1
Selling drugs	17.1
Relatives	10.0
Sale of illegal goods	5.7
Friends	3.4
Pension or social security	1.3

Of the respondents, 23.4 percent indicated that they were not employed in the month before their arrest. When asked why, the most prevalent reasons were that they could not find a job (23.2 percent of all those who were not employed), they had an illegal job (15.9 percent), they did not want to work (8.2 percent), and they did not need to work (6.0 percent) (Table 14).

Table 14: Reason Not Employed (n=233; percent)

I could not find a job	23.2
I had an illegal “job”	15.9
I did not want to work	8.2
I did not need to work	6.0
I was an alcoholic or drug addict	4.7
Health problems	4.3
I had a criminal record	3.0
Family responsibilities	2.6
I was studying	1.7
Lack of education	0.9
DK/Other	29.6

Respondents were also asked to indicate how satisfied they were with their economic position and that of their family one month before their arrest (Figure 8). The majority were either very satisfied (23.1 percent) or somewhat satisfied (39.7 percent), though some were not very satisfied (22.1 percent) or not satisfied at all (14.5 percent).

Figure 8: Satisfaction with Economic Situation and That of Family One Month before Arrest (N=761)

Inmates were asked a series of questions related to their children. Of the sample, 32.7 percent did not have children and 67.3 percent did; 23.0 percent had one child, 19.1 percent had two, 9.5 percent had three, 3.3 percent had four, and 7.9 percent had five or more children. On average respondents had their first child when they were 21.6 years of age. When asked whether they had children who resided with them in prison, 0.8 percent (n=6) said yes and all were female.

Respondents were asked about their use of illegal substances (Table 15). Of the sample, 76.3 percent had used marijuana one or more times in their lifetime, with the average age of first use being 15 years of age, and 53.0 percent admitted that they used marijuana three or more times per week in the six-month period leading up to their arrest. Of the sample, 10.8 percent used cocaine or crack cocaine within their

lifetime, with the average age of first use being 24 years of age, and 6.4 percent admitted that they used cocaine/crack cocaine three or more times per week in the six-month period leading up to their arrest. The findings for other drugs are shown in Table 15.

Table 15: Drug Use (N=761)

	Ever Used (%)	Average Age of First Use	Used 3+ Times/Week in 6 Months Prior to Arrest (%)
Marijuana	76.3	15.0	53.0
Cocaine/crack	10.8	24.0	6.4
Pills/ecstasy	7.0	20.4	0.6
Inhalants	2.9	20.1	0.9
Heroin	0.7	25.4	0.1
Other drugs	15.6	17.0	5.4

Total lifetime usage of drugs is disaggregated according to gender, prisoner status, and age at arrest in Table 16. Total drug use, or the proportion of inmates who had used one or more of the drugs listed, including other drugs, is shown in the final row of Table 16. Of the full sample, 80.7 percent had used one or more of the drugs listed within their lifetime, with use levels being higher among males (82.1 percent) than females (61.5 percent), convicts (82.9 percent) than those on remand (79.0 percent), and younger inmates (83.7 percent) than older ones (78.9 percent). Table 16 also provides statistics for specific drugs. The data indicate that a larger proportion of males (78.0 percent) had used marijuana than females (53.8 percent), convicts (79.1 percent) than those on remand (74.1 percent), and younger inmates (80.4 percent) than older ones (74.0 percent). A similar percentage of males (10.9 percent) and females (9.6 percent) had used crack or cocaine, but use was higher among convicts (16.3 percent) than those on remand (5.6 percent) and among older inmates (14.5 percent) than among younger ones (3.7 percent). More of the females (7.7 percent) had used pills/ecstasy than males (6.9 percent), more convicts (8.5 percent) than those on remand (5.6 percent), and more of the younger inmates (9.6 percent) than older ones (5.6 percent). Of the sample, 2.9 percent had used inhalants in their lifetime, with 3.1 percent of the males and none of females using this drug. Somewhat more convicts (3.9 percent) than those on remand (2.1 percent), and older inmates (3.1 percent) compared to younger ones (2.2 percent) had used inhalants.

Table 16: Drug Use by Inmate Characteristics (N=761; percent)

	Total	Male	Female	On Remand	Convicted	25 or Younger	Older than 25
Marijuana	76.3	78.0	53.8	74.1	79.1	80.4	74.0
Cocaine/crack	10.8	10.9	9.6	5.6	16.3	3.7	14.5
Pills/ecstasy	7.0	6.9	7.7	5.6	8.5	9.6	5.6
Inhalants	2.9	3.1	0.0	2.1	3.9	2.2	3.1
Heroin	0.7	0.6	1.9	0.0	1.4	0.4	0.8
Other drugs	15.6	15.8	13.5	14.6	17.1	13.3	16.7
TOTAL	80.7	82.1	61.5	79.0	82.9	83.7	78.9

Table 17 shows the proportion of inmates that committed specific crimes and for each crime shows the total percentage of respondents who used any illegal substance, marijuana, and cocaine. In considering the relationship between drug use and crimes committed it is important to note that the association may not be representative where only a very small number of people committed specific crimes. Crimes committed by a small number of respondents (less than 2 percent of the sample) were encroachment/identity theft; extortion; scam, misappropriation, fraud; injuries; and manslaughter.

All respondents who committed extortion reported using drugs, with 100 percent of them using marijuana but none of them using cocaine. A very large proportion of those who committed robbery reported that they had used drugs (94.1 percent), with 91.2 percent indicating that they used marijuana and 10.3 percent indicating that they used cocaine. Of the inmates who committed theft/aggravated theft, 89.5 percent used drugs, with 82.6 percent using marijuana and 8.1 percent using cocaine. Of those charged with possession of illegal weapons, 89.3 percent used drugs, with 85.4 percent using marijuana and 4.9 percent using cocaine. Of those charged with burglaries/break-ins, 88.0 percent used drugs, with 84.0 percent using marijuana and 44.0 percent using cocaine.

Use of any drug and use of marijuana were highest for extortion, robberies, theft, possession of illegal weapons, and burglaries/break-ins. In contrast, use of cocaine was highest burglaries/break-ins (44.0 percent), drug possession/dealing (19.4 percent), sex crimes (18.2 percent), and scams/misappropriation/fraud (11.1 percent).

Table 17: Drug Use and Offenses Committed (N=761; percent)

	Crime Committed	All Drugs	Marijuana	Cocaine
Extortion	0.3	100.0	100.0	0.0
Robbery/aggravated robbery	8.9	94.1	91.2	10.3
Theft/aggravated theft	11.3	89.5	82.6	8.1
Possession of illegal weapons	13.5	89.3	85.4	4.9
Burglary/break-in	3.3	88.0	84.0	44.0
Drug possession/dealing	13.5	87.4	82.5	19.4
Injuries	1.6	83.3	75.0	8.3
Murder/intentional homicide	38.8	76.9	71.9	4.7
Manslaughter	1.7	76.9	76.9	0.0
Other crimes	18.7	72.5	72.5	15.5
Kidnapping	3.8	69.0	69.0	3.4
Sex crimes	2.9	68.2	68.2	18.2
Scam, misappropriation, fraud	1.2	55.6	44.4	11.1
Encroachment/identity theft	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Criminal Careers and Inmate Profiles

This section examines the crimes that inmates committed and looks at the specific characteristics of these crimes, including victims, place, use of firearms or other weapons, and intoxication. Inmates were first asked which crimes they committed and then asked to provide additional details for each crime. For example, those who committed drug-related offenses were asked to specify the drugs involved, the value of the drugs in their possession, and the reasons that they sold drugs, among other questions. In contrast, those who committed murder were asked why and what weapon they used, among other questions.⁷

Crimes Committed

Table 18 provides information about the crimes committed and is disaggregated by gender, trial stage, and age at the time of arrest. The most prevalent crime in the sample was intentional homicide/murder (38.8 percent), with more males (39.4 percent) than females (30.8 percent) and many more of the inmates on remand (60.0 percent) than convicts (16.3 percent) being held for this crime.

The next most prevalent crimes were drug-related offenses and possession of illegal weapons. Of the sample, 13.5 percent were being held for drug-related crimes, with far more females (30.8 percent) having committed this crime than males (12.3 percent), more convicts (22.0 percent) than those on remand (5.6 percent), and more of the older inmates (16.7 percent) than younger ones (7.4 percent). Of the sample, 13.5 percent were imprisoned for possessing illegal weapons, with somewhat more females (15.4 percent) than males (13.4 percent), more convicts (17.6 percent) than those on remand (9.7 percent), and more younger inmates (15.2 percent) than older ones (12.6 percent) being held for this offense.

Of the inmates, 11.3 percent were being held for theft or aggravated theft, with 11.8 percent of males and 3.8 percent of females, 8.5 percent of inmates on remand and 14.6 percent of convicted inmates, and 12.2 percent of younger inmates compared to 11.0 percent of older ones incarcerated for these crimes.

Table 18 also shows that 18.7 percent of the sample committed crimes not specifically listed. Other crimes include larceny (22.5 percent of the 18.7 percent), shooting with intent (8.5 percent), drug-related crimes apart from possession or trafficking (7.0 percent), assault (5.6 percent), possession of stolen goods (5.6 percent), malicious wounding (5.6 percent), driving under the influence (4.9 percent), illegal entry (4.2 percent), and child maintenance (2.8 percent).

⁷ Where comparisons are possible, it would be useful to cross-reference the findings in this section with administrative data on the prison population. Those data, however, are confidential and could not be used in this report.

Table 18: Crimes Committed (N=761; percent)

	Sample	Males	Females	On Remand	Convicted	25 or Younger	Older than 25
Murder/intentional homicide	38.8	39.4	30.8	60.0	16.3	48.1	33.3
Drug possession/dealing	13.5	12.3	30.8	5.6	22.0	7.4	16.7
Possession of illegal weapons	13.5	13.4	15.4	9.7	17.6	15.2	12.6
Theft/aggravated theft	11.3	11.8	3.8	8.5	14.6	12.2	11.0
Robbery/aggravated robbery	8.9	9.3	3.8	8.2	9.6	14.4	6.0
Kidnapping	3.8	4.1	0.0	3.8	3.6	4.4	3.5
Burglary/break-in	3.3	3.5	0.0	0.8	6.1	1.9	4.1
Sex crimes	2.9	3.1	0.0	4.4	1.1	1.1	3.9
Manslaughter	1.7	1.8	0.0	1.3	2.2	1.9	1.7
Injuries*	1.6	1.7	0.0	1.5	1.7	1.1	1.9
Scam, misappropriation, fraud	1.2	0.8	5.8	1.0	1.4	0.4	1.7
Extortion	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.3	0.3	0.7	0.0
Encroachment/identity theft	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other crimes	18.7	18.2	25.0	12.8	24.8	14.8	20.9

* "Injuries" refers to any bodily injuries inflicted on another person apart from injuries incurred as a result of the other crimes listed in the table.

For each specified crime, Table 19 shows the percent of respondents who indicated that victims were physically injured, that respondents used drugs or alcohol prior to committing the crime, and that a weapon was used. Of note, convicts responding to these questions are referring to things actually done while committing the crime, while those on remand allegedly did these things while committing the crime for which they were accused.

With respect to physical injury, the crime during which the highest proportion of respondents indicated that physical injury occurred was murder/intentional homicide (94.2 percent of all offenses) followed by manslaughter (92.3 percent) and injuries (91.7 percent). By definition, physical injury would occur in 100 percent of such incidents; however, at least some inmates on remand claimed that they did not commit the crime and as such claimed that physical injuries did not occur.

Respondents indicated that victims were injured in 48.3 percent of all kidnappings, 38.2 percent of robberies, 31.7 percent of the other crimes, 29.1 percent of the time while possessing an illegal weapon, and in 23.5 percent of thefts. Further, physical injury was reported by inmates to have occurred to 22.7 percent of victims of sexual offenses.

Table 19 also shows whether drugs or alcohol were used within the six-hour period prior to committing the offense. The crimes for which drugs or alcohol were most frequently used were burglaries/break-ins (52.0 percent), injuries (50.0 percent), robberies (41.2 percent), drug offenses (37.9 percent), possession of illegal weapons (36.9 percent), sexual offenses (36.4 percent), and theft (36.0 percent). The use of drugs or alcohol was least likely during kidnappings (17.2 percent) and manslaughter (15.4 percent). Note: Extortion (n=2) and encroachment/identity theft (n=0) were excluded because the very low number of

respondents who committed these crimes would have produced unreliable estimates. Note: Extortion (n=2) and encroachment/identity theft (n=0) were excluded because the very low number of respondents who committed these crimes would have produced unreliable estimates.

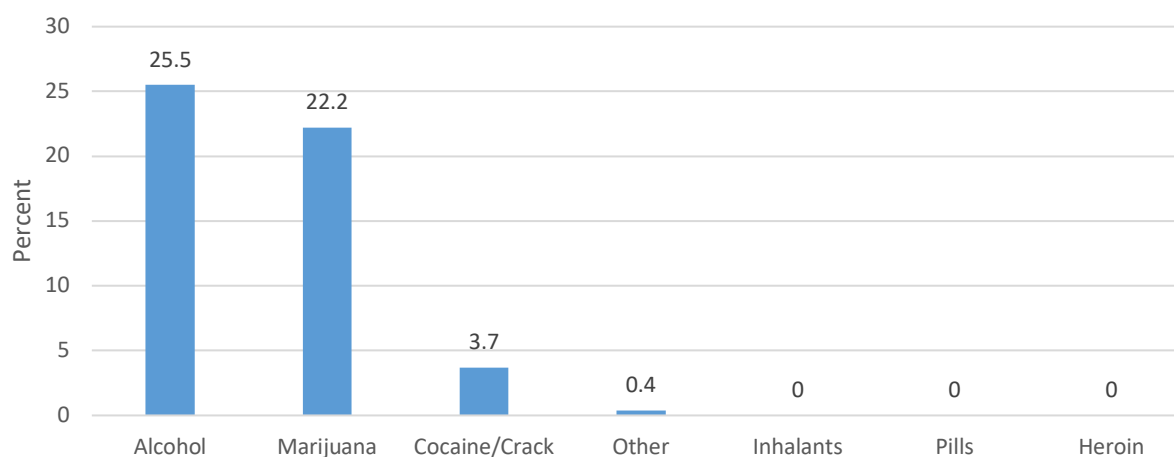
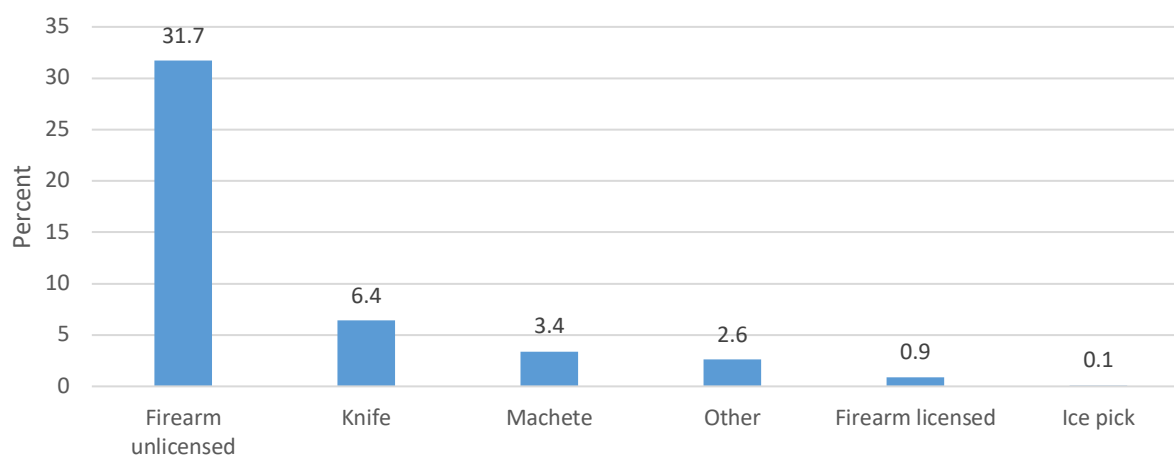
Figure 9 Figure 9 shows that the drug most frequently used prior to committing a crime was alcohol (25.5 percent), followed by marijuana (22.2 percent) and cocaine/crack (3.7 percent).

Table 19 shows that weapons were carried when committing their crime by 87.4 percent of inmates possessing an illegal weapon, 77.9 percent of those who committed robbery, 75.0 percent of those who committed injuries, 69.2 percent of inmates involved in manslaughter, 55.2 percent of kidnappers, and 52.3 percent of thieves. Inmates were least likely to carry a weapon while committing a sexual offense (9.1 percent) or scams, misappropriation, and fraud (0 percent). Unlicensed firearms were the weapons most frequently carried while committing crimes, with 31.7 percent of inmates carrying such a weapon at the time of the crime for which they were incarcerated, followed by knives (6.4 percent) and machetes (3.4 percent) (Figure 10).

Table 19: Crime by Physical Injury, Drug or Alcohol Use, and Carrying a Weapon (percent except n)

	Physical Injury Occurred	Drugs or Alcohol Used within 6 Hours of Crime	Carried a Weapon	n=
Murder/intentional homicide	94.2	33.6	48.8	295
Manslaughter	92.3	15.4	69.2	13
Injuries	91.7	50.0	75.0	12
Kidnapping	48.3	17.2	55.2	29
Robbery/aggravated robbery	38.2	41.2	77.9	68
Other crimes	31.7	33.8	36.6	142
Possession of illegal weapons	29.1	36.9	87.4	103
Theft/aggravated theft	23.5	36.0	52.3	86
Sex crimes	22.7	36.4	9.1	22
Scam, misappropriation, fraud	22.2	22.2	0.0	9
Burglary/break-in	12.0	52.0	24.0	25
Drug possession/dealing	5.8	37.9	21.4	103

Note: Extortion (n=2) and encroachment/identity theft (n=0) were excluded because the very low number of respondents who committed these crimes would have produced unreliable estimates.

Figure 9: Drugs Used Prior to Committing Offenses (N=761)**Figure 10: Weapons Carried while Committing Offenses (N=761)**

When inmates were asked whether other people were involved as offenders in the crimes they committed, 48.1 percent said there were other people involved. Of the respondents, 10.5 percent said that the crime they committed was entrusted to them by a gang. Regarding crime organized or directed from within prisons, 39.7 percent of the respondents said that they were aware of such crimes. When asked which crimes were directed from within the prisons, 13.7 percent indicated they knew of kidnappings, 12.1 percent knew of extortions, 17.5 percent knew of drug trafficking, 20.4 percent knew of robberies, and 30.1 percent knew of murders (Table 20).

Table 20: Awareness of Crimes Organized or Directed from within Prison (N=761; percent)

Kidnapping	13.7
Extortion	12.1
Trafficking	17.5
Robbery	20.4
Murder	30.1
Other	3.2
Total	39.7

Inmates were asked specific questions based on the crimes committed. Respondents who committed crimes against property (robbery/aggravated robbery, encroachment/identity theft, theft/aggravated theft, scam/misappropriation/fraud) were asked to estimate the monetary value of their crimes. Responses ranged from \$0 to \$5 million (US\$0–US\$746,269), with an average of \$182,141 (US\$27,185) per crime (median=\$32,000 [US\$4,776]). When asked whether they had committed other property crimes prior to the present arrest, 6.7 percent of responded yes. When asked how much they “earned” on average per month from property crimes, responses ranged from \$0 to \$150,000 (US\$0–US\$22,388), with an average of \$34,639 (US\$5,170) (median=\$15,000 [US\$2,239]).

For drug-related offenses (Table 21), 62.1 percent said they were selling or carrying marijuana while 43.7 percent said cocaine; none of the respondents said they were selling or carrying inhalants, pills, or heroin. When asked about the approximate monetary value of the drugs in their possession at arrest, responses ranged from \$0 to \$10 million (US\$0–US\$1.46 million), with an average of \$756,490 (US\$112,909) (median=\$15,000 [US\$2,239]). Of the respondents, 8.1 percent indicated that they sold drugs prior to their current drug offense. When asked why they sold drugs, 9.0 percent of these persons said they needed the money to purchase drugs for their own personal use, 14.9 percent said they did not have any other source of income, 50.7 percent said selling drugs resulted in a lot of income, and 3.0 percent said other people asked them to sell the drugs. Inmates indicated that they “earned” an average of \$60,119 (US\$8,973) per month from selling drugs prior to their arrest (median=\$20,000 [US\$2,985]).

Table 21: Drugs Charged with Selling or Carrying (n=103; percent)

Marijuana	62.1
Cocaine/Crack	43.7
Inhalants	0.0
Pills	0.0
Heroin	0.0
Other	1.0

Of the inmates who committed murder or manslaughter, 15.0 percent (the most prevalent reason) said the offense occurred while they were involved in a fight, 14.2 percent claimed they acted in self-defense, and 12.3 percent said it occurred while they were committing another crime (Table 22). Of the respondents, 36.0 percent cited other reasons, the largest proportion of which were related to gangs (11.0 percent) followed by the crime occurring during a robbery (7.7 percent).

Table 22: Reasons for Committing Murder/Manslaughter (n=253; percent)

A fight	15.0
Self-defense	14.2
Occurred while committing another crime	12.3
Revenge	7.5
Family problems	5.9
Problems with spouse/partner	4.7
You were paid to do so	4.3
Other*	36.0

Note: Murder/manslaughter was committed by 308 of the respondents, but only 253 replied to this question.

* Others reasons were that it was related to gangs (11.0 percent), the crime occurring during a robbery (7.7 percent), they were provoked (6.6 percent), it was drug-related (4.4 percent), because of an argument (3.3 percent), it was a crime of passion (2.2 percent), and money (2.2 percent).

The weapon most widely used while committing murder/manslaughter was an unlicensed firearm (40.7 percent) followed by knives (25.3 percent), machetes (8.4 percent), objects found at the crime scene (2.2 percent), and licensed firearms (1.8 percent) (Table 23).

Table 23: Weapons Used while Committing Murder/Manslaughter (n=273; percent)

Firearm (unlicensed)	40.7
Knife	25.3
Machete	8.4
An object found in the crime scene	2.2
Firearm (licensed)	1.8
Other	21.6

Note: Murder/manslaughter was committed by 308 of the respondents, but only 273 replied to this question.

Only a small number of respondents were involved in extortion or kidnapping (n=31, of which 22 responded to the additional questions). These respondents were asked whether any other people participated in their offense, with answers ranging from 0 to 7 other people and an average of 2 others. When asked how much money they received from their crime, responses ranged from \$0 to \$200,000, with an average of \$20,380. Also, 39.1 percent of these respondents had committed the same type of crime before.

Of the respondents who committed sexual offenses, the highest percentage (33.3 percent) said their victim was a stranger, followed by other relatives (30.8 percent), boyfriends/girlfriends (21.4 percent), their children (14.3 percent), friends (14.3 percent), and acquaintances (14.3 percent) (Table 24). Of these respondents, 18.2 percent reported being accused of using physical violence during the crime; however, as shown in Table 19, only 22.7 percent admitted that physical injuries occurred during the crime. Since by their very definition sexual offenses are acts of physical violence, these findings are as reported by the respondents. In this case, respondents were referring to acts of physical violence that occurred in addition to the sexual violence.

Table 24: Victims of Sexual Offenses (n=14; percent)

A stranger	33.3
Other relative	30.8
Boyfriend/girlfriend	21.4
Your child	14.3
A friend	14.3
An acquaintance	14.3
Mother	7.1
A neighbor	7.1
Father	0.0
A student	0.0
Other	14.3

Note: Sexual offenses were committed by 22 of the respondents, but only 14 replied to this question.

Recidivism

While the previous section focused on the crimes that led to inmates' current incarcerations, this section looks at repeat offending. Two ways to measure recidivism are discussed below. First, respondents were asked whether they were involved in any criminal offense, apart from the one for which they were currently incarcerated, within the six-month period prior to their arrest (Table 25). This measure applies to any crime committed within the six-month period prior to their current arrest, not necessarily the same offense they were currently incarcerated for, and respondents were not asked whether they were arrested for such offenses, only if they had committed them. Second, inmates were asked if they had previously been arrested for a crime other than the one for which they were currently incarcerated at any period in their life (Table 27). This measure, unlike the one above, refers to arrests and does not specify a time period.

Table 25 shows the results for criminal activity in the six months prior to arrest—the first measure of recidivism. Of the sample, 27.7 percent said that they had engaged in other crimes during that time. A greater proportion of the male inmates (29.1 percent) were recidivists than female inmates (9.6 percent), convicted inmates (32.5 percent) had a higher recidivism rate than inmates on remand (23.6 percent), and younger inmates (35.9 percent) a higher rate than older inmates (23.3 percent). Alcohol and drug use was also found to be related to recidivism rates, with inmates who used drugs or alcohol prior to committing offenses having a higher recidivism rate (35.6 percent) than those who did not (23.2 percent). Recidivism rates also varied by prison, with Carrera having the highest proportion of recidivists (35.7 percent) followed by the ECRC (33.3 percent) and the MSP (29.7 percent). The Women's Prison had the lowest recidivism rate (9.6 percent). Offenders of some types of crimes were more likely to be recidivists than offenders of other types, with 58.3 percent of all inmates who committed injuries being recidivists followed by those who committed robberies (52.9 percent), theft (51.2 percent), possessed an illegal weapon (40.8 percent), and kidnapping (37.9 percent). The offense with the lowest proportion of recidivists was sexual offenses (9.1 percent).

Table 25: Recidivism: Offenses Committed within 6-Months of Current Arrest (N=761; percent)

Sample	27.7
Males	29.1
Carrera	35.7
ECRC	33.3
Golden Grove	25.4
MSP	29.7
Port of Spain	25.2
Remand	28.4
Females (Women's Prison)	9.6
Convicted	32.5
On remand	23.6
25 or younger	35.9
Older than 25	23.3
Used drugs/alcohol prior to committing crime	35.6
Did not use drugs/alcohol prior to committing crime	23.2
Injuries	58.3
Robbery/aggravated robbery	52.9
Theft/aggravated theft	51.2
Possession of illegal weapons	40.8
Kidnapping	37.9
Burglary/break-in	32.0
Other crimes	23.2
Manslaughter	23.1
Murder/intentional homicide	22.0
Drug possession/dealing	20.4
Scam, misappropriation, fraud	11.1
Sex crimes	9.1

The crimes most frequently committed by recidivists were drug-related (57.8 percent) followed by robbery (35.1 percent), possession of illegal weapons (20.9 percent), theft (7.6 percent), and injuries (6.2 percent) (Table 26).

Table 26: Crimes Committed by Repeat Offenders (N=211; percent)

Drug-related crimes	57.8
Robbery/aggravated robbery	35.1
Possession of illegal weapons	20.9
Theft	7.6
Injuries	6.2
Kidnapping	5.2
Extortion	5.2
Intentional homicide/murder	4.7
Scam/misappropriation	2.8
Encroachment/identity theft	1.4
Manslaughter	1.4
Sex crimes	0.9
Other	13.7

Based on the second measure—inmates had been arrested for a crime other than the one they were currently incarcerated for—47.7 percent of the respondents were recidivists (Table 27). A much larger proportion of males (50.5 percent) were recidivists than females (9.6 percent), more convicts (53.2 percent) were recidivists than those on remand (42.8 percent), and more of the older prisoners (52.5 percent) were recidivists than younger ones (38.5 percent). By prison, inmates at Golden Grove (68.3 percent), the ECRC (59 percent), and Carrera (58.6 percent) had the highest recidivism rates, while inmates at the Women’s Prison had the lowest rate (9.6 percent). Recidivism rates also varied according to the crimes that inmates were incarcerated for, with the rates among inmates in prison for burglaries and break-ins being highest (88.0 percent those who committed this offence were recidivists), followed by those who committed injuries (83.3 percent), robbery (57.4 percent), theft (55.8 percent), and sex crimes (54.5 percent).

Table 27: Recidivism: Previously Arrested (N=761; percent)

Sample	47.7
Males	50.5
Carrera	58.6
ECRC	59.0
Golden Grove	68.3
MSP	46.2
Port of Spain	45.9
Remand	47.9
Females (Women's Prison)	9.6
Convicted	53.2
On remand	42.8
25 or younger	38.5
Older than 25	52.5
Used drugs/alcohol prior to committing crime	55.0
Did not use drugs/alcohol prior to committing crime	43.2
Burglary/break-in*	88.0*
Injuries	83.3
Robbery/aggravated robbery	57.4
Theft/aggravated theft	55.8
Sex crimes	54.5
Drug possession/dealing	52.4
Possession of illegal weapons	52.4
Kidnapping	48.3
Murder/intentional homicide	33.9
Manslaughter	30.8
Scam, misappropriation, fraud	22.2
Other	57.7

*For the final section of this table, the crimes refer to the offences for which inmates were currently incarcerated.
Percentages refer to the proportion of inmates within each crime category who are recidivists.

The most prevalent offenses for which recidivists were previously arrested were drug related (14.1 percent) followed by robbery (8.4 percent), possession of illegal weapons (7.1 percent), theft (3.4 percent), and murder (1.8 percent) (Table 28).

Table 28: Crimes Repeat Offenders Were Previously Arrested For (N=363; percent)

Drug-related crimes	14.1
Robbery/aggravated robbery	8.4
Possession of illegal weapons	7.1
Theft/aggravated theft	3.4
Intentional homicide/murder	1.8
Injuries	1.6
Kidnapping	0.7
Extortion	0.7
Sex crimes	0.3
Encroachment/identity theft	0.3
Manslaughter	0.1
Scam, misappropriation, fraud	0.0
Other	12.9

On average, respondents were 26.8 years old when they were previously arrested and served an average of 15.5 years. Further, the average time that elapsed between their previous and current incarcerations was 3.7 years, and prior to their current arrest respondents were arrested an average of 5.9 times.

Prior Educational Experiences in Prison

Respondents were asked whether they took part in any vocational or educational training during their previous period of incarceration (Table 29). Of this sample, 23.7 percent learned a trade while 24.5 percent were involved in academic studies. For those who did academic studies, 44.9 percent did elementary courses, 40.4 percent did O Level courses, and 4.5 percent did A Level courses.

The Carrera Prison had the highest proportion of inmates who learned a trade during a previous incarceration (29.3 percent). The rates at the MSP, Golden Grove, and Port of Spain ranged from 25.5 percent to 25.7 percent. The rate at the Remand Prison was 19.8 percent and at the ECRC, 17.4 percent. None of the respondents from the Women's Prison had been involved in learning a trade but 24.0 percent of the male inmates in the sample had been. By trial stage, 18.6 percent of those on remand compared to 28.5 percent of convicts learned a trade, and by age, older inmates (27.2 percent) were more likely to have learned a trade than younger inmates (16.3 percent).

Table 29: Education during Previous Incarceration (N=363; percent)

	Vocational	Academic
Sample	23.7	24.5
Males	24.0	24.6
Carrera	29.3	39.0
MSP	25.7	20.2
Golden Grove	25.6	20.9
Port of Spain	25.5	25.5
Remand	19.8	23.1
ECRC	17.4	30.4
Females (Women's Prison)	0.0	20.0
On remand	18.6	21.6
Convicted	28.5	26.9
25 or younger	16.3	20.2
Older than 25	27.2	26.8

When asked about the usefulness of the trade they learned while in prison, 67.4 percent of respondents stated that the training was useful in helping them find a job after they were released. Of those who felt that learning a trade was not helpful to them, 19.2 percent indicated that they could not find a job, 3.8 percent said that they were poorly paid, 11.5 percent said that they made more money doing other things, and 26.9 percent said that no one wanted to hire them.

Carrera Prison also had the highest proportion of inmates involved in academic studies during a previous incarceration (39.0 percent), followed by the ECRC (30.4 percent), Port of Spain (25.5 percent), and Remand (23.1 percent). The lowest rate was at the Women's Prison (20.0 percent) and compares to 24.6 percent of the male inmates surveyed. By trial stage, 21.6 percent the inmates on remand studied academics compared to 26.9 percent of convicts, and by age, 26.8 percent of older inmates compared to 20.2 percent of younger inmates were involved in academic studies. When asked about the usefulness of their academic studies in prison, 50.6 percent said that it was very useful and 39.3 percent said that it was quite useful, while 4.5 percent said that it was not very useful and another 4.5 percent said that it was not useful at all.

Of the inmates who did not get any education while previously incarcerated, 37.4 percent said that no classes were offered, 0.7 percent said that teachers did not show up to class, 17.2 percent said that they had no interest in studying, and 1.8 percent said that they dropped out because they did not like the courses.

Life After Release from Prison

Respondents were asked who they lived with after being released from prison the last time. Of these respondents, 61.4 percent indicated that they went to live with family, 24.8 percent lived on their own, and 5.0 percent lived with friends. Interestingly, 1.1 percent lived with friends they met while in prison.

These respondents were also asked how they supported themselves financially (Table 30). The largest proportion (27.1 percent) had temporary jobs, 22.4 percent had family support, including support from a spouse or partner, 17.6 percent were able to get permanent jobs, and 4.0 percent said that their friends

supported them. Some respondents admitted that they resorted to illegal means for financial support, specifically, 13.4 percent sold drugs, 2.6 percent complemented their income by stealing, and 1.6 percent did jobs for criminal gangs.

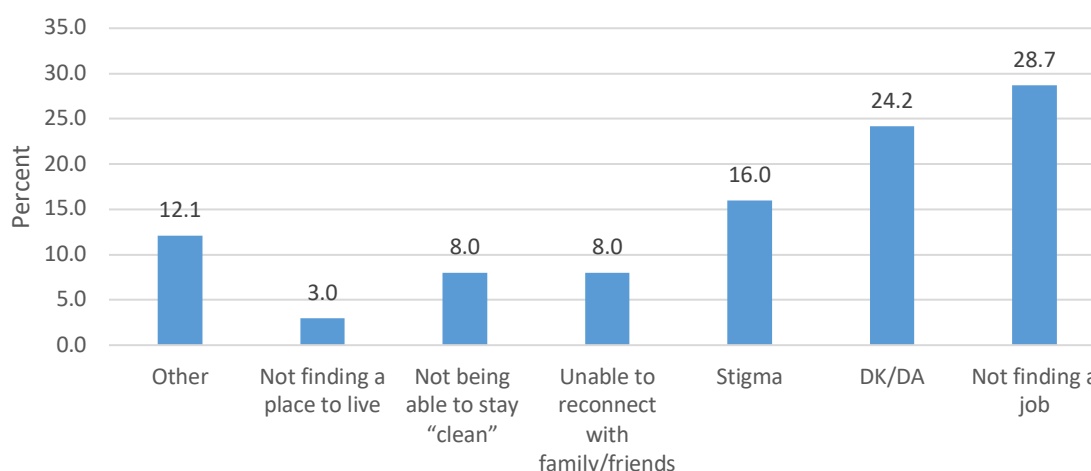
Table 30: Financial Support after Release from Prison (n=363; percent)

I had temporary jobs	27.1
My family supported me	22.4
I had a permanent job	17.6
I sold drugs	13.4
My friends supported me	4.0
I complemented my income by stealing	2.6
I did some jobs for the gang	1.6
Other	11.3

Note: Because respondents were allowed to provide more than one answer, there were 425 responses to this question.

When asked how many weeks elapsed between the time they were released and the time they found a job, the average of the responses was 2.1 weeks. Respondents were also asked about the most important challenge they faced when released the previous time and that affected their ability to stay out of prison (Figure 11). The most commonly cited reason was not being able to find a job (28.7 percent) followed by the stigma attached to being a prisoner (16.0 percent), the inability to reconnect with friends and family (8.0 percent), not staying away from drugs (8.0 percent), and not finding a place to live (3.0 percent). Of this sample, 12.1 percent cited a range of other reasons but 24.2 percent were not sure why they were unable to stay out of prison.

Figure 11: Most Important Challenge Faced When Previously Released from Prison (n=363)



Respondents were asked whether on release from prison they were in contact with any organization that could assist them as they attempted to reintegrate into society and, if so, which organization. Only 6.1 percent of inmates were in contact with any organization and 1.8 percent contacted non-governmental organizations (NGOs); very few contacted any other type of organization (Table 31). These data reflect the lack of relevant support services in Trinidad and Tobago. Apart from Vision on Mission, which is an NGO that provides temporary accommodation and other support services for released inmates, there are very few services available. This suggests reintegration services need to be developed and that information on such services should be disseminated to inmates.

Table 31: Organizations Inmates Contacted on Release from Prison (n=363; percent)

Non-governmental organization	1.8
Government agency that provides work support	0.3
Government agency that provides financial support	0.1
The police and/or Defence Force personnel	0.1
Other	0.7

Firearms

When asked if they had ever owned a firearm, 45.7 percent of the sample said yes (Table 32). Disaggregated, a larger proportion of males (48.7 percent) than females had owned firearms (5.8 percent), more convicts (53.7 percent) than inmates on remand (38.2 percent), and more of the younger inmates (51.9 percent) than the older ones (42.6 percent). These findings were also disaggregated by prison and inmates at the ECRC had the highest gun ownership levels (61.5 percent), followed by Carrera (57.1 percent) and Golden Grove (54.0 percent). The Women's Prison had the lowest gun ownership (5.8 percent).

Table 32: Firearm Ownership (N=761; percent)

Sample	45.7
Convicted	53.7
On remand	38.2
25 or younger	51.9
Older than 25	42.6
Male	48.7
ECRC	61.5
Carrera	57.1
Golden Grove	54.0
MSP	53.4
Port of Spain	45.9
Remand	36.8
Female (Women's Prison)	5.8

Of those who had owned a firearm, the average age of first ownership was 17 years. When they were asked how they got their firearms (Table 33), the largest proportion said that they purchased them (36.5 percent), others got them from a friend (29.6 percent) or were given them by a family member

(14.7 percent), 5.7 percent said that they stole the firearm, and 3.2 percent said that they had firearms because they had been a member of law enforcement services.

Table 33: Source of Firearm (n=348; percent)

Bought it	36.5
Got it from a friend	29.6
Got it from a family member	14.7
Stole it	5.7
Was a police officer or member of law enforcement	3.2
Other/DK	10.3

When asked if they had ever used a firearm (Table 34), 39.6 percent of all respondents had, with more males (42.0 percent) than females (5.8 percent) having used a firearm, more convicts (47.1 percent) than inmates on remand (32.6 percent), and more of the younger inmates (43.3 percent) than older ones (37.6 percent). Firearm use was highest for inmates in the ECRC (59.0 percent), followed by Carrera (52.9 percent), and the MSP (46.2 percent), and lowest in the Women's Prison (5.8 percent).

Table 34: Firearm Use (N=761; percent)

Sample	39.6
Convicted	47.1
On remand	32.6
25 or younger	43.3
Older than 25	37.6
Male (overall)	42.0
ECRC	59.0
Carrera	52.9
MSP	46.2
Golden Grove	44.4
Port of Spain	38.7
Remand	30.5
Female (Women's Prison)	5.8

Of all respondents, 18.0 percent said that they had injured or killed someone with a firearm (Table 35). Males (19.2 percent) were more likely than females (1.9 percent) to have injured or killed someone with a firearm, convicts (20.4 percent) more likely than those on remand (16.2 percent), and younger inmates (23.0 percent) more likely than older ones (15.1 percent). The proportion of inmates who either killed or injured someone with a firearm was highest in Carrera (28.6 percent), followed by Golden Grove (23.8 percent) and the ECRC (23.1 percent). The proportion was lowest in the Women's Prison (1.9 percent).

Table 32 shows that 45.7 percent of the sample (n=348 inmates) owned a firearm, Table 34 shows that 39.6 percent (n=301) used a firearm, and Table 35 shows that 18.0 percent of the sample (n=137) had injured or killed someone with a firearm. This means that the majority of those who owned a firearm also

used those firearms (86.5 percent) and that a large proportion of firearm owners (39.4 percent) had injured or killed someone with those firearms.

Table 35: Injured or Killed Someone with a Firearm (N=761; percent)

Sample	18.0
Convicted	20.4
On remand	16.2
25 or younger	23.0
Older than 25	15.1
Male	19.2
Carrera	28.6
Golden Grove	23.8
ECRC	23.1
MSP	19.9
Port of Spain	18.0
Remand	13.2
Female (Women's Prison)	1.9

Gangs

Of the sample, 7.0 percent belonged to a gang in prison, males (7.3 percent) were more likely than females (1.9 percent) to be gang members, convicts (10.2 percent) more likely than those on remand (4.1 percent), and younger inmates (10.4 percent) more likely than older inmates (5.0 percent) (Table 36). Gang membership also differed among the prisons, with Carrera having the highest level (24.3 percent), followed by the ECRC (10.3 percent) and Golden Grove (9.5 percent). The Women's Prison had the lowest level (1.9 percent) of gang membership.

It is interesting to note that only 4.7 percent of respondents were in a gang when they were arrested. The increase to 7.0 percent while in prison suggests that some inmates joined a gang after being incarcerated. Of the respondents that were in a gang prior to their arrest, the average age at which they joined the gang was 16 years old. These findings are interesting because they contrast with the proportion of crimes that are attributed to gang members. For example, official crime data show that of all murders committed from 1995 to 2013, 27.5 percent were gang-related (Seepersad and Williams, 2016).

Table 36: Member of a Gang (N=761; percent)

Sample	7.0
Convicted	10.2
On remand	4.1
25 or younger	10.4
Older than 25	5.0
Male (overall)	7.3
Carrera	24.3
ECRC	10.3
Golden Grove	9.5
MSP	5.1
Remand	4.7
Port of Spain	3.6
Female (Women's Prison)	1.9

Of the sample, 38.8 percent said they knew of gang members who committed offenses because gang leaders ordered them to do so from inside the prison. When asked the reasons gang members committed offenses, 32.9 percent felt that loyalty to the gang was the main reason, followed by gaining a reputation (27.6 percent) and fear of retaliation against family members or friends (11.4 percent) (Table 37). Of the sample, 56.5 percent said that they were aware of gangs in the prisons, either presently or in the past.

Table 37: Reasons Gang Members Commit Offenses (n=295; percent)

Loyalty to the gang	32.9
To gain a reputation	27.6
Fear of retaliation against family or friends	11.4
Fear of personal retaliation outside the prison	7.5
Fear of retaliation if they are imprisoned	3.5
DK/Other	17.1

Note: Responses were provided by 295 respondents. A total of 456 responses were provided and the percentages shown are based on the number of responses, not the number of respondents.

Legal Procedures and Criminal Process

This section examines the legal procedures involved in navigating the pretrial and trial phases of inmates' incarceration, thus providing insight from the "clients" of the legal system. As the users, inmates are intimately familiar with the functioning of the system and may be ideally positioned to tell us what is working well and what is working not so well, and may be able to offer suggestions for improvement. The insight that inmates provide can allow for an assessment of whether due process of law was upheld, how the judicial system operates, whether civil rights of offenders are protected, and other factors of relevance to the judicial process.⁸

Pretrial Period

Of the respondents, 35.2 percent were on remand and 16.3 percent said that they were currently on trial and had not yet been sentenced (Table 38). On average, inmates had been in prison for 4.4 years, with those on remand being in for an average of 4.2 years, those on trial for an average of 4.6 years, and those already sentenced having spent an average of 4.7 years in prison.

Table 38: Stage in the Trial Process (N=761)

	Percent	Average Time Spent in Prison (years)
On remand	35.2	4.2
On trial	16.3	4.6
Sentenced	47.0	4.7
DK/Other	1.5	1.9
Average		4.4

When asked how much time elapsed between committing their crime and being arrested, the highest proportion were arrested between a day and a week (20.4 percent), followed by less than an hour (17.1 percent), while 10.0 percent were arrested more than a year after their offense (Table 39).

Table 39: Time between Offense and Arrest (N=761; percent)

Less than 1 hour	17.1
Between 1 hour and 3 hours	7.9
Between 3 hours and 1 day	8.3
Between 1 day and 1 week	20.4
Between 1 week and 1 month	12.9
Between 1 and 6 months	13.3
Between 6 months and 1 year	7.9
More than 1 year	10.0
DK	2.2

⁸ It would be useful to cross-reference the findings in this section with administrative data from the prisons or courts. Unfortunately, however, the Prison Service does not maintain administrative data on inmates' trials and analysis of court data was outside of the scope of this study.

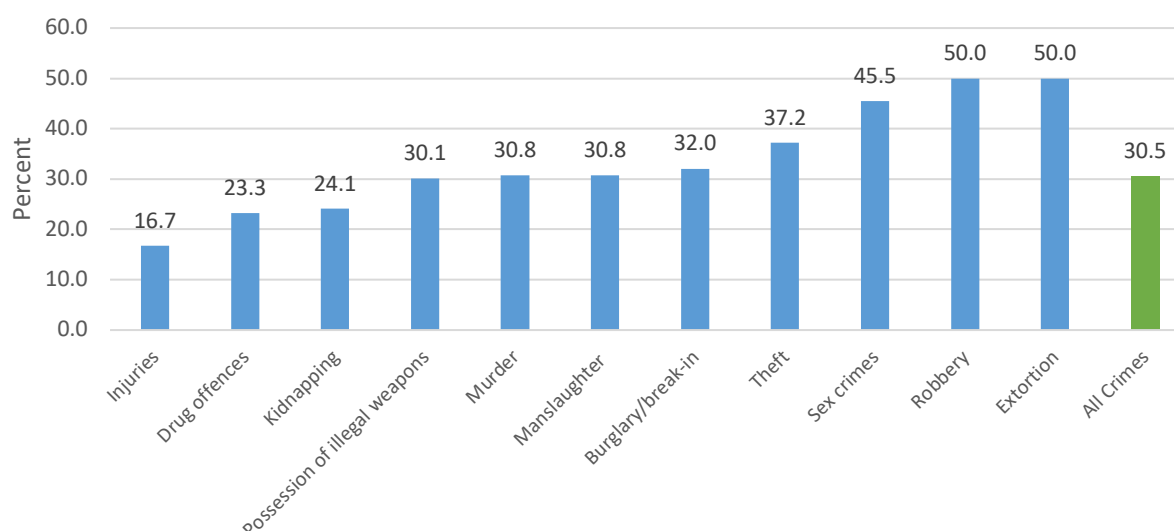
Of the respondents, only 14.2 percent were shown a warrant before they were arrested. The majority of the respondents (90.8 percent) were taken to a police station after their arrest. When asked how many nights they spent at the police station, 1.7 percent did not spend any time, 21.1 percent spent one or two nights, 45.7 percent between three nights and a week, and 21.4 percent spent more than a week. Interestingly, only 35.2 percent of the respondents were informed that they had the right to an attorney.

When asked if anyone hit them or used physical force to compel them to testify or to change their statement while at the police station (Table 40), 30.5 percent of the respondents said yes, with a larger proportion of males (31.7 percent) than females (13.5 percent) experiencing such a use of force and more of the younger inmates (41.3 percent) than older ones (29.2 percent). Convicts (30.3 percent) and inmates on remand (30.8 percent) experienced such a use of force a similar amount. The highest levels of use of force occurred with inmates at the MSP (37.7 percent), followed by Remand (31.1 percent), Carrera (30.0 percent), and Golden Grove (27.0 percent). The lowest level applied to the Women's Prison (13.5 percent).

Table 40: Force Used to Compel Testimony or Change Statement (N=761; percent)

Sample	30.5
Convicted	30.3
On remand	30.8
25 or younger	41.3
Older than 25	29.2
Male	31.7
MSP	37.7
Remand	31.1
Carrera	30.0
Golden Grove	27.0
Port of Spain	26.1
ECRC	25.6
Female (Women's Prison)	13.5

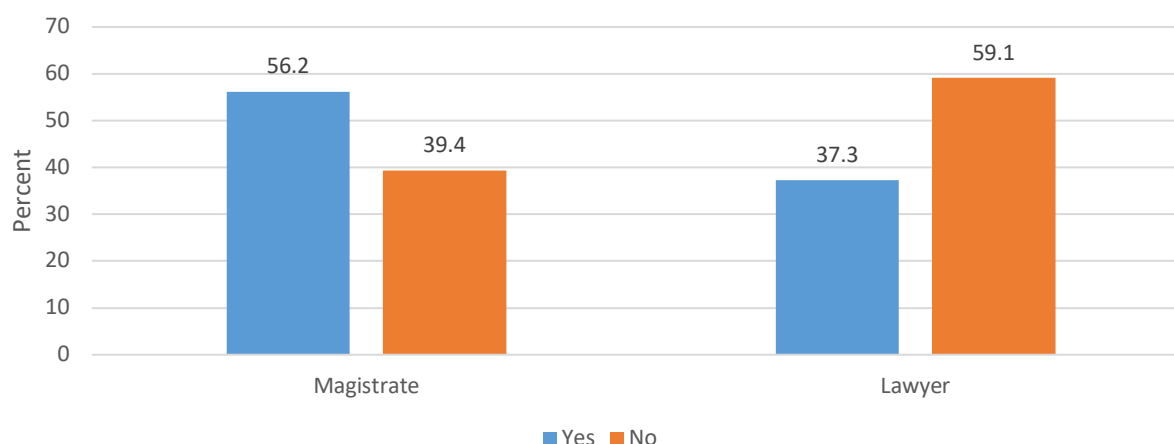
Use of force to compel testimony or change a statement was disaggregated by type of crime (Figure 12). Of the respondents who committed robbery or extortion, 50.0 percent experienced physical force for such a purpose, followed by sex crimes (45.5 percent), theft (37.2 percent), and burglaries/break-ins (32.0 percent). The crime with the lowest levels of physical force for such purposes was injuries (16.7 percent).

Figure 12: Force Used to Compel Testimony or Change Statement by Type of Crime (N=761)

Note: The crimes of scam, misappropriation, and fraud; and identity theft were excluded because the low number of inmates who committed these offenses would lead to unreliable estimates of the use of force.

Criminal Justice Treatment

On average inmates were able to present their preliminary statement to a judicial officer within 12.7 days of arrival at the prison (range 0 to 356 days). Further, 56.2 percent of the respondents indicated that a magistrate was present and 37.3 percent indicated that their lawyer was present when they gave their preliminary statement (Figure 13).

Figure 13: Magistrate and/or Lawyer Present for Preliminary Statement (n=655)

Note: Respondents who did not give a preliminary statement were not required to provide an answer to this question.

During the preliminary statement, 30.4 percent of respondents were informed that they could be given a reduced sentence if they pled guilty but 67.3 percent were not given this information. Of the respondents,

39.4 percent pled guilty and 59.6 percent did not plead guilty. Looking at pleading guilty by being informed that a guilty plea would lead to a reduced sentence (Table 41) suggests that inmates who were informed were more likely to plead guilty. More specifically, of the inmates who were informed, 50.8 percent pled guilty compared to 34.1 percent of those who were not informed of the possibility of a reduced sentence. This relationship is statistically significant ($\chi^2(4)=78.9$, $p < .001$). It is also important to note that the time spent in pretrial detention can impact the decision to plead guilty, and 46.5 percent indicated that it did have an effect while 53.1 percent said it was not a factor.

Table 41: Pled Guilty by Informed that Guilty Plea Would Lead to a Reduced Sentence (n=655; percent)

	DK	Pled Guilty	Did Not Plead Guilty
DK	20.0	46.7	33.3
Informed of reduced sentence	0.5	50.8	48.7
Not informed of reduced sentence	0.5	34.1	65.5
Average	0.9	39.4	59.6

Note: Not all respondents answered both questions, thus the number of respondents for this table is not the full sample.

A larger proportion of males (40.0 percent) pled guilty than females (32.7 percent), but there was no age difference, with 40.3 percent of younger inmates and 38.6 percent of older inmates pleading guilty. There were differences according to the crime for which inmates were incarcerated (Table 42), with 75.0 percent of those incarcerated for burglaries and break-ins pleading guilty, followed by drug-related crimes (65.6 percent), possession of illegal weapons (52.7 percent), robbery (52.6 percent), extortion (50 percent), and theft (46.2 percent). The crimes for which inmates were least likely to plead guilty were murder (14.3 percent) and sexual offenses (25.0 percent).

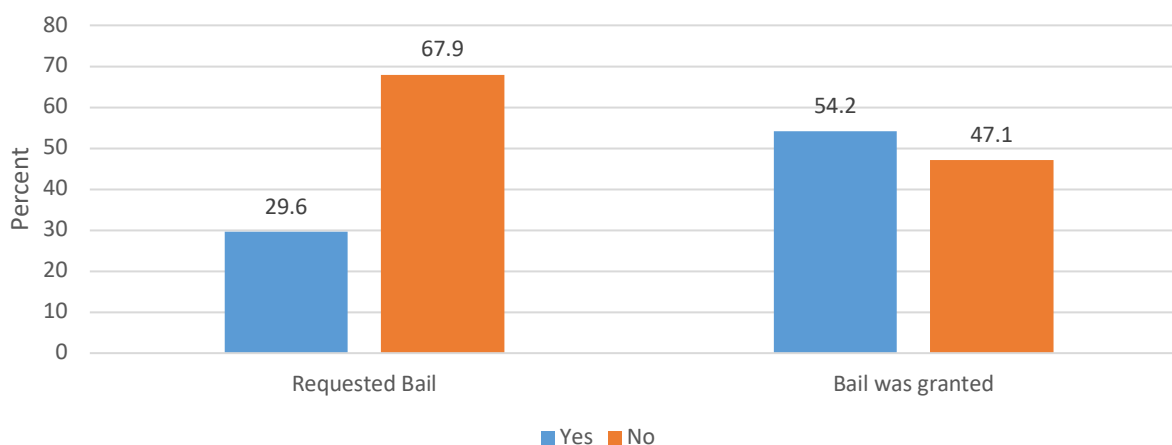
Table 42: Pled Guilty by Crime (N=761; percent)

Burglaries/break-ins	75.0
Drug-related crimes	65.6
Possession of illegal weapons	52.7
Robbery/ aggravated robbery	52.6
Extortion	50.0
Theft/aggravated theft	46.2
Manslaughter	36.4
Injuries	33.3
Scam, misappropriation, fraud	33.3
Kidnapping	28.6
Sex crimes	25.0
Intentional homicide/murder	14.3
Other	53.0
Sample	39.4

Of the respondents, 29.6 percent said that they or their lawyer requested bail while 67.9 percent did not (Figure 14). The judge granted bail for 54.2 percent of those who made the request but denied bail for

47.1 percent. Bail was set at between \$2,000 and \$5,000,000 (average=\$198,197, median=\$100,000), and of those who were granted bail, 43.2 percent were able to pay the required amount while the rest were unable to pay.⁹ The average bail for inmates who stated that they were able to pay was \$142,020, while the average for those unable to pay was \$245,746.

Figure 14: Requesting and Being Granted Bail*



*n=758 for requesting bail and n=225 for being granted bail.

Of the inmates who were denied bail, 37.5 percent were denied because they were repeat offenders, 27.7 percent had committed very serious offenses, 3.6 percent were considered dangerous, and 2.7 percent were believed to pose an escape risk (Table 43). Some inmates (4.5 percent) were denied bail because the judge thought that they could hinder the court process, for example by threatening or bribing witnesses.

When asked whether they were offered other penalties, only 3.8 percent of respondents said that community service, probation, fines, work, or some other alternative to prison was proposed.

Table 43: Reasons Bail Denied (n=106; percent)

Because the inmate was a reoffender	37.5
Because a serious offense was involved	27.7
Danger that the inmate would hinder court procedures	4.5
Offender was considered dangerous	3.6
Prison escape risk	2.7
DK/Other	24.1

Note: The respondents who answered this question provided a total of 112 responses.

⁹ Some inmates may have been granted bail and paid the required sum but were still in prison because of other charges or prison pre-release processes, among other reasons.

When asked how often they saw their attorneys (Table 44), 0.9 percent said that they saw them almost daily, 2.9 percent saw them weekly, 3.7 percent saw them once every 15 days, and 34.2 percent saw them once a month. Of the respondents, 23.9 percent claimed that they almost never saw their lawyers and 25.2 percent did not have lawyers.

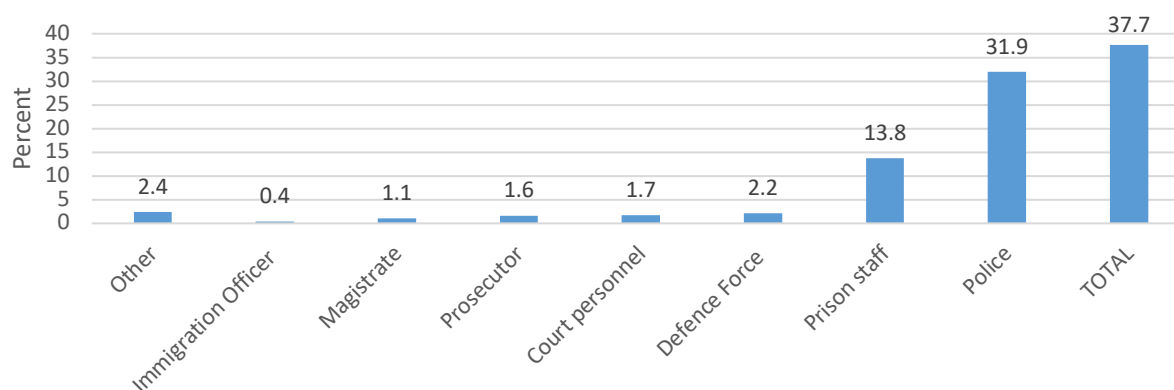
Table 44: Frequency of Lawyer Visits (N=761; percent)

Almost daily	0.9
Once a week	2.9
Every 15 days	3.7
Once a month	34.2
Almost never	23.9
Did not have a lawyer	25.2
DK/Other	9.2

Respondents were asked a series of questions to assess their opinions on bribes and to determine whether there were attempts to elicit bribes from them. With respect to their opinions, 50.7 percent felt that if they had given money to law enforcement personnel they would have been released, while 40.1 percent did not think so. Apart from opinions, data were collected on actual requests for bribes. Note that inmates may hold grudges for or may dislike correctional and other criminal justice staff and thus provide responses that exaggerate estimates of such requests. However, as with other sensitive questions, the respondents were asked to give honest responses.

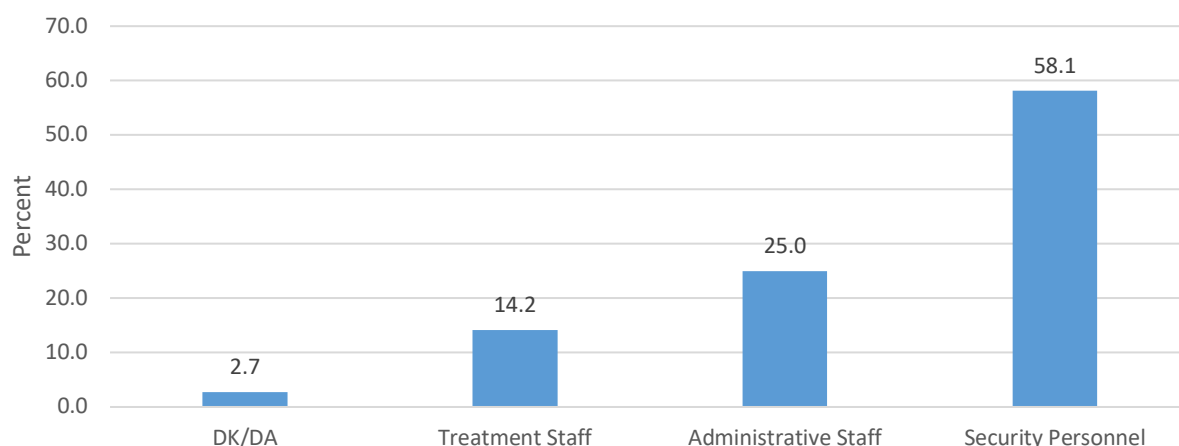
When asked whether certain officials asked them for money or their possessions (Figure 15), 31.9 percent of respondents claimed that police officers attempted to elicit bribes, 13.8 percent made the same claim about prison staff, 2.2 percent about Defence Force staff, 1.7 percent about court staff, and 1.6 percent about prosecutors. Overall, 37.7 percent of inmates claimed that they were approached for bribes at some point while in custody. Males (38.4 percent) were more likely to be approached for bribes than females (28.8 percent) and younger inmates (43.0 percent) more likely than older ones (34.9 percent). Roughly the same proportion of inmates on remand (38.7 percent) and convicted (37.5 percent) inmates were approached for bribes.

Figure 15: Requests for Money or Possessions (N=761)



Of the respondents who indicated that prison staff asked them for money or their possessions, 58.1 percent identified security personnel, 25.0 percent said it was administrative staff, and 14.2 percent indicated it was treatment staff (Figure 16).

Figure 16: Prison Staff Who Requested Money or Possessions (n=105)



Note: The respondents who answered this question provided a total of 148 responses.

Of the respondents who were sentenced at the time of the survey (n=358), 14.5 percent were on bail at the time of sentencing while 81.3 percent were in jail. The average time elapsed between arrest and sentencing was 23.1 months. The average sentence length was 5.8 years and respondents had 0 to 78 years left to serve, with an average of 1.9 years. Of note, 51.7 percent of sentenced respondents expected their sentence to be reduced or that they would be able to leave prison early.

Trial Process

Of the respondents who were on trial, 36.7 percent said that they understood quite a lot about what was happening throughout their trial and 27.6 percent understood a lot; however, 20.7 percent only understood a little and 13.7 percent admitted that they understood very little of what was going on (Table 45).

Table 45: Understanding of Trial Proceedings (n=482; percent)

Quite a lot	36.7
A lot	27.6
A little	20.7
Very little	13.7
DK	1.2

The average number of times that the respondents spoke to the judge or magistrate throughout their trial was 4.3 times. Since the average time spent in prison by respondents on trial without a verdict was 4.6 years, on average respondents had the opportunity to speak to a judge or magistrate once a year. Of those who spoke with a magistrate or judge, 13.7 percent felt that the judge/magistrate listened quite a

lot to what they had to say and 26.6 percent felt that they listened a lot; however, 26.6 percent felt that the judge/magistrate listened only a little and 30.6 percent felt that they listened very little (Table 46).

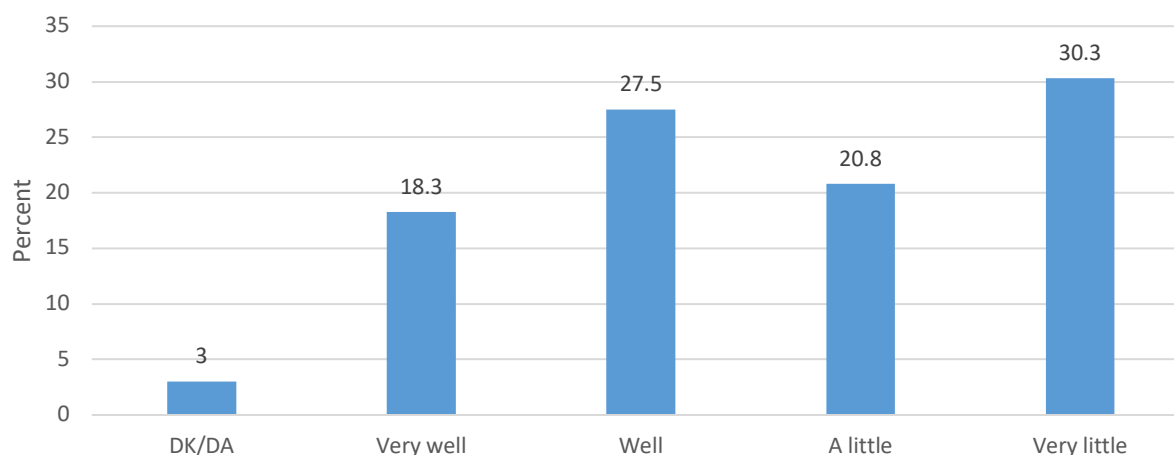
Table 46: Magistrate Listened (n=350; percent)

DK	2.6
Quite a lot	13.7
A Lot	26.6
A Little	26.6
Very little	30.6

On average, the respondents had 1.7 lawyers represent them throughout their legal process and 33.5 percent used public defenders while 66.5 percent used private lawyers. When asked to rate the performance of their attorneys (Figure 17), 18.3 percent felt that their attorneys represented them very well and 27.5 percent felt that they were well represented; however, 20.8 percent felt that they were only represented a little and 30.3 percent felt that they were represented very little.

Of the inmates who had begun the legal process, 24.7 percent said that they had no attorney to represent them. When asked why they did not have a lawyer, 38.6 percent said that they did not have the money to hire one, 5.3 percent said that they did not know that they could use a public lawyer, and 7.4 percent indicated that they were not told that they had the right to an attorney.

Figure 17: Quality of Defense (n=567)



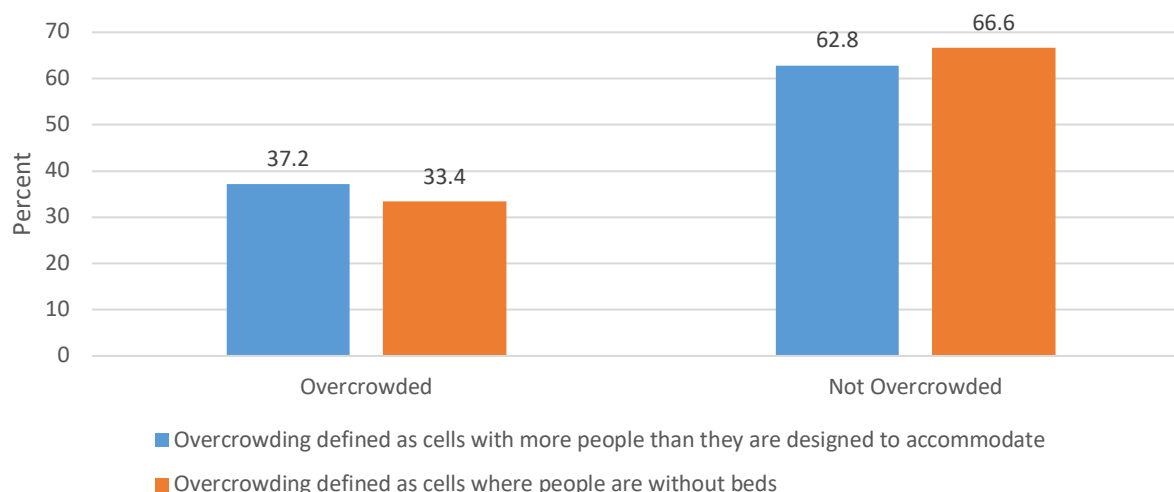
Prison Conditions

This section examines the living conditions of inmates in prisons in Trinidad and Tobago. Inmates provided a detailed picture of their lives in confinement in terms of sleeping space, food and water, access to healthcare, and to what extent the prisons offer effective education and work services. Questions attempted to assess the state of prison infrastructure, the effectiveness of prison staff, and the role that families can play in providing support for inmates.

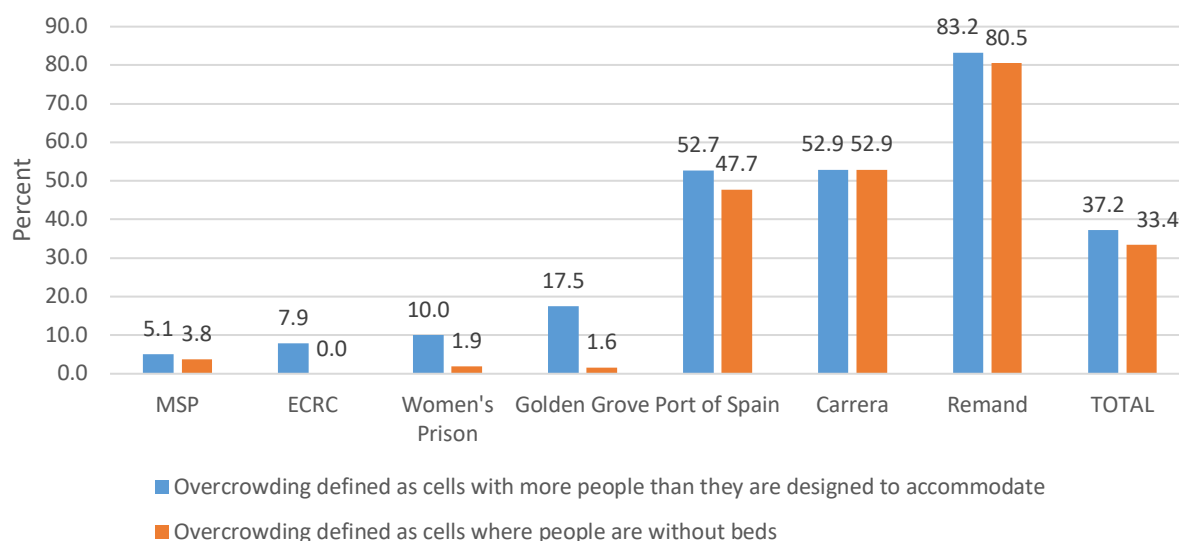
Overcrowding and Hygiene Conditions

Prison overcrowding was measured in a couple of ways (Figure 18). First, respondents were asked how many people slept in the same cell as them and how many people the cell was designed to accommodate. A cell was considered overcrowded if there were more people sleeping there than it was meant to accommodate. Using this method, 37.2 percent of respondents said that they resided in overcrowded cells while 62.8 percent did not. Second, respondents were asked how many people in their cell did not have a bed. A cell was considered overcrowded if someone did not have a bed. Using this method, 33.4 percent of respondents lived in overcrowded cells while 66.6 percent did not.

Figure 18: Overcrowding (N=761)



Disaggregated by prison (Figure 19), the most overcrowded prisons were Remand, Carrera, and Port of Spain, while the least overcrowded prisons were the MSP, the ECRC, the Women's Prison, and Golden Grove. More specifically, defining overcrowding based on more inmates than a cell was designed to accommodate, Remand's overcrowding rate was 83.2 percent, Carrera's was 52.9 percent, and Port of Spain's was 52.7 percent. Defining overcrowding as one or more people not having a bed, Remand's overcrowding rate was 80.5 percent, Carrera's was 52.9 percent, and Port of Spain's was 47.7 percent.

Figure 19: Overcrowding, by Prison (N=761)

Of note, based on data from 2018, the Prison Service can accommodate 4,886 inmates but housed 3,935 inmates and thus, as a whole, the prisons in Trinidad and Tobago are not overcrowded. Further, according to data from the Prison Service, the only prisons that are overcrowded are Port of Spain (148 percent overcrowding rate), Tobago (77 percent), Carrera (76 percent), and Remand (69 percent). The survey data is consistent with this in that Remand, Carrera, and Port of Spain also come out as those prisons with the highest overcrowding rates. By way of comparison, data from the World Prison Brief¹⁰ indicate that in 2016 Canada had a 6.1 percent overcrowding rate, in 2018 the United Kingdom's rate was 10.2 percent, and in 2018 Guyana's was 34.1 percent. In contrast, there was no overcrowding in the United States (2016 data), Barbados (2014), Jamaica (2016), or Suriname (2014).

Despite the levels of overcrowding just cited, when inmates were asked to indicate where they slept the previous night, 84.9 percent said that they slept on a bed, 5.0 percent slept on a mattress, 0.9 percent slept on a hammock, and 7.1 percent slept on the floor, while 2.1 percent slept in other locations. Of note, cells can be overcrowded even if sleeping accommodation is provided for the majority of people. For example, a cell may be designed for a specific number of people but fitted with sleeping accommodation for a larger number of people.

Respondents were also asked whether the Prison Service provided them with certain specified hygiene and other personal items necessary for living (Table 47). Personal hygiene items were more likely to be provided by the Prison Service than other types of items. For example, 61.6 percent of the inmates received soap from the prison, 61.4 percent received toilet paper, 52.2 percent received toothpaste, and 44.9 percent received toothbrushes. In contrast, only 17.2 percent got sheets from the prison, 15.2 percent got clothes, 7.6 percent got shoes, and 9.3 percent got towels. The majority of the respondents claimed that personal items (e.g., clothes, sheets, and shoes) were provided by family or some other

¹⁰ <https://www.prisonstudies.org/>

source, such as friends. Of note, 93.7 percent of the respondents acknowledged that the Prison Service provided them with a bed or mattress.

Table 47: Specified Items Received from Prison Service (N=761; percent)

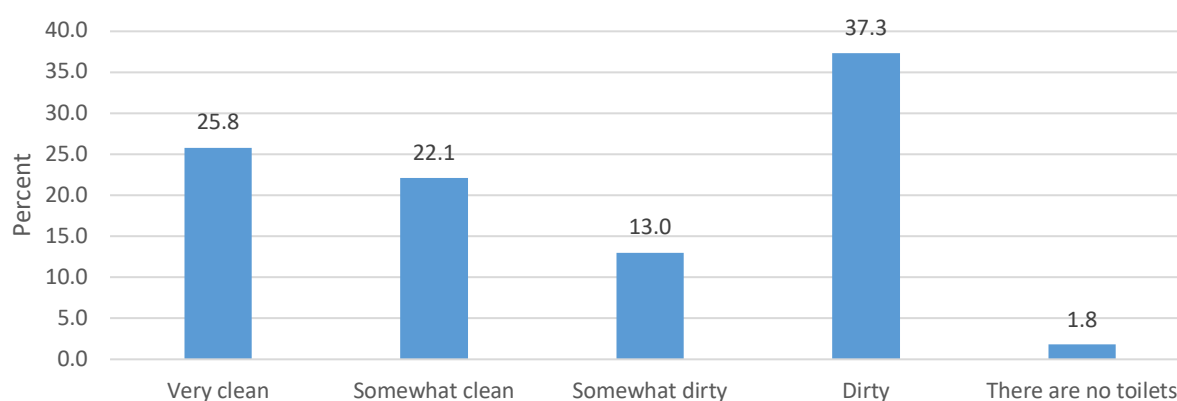
Bed or mattress	93.7
Tampons or Pads*	63.5
Soap	61.6
Toilet paper	61.4
Toothpaste	52.2
Toothbrush	44.9
Deodorant	25.5
Sheets	17.2
Clothes	15.2
Towel	9.3
Pillow	8.3
Shoes	7.6
Blanket	6.7
Razor	6.6

*Applies to females only (n=52).

When asked how many times per week they were able to take a shower, the average was 14 times, which suggests that inmates could shower on average twice per day.

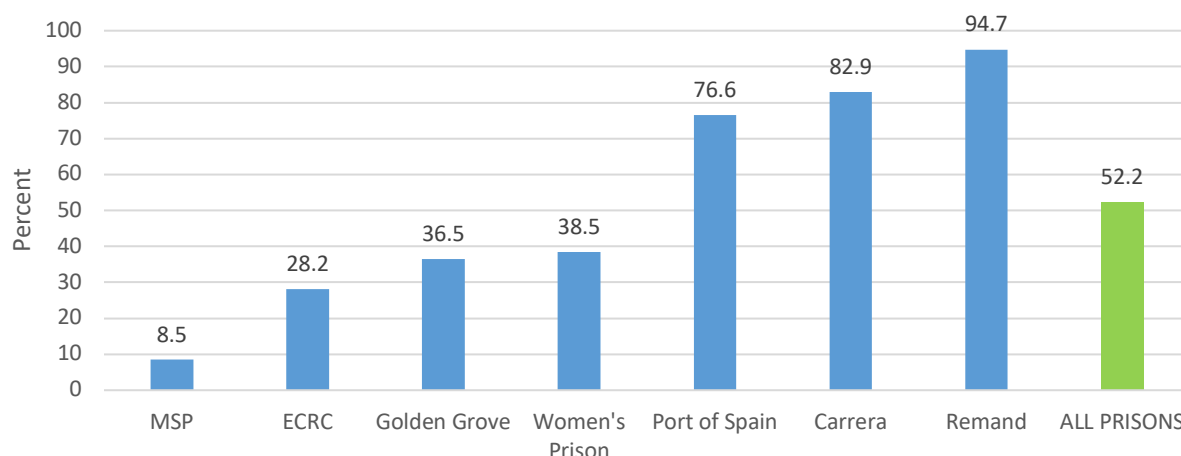
When asked about the cleanliness of the toilets (Figure 20), 25.8 percent of the respondents said the toilets were very clean and 22.1 percent said they were somewhat clean compared to 13.0 percent who said they were somewhat dirty and 37.3 percent who said they were dirty. Note that 1.8 percent said that there were no toilets.

Figure 20: Cleanliness of Toilets (N=761)



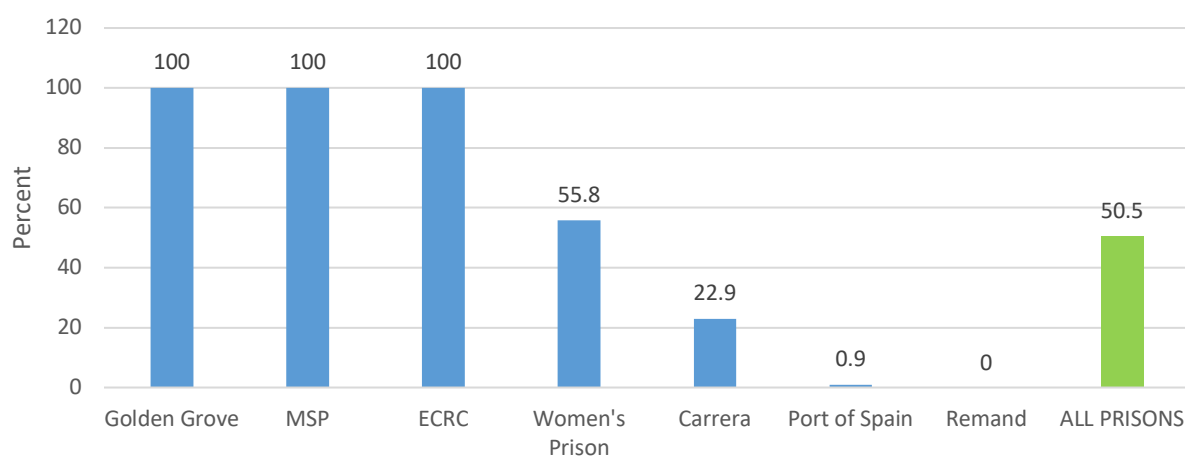
To better understand the state of the toilet facilities, the somewhat dirty, dirty, and there are no toilets responses were combined. Of the respondents, 52.2 percent said the toilets met this criteria, thus signaling that the toilet facilities needed attention (Figure 21). This was particularly true at Remand, where 94.7 percent of the inmates said that the toilets met this criteria, followed by Carrera (82.9 percent), and Port of Spain (76.6 percent). Facilities where a low proportion of inmates recorded disapproval of the toilet facilities were the MSP (8.5 percent) and the ECRC (28.2 percent).

Figure 21: Toilets Are Dirty or There Are No Toilets (N=761)



Respondents were also asked whether they had access to toilets at night, and 50.5 percent said they did but 49.3 percent said that they did not (Figure 22). Disaggregated by prison, all inmates at Golden Grove, the MSP, and the ECRC had access to toilet facilities at night. However, at the Women's Prison, only 55.8 percent of inmates had such access at night, at Carrera this dropped to 22.9 percent, and at Port of Spain to 0.9 percent. At Remand no inmates had access to toilets at night. The majority of inmates who needed to use toilet facilities at night but had no access indicated that they either used pails or newspapers.

Figure 22: Access to Toilets at Night (N=761)



Of the respondents, 78.8 percent said they had enough water to drink and 20.9 percent said they did not. When asked about the water quality (Table 48), 1.8 percent said it was very good, 6.2 percent said it was good, and 27.5 percent said it was normal, however 30.5 percent said it was poor and 32.6 percent said it was very poor.

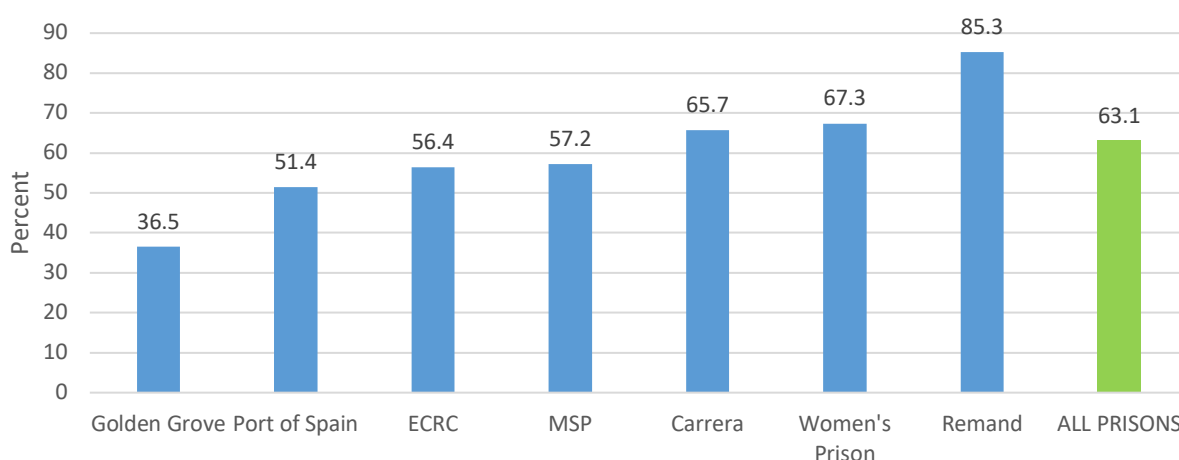
When asked to rate the quality of the food they were served (Table 48), 0.3 percent said it was very good, 2.1 percent said it was good, and 8.1 percent said it was normal, however 17.9 percent said it was poor and 71.6 percent said it was very poor. Prison staff indicated that the laws that govern food preparation and quality are followed. In some instances, the laws specify measures (such as reducing the amount of salt used) that may reduce the tastiness of the food, but also reduce the incidence of diseases such as hypertension. Also, special diets are prepared for inmates with specific dietary requirements, such as diabetes.

Table 48: Quality of Food and Water (N=761; percent)

	Water	Food
Very good	1.8	0.3
Good	6.2	2.1
Normal	27.5	8.1
Poor	30.5	17.9
Very poor	32.6	71.6

The percent of respondents in each prison who felt that the quality of water was poor or very poor is shown in Figure 23. When all prisons are considered simultaneously, 63.1 percent of inmates felt that the water quality was poor or very poor. The prison with the lowest proportion who felt this way was Golden Grove (36.5 percent). The prisons with the largest proportions who felt this way were Remand (85.3 percent), the Women's Prison (67.3 percent), and Carrera (65.7 percent).

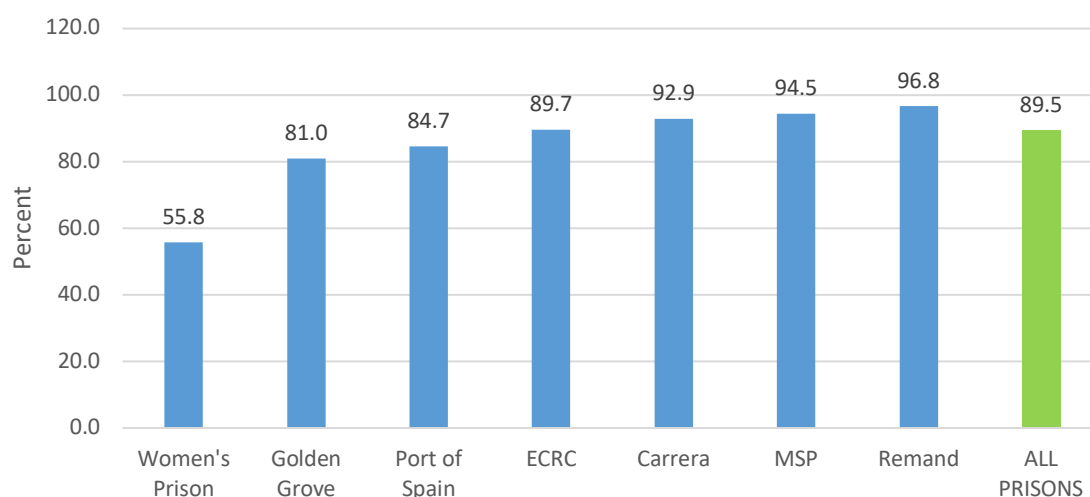
Figure 23: Water Quality Is Poor or Very Poor by Prison (N=761)



The percent of respondents in each prison who felt that the food was poor or very poor is shown in Figure 24. When all prisons are considered simultaneously, 89.5 percent of inmates felt that the food was

poor or very poor. The prison with the lowest proportion who felt this way was the Women’s Prison (55.8 percent). The prisons with the largest proportions who felt this way were Remand (96.8 percent), the MSP (94.5 percent), and Carrera (92.9 percent), though other than the Women’s Prison, over 80 percent of inmates in each prison said the food was poor or very poor. It is noteworthy that Remand had the largest proportion of respondents who felt that both the food and water quality were poor.

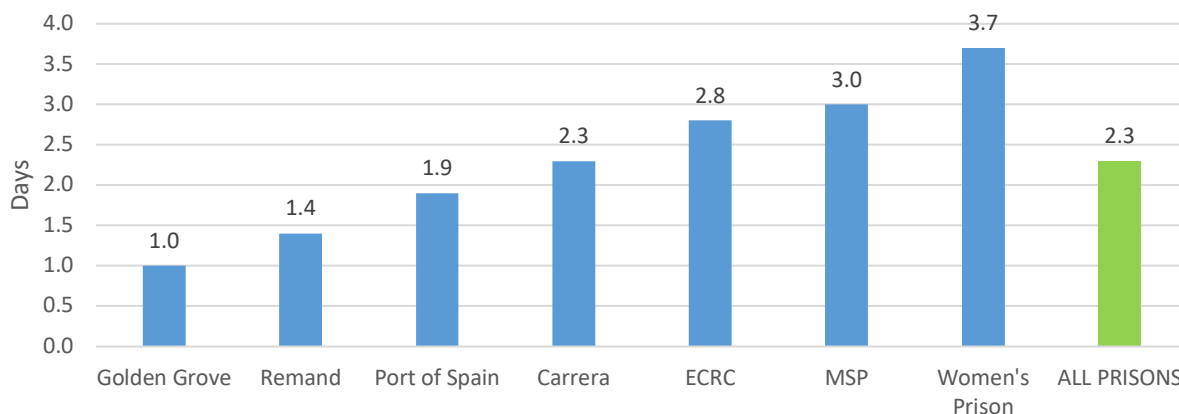
Figure 24: Food Is Poor or Very Poor by Prison (N=761)



Healthcare in Prison

Of the respondents, 62.4 percent said that they received medical care from the prison when they got sick and 36.0 percent did not. On average, it took 2.3 days from the time they told staff that they were sick to the time they got to see a doctor or nurse (Figure 25). Disaggregated by prison, inmates accessed healthcare the quickest at Golden Grove (average wait time of 1 day), while the longest wait time was at the Women’s Prison (3.7 days). Note that in Trinidad and Tobago healthcare is provided free of charge at public hospitals and health facilities.

Figure 25: Average Wait Time to See a Doctor or Nurse (n=401)



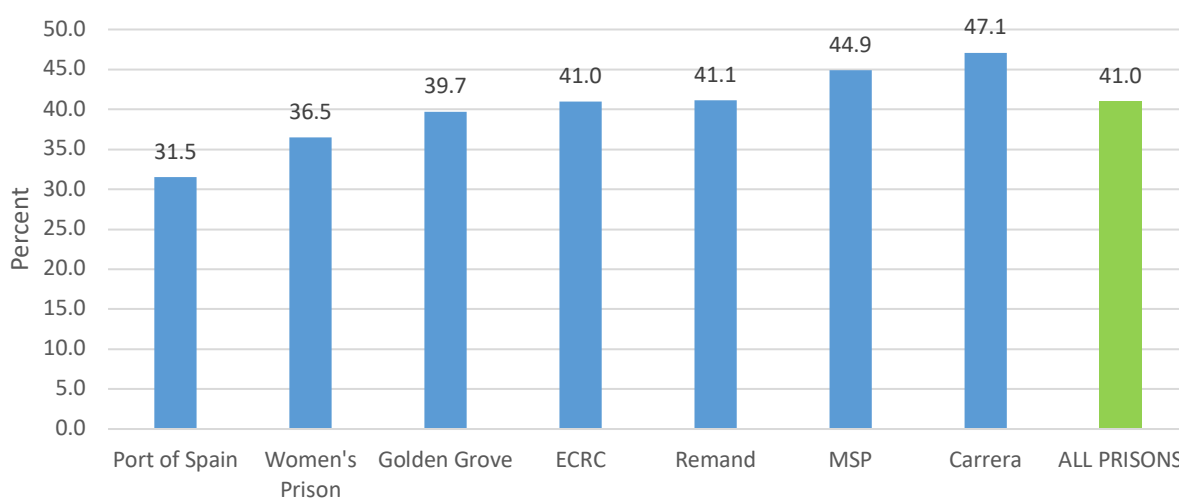
When asked to rate the medical care they received (Table 49), 1.2 percent said it was very good, 4.5 percent said it was good, and 14.1 percent said that it was normal. However, 22.6 percent said it was poor and 18.4 percent said it was very poor.

Table 49: Quality of Healthcare Received (n=462; percent)

Very good	1.2
Good	4.5
Normal	14.1
Poor	22.6
Very poor	18.4

Across all prisons, 41.0 percent of the inmates rated the quality of healthcare as poor or very poor. Disaggregated by prison (Figure 26), the lowest proportion of negative ratings came from Port of Spain at 31.5 percent of respondents and the highest proportions occurred at the MSP (44.9 percent) and Carrera (47.1 percent).

Figure 26: Quality of Healthcare Is Poor or Very Poor by Prison (n=462)



When asked how they got the medications they needed when they got sick (Table 50), 48.9 percent of the respondents said they got them from the prison and 34.0 percent from family. However, some inmates had to buy them with their own money (1.7 percent) or get them from other inmates (0.5 percent) and some indicated that they were unable to get the needed medications (5.8 percent).

Table 50: Obtained Necessary Medications from ____ (N=761; percent)

Prison supplies medication	48.9
Family members	34.0
Don't get them	5.8
Buy them with my own money	1.7
Other inmates	0.5
DK/Other	9.1

Respondents were asked to indicate what sicknesses they had experienced while in prison. Of the full sample, 41.7 percent said that they had the flu or other chest infections, 6.7 percent had stomach problems, 1.7 percent had depression or anxiety, and 0.3 percent had HIV/AIDS (Table 51). It is important to note that 50.8 percent of all respondents indicated that they received a test for HIV/AIDS.

Table 51: Ailments Inmates Experienced (N=761; percent)

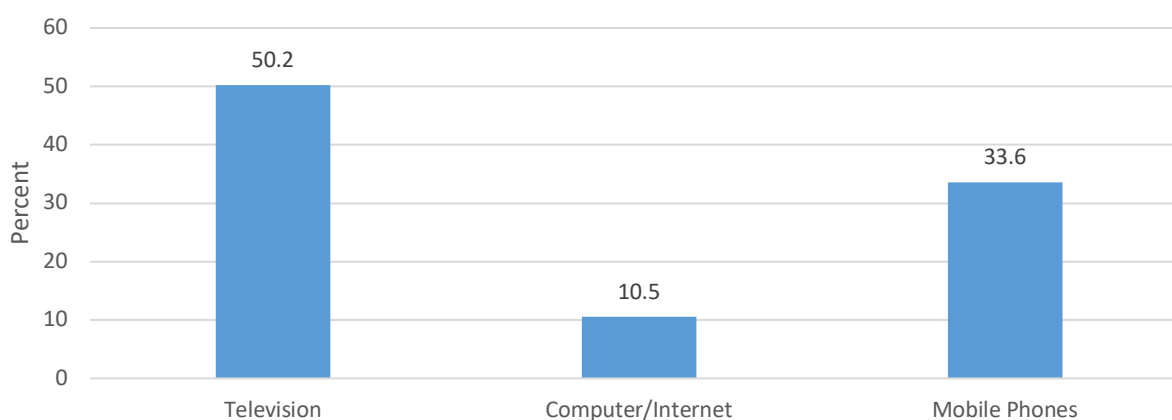
Flu or other chest infection	41.7
Stomach problems	6.7
Depression/anxiety	1.7
Tuberculosis	1.4
HIV/AIDS	0.3
Other	29.3

Of the respondents, 21.6 percent said that they received dental care when they needed it but 59.8 percent did not receive such care when it was needed. It is also instructive to note that 45.3 percent of inmates have been taken to hospital while in prison.

Activities and Entertainment in Prison

Of the inmates, 50.2 percent indicated that they can watch television (Figure 27), and on average they spent 4.2 hours a day watching TV. When asked about computer and internet use, only 10.5 percent of the respondents indicated that they had such access, but of those who did have access, on average they spent 8.8 hours a day on them. When asked about access to mobile phones, 33.6 percent of respondents claimed that they had access, with younger inmates (44.6 percent) more likely to have access than older inmates (27.7 percent), males (35.5 percent) more likely than females (9.6 percent), and inmates on remand (38.1 percent) more likely than convicts (29.5 percent). On average, even though in Trinidad and Tobago it is illegal for inmates to possess phones, each respondent knew of 66 other inmates who had used mobile phones while in prison over the previous month.

Figure 27: Activities that Can Be Accessed (N=761)



Families and Visits to Prison

Respondents were asked a series of questions to provide insight into family and conjugal connections and visits. Respondents were asked how often they spoke to relatives on the phone (Table 52) and most said fairly frequently, with 26.1 percent speaking to them every day, 9.1 percent twice a week, 6.7 percent once a week, and 3.9 percent once every 15 days. Some inmates (27.9 percent) never spoke to their relatives.

Table 52: Frequency of Phone Calls with Family Members (N=761; percent)

Every day	26.1
Twice a week	9.1
Once a week	6.7
Every 15 days	3.9
Once a month	16.6
Every 6 months	3.4
Less than twice a year	3.2
Never	27.9
DK	1.2
Other	1.7

Family visits happened less frequently than calls (Table 53), with 0.4 percent of respondents seeing family every day, 1.4 percent three times a week, 3.0 percent twice a week, 6.6 percent once per week, and 6.3 percent once every 15 days. However, 64.4 percent saw family members only once a month or less and 17.2 percent indicated that they never saw their family members.

Of the inmates who did not see their family members frequently (n=198), 22.7 percent said that their family members lived too far away and 13.6 percent said that their family lacked money. On the other hand, 5.6 percent indicated that they had no family, 4.5 percent said that their family did not want to see them, and 4.5 percent said that their family was upset with them.

Table 53: Frequency of Family Visits (N=761; percent)

Every day of the week	0.4
Three times a week	1.4
Twice a week	3.0
Once a week	6.6
Every 15 days	6.3
Once a month	43.0
Every 3 months	13.0
Once a year	8.4
Never	17.2
DK	0.4

When asked how well family members were treated when they visited the prison (Table 54), 5.9 percent of the respondents said they were treated very well, 19.1 percent said they were treated well, and

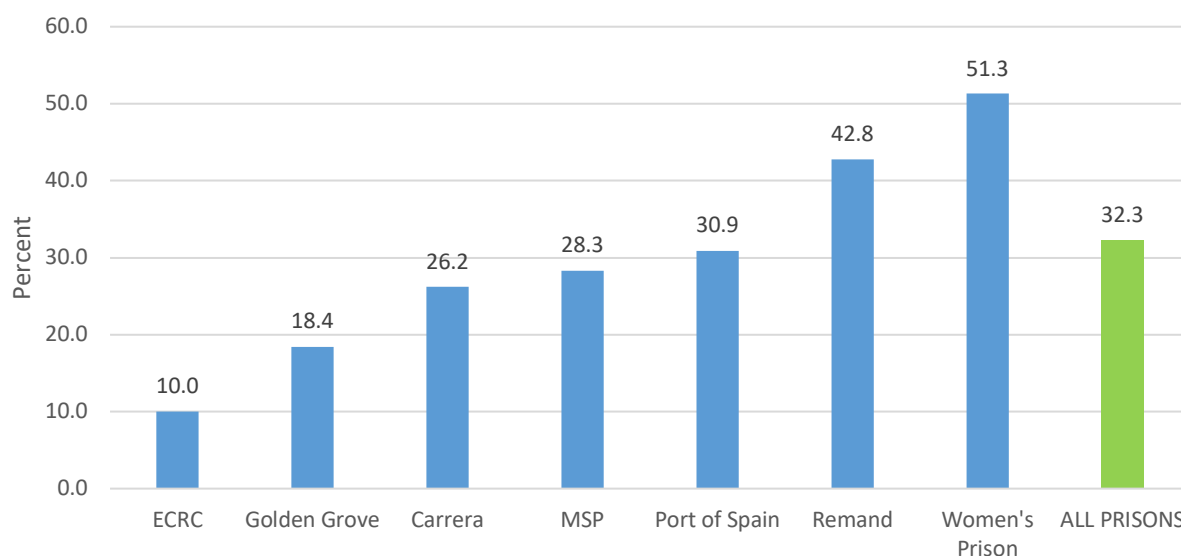
38.1 percent said they were treated 'so-so'. However, 18.4 percent said that family members were treated badly and 13.9 percent said they were treated very badly.

Table 54: Treatment of Family Members by Prison Staff (n=561; percent)

Very well	5.9
Well	19.1
So-so	38.1
Badly	18.4
Very badly	13.9
DK	4.6

Across all prisons, 32.3 percent of respondents claimed that their relatives were treated badly or very badly by prison staff (Figure 28). Disaggregated by prison, the ECRC had the lowest proportion of inmates who made this claim (10.0 percent), followed by Golden Grove (18.4 percent). In contrast, the Women's Prison had the highest proportion of inmates who felt that their family members were treated badly or very badly by staff (51.3 percent), followed by Remand (42.8 percent).

Figure 28: Family Members Treated Badly or Very Badly by Prison Staff (n=561)

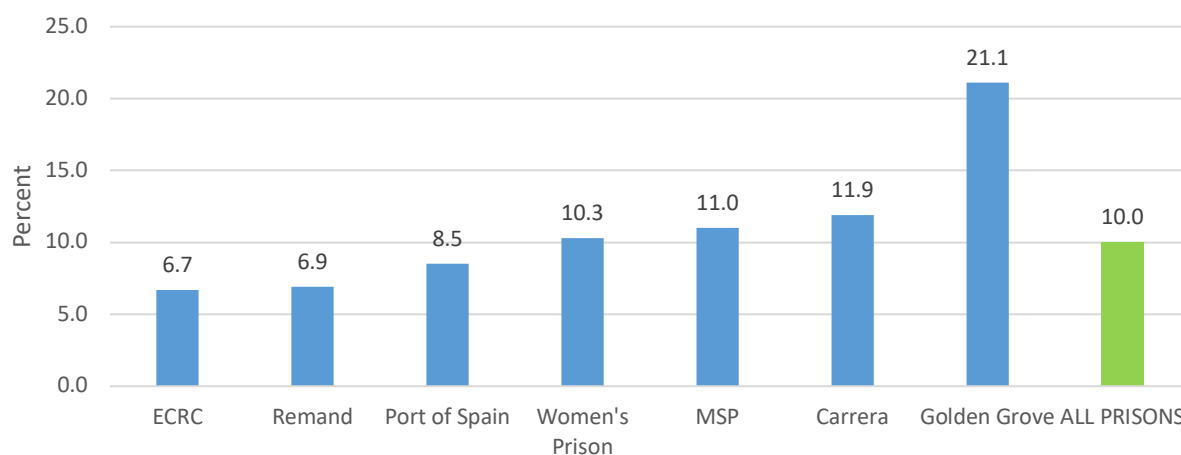


When asked if their relatives had to pay for some specified things to enter the prison (Table 55), 0.4 percent of the respondents claimed that relatives had to pay to enter the prison, 2.1 percent claimed they had to pay to bring in work materials, and 10.7 percent claimed that they had to pay to bring in food, though it was unclear whether responses referred to food purchased outside or inside of the prison. Since conjugal visits are not allowed in the prisons in Trinidad and Tobago, it is not surprising that respondents indicated that family members did not have to pay for such visits.

Table 55: When Visiting, Relatives Had to Pay to ____ (n=561; percent)

Bring in food	10.7
Bring in forbidden items	10.0
Get other items through	8.0
Bring in work materials	2.1
Enter the prison	0.4
Conjugal visits	0.0

Of the respondents who received visitors, 10.0 percent claimed that family members had to pay to bring forbidden items into the prisons (Figure 29). Disaggregated by prison, the largest proportion of inmates who made this claim was at Golden Grove (21.1 percent), followed by Carrera (11.9 percent) and the MSP (11.0 percent). Of course, these figures imply that forbidden items can enter the prisons, but having said this, it should be acknowledged that only a very small number of inmates claimed that family members could bring in forbidden items once they paid. Across all prisons, only 56 respondents of the 561 who had visits from family members (10.0 percent) made this claim.

Figure 29: Family Members Had to Pay to Bring in Forbidden Items, by Prison (n=561)

When asked whether family members supported them by bringing in specified items within the previous six months (Table 56), 93.6 percent said they received clothes and/or shoes from family members, followed by medicines (44.9 percent) and food (33.2 percent). Fewer respondents received work materials or tools (8.4 percent) and money (3.4 percent).

Table 56: Within Previous Six Months, Family Provided ____ (n=561; percent)

Clothes and/or shoes	93.6
Medicines	44.9
Food	33.2
Work materials or tools	8.4
Money	3.4
Other	9.1

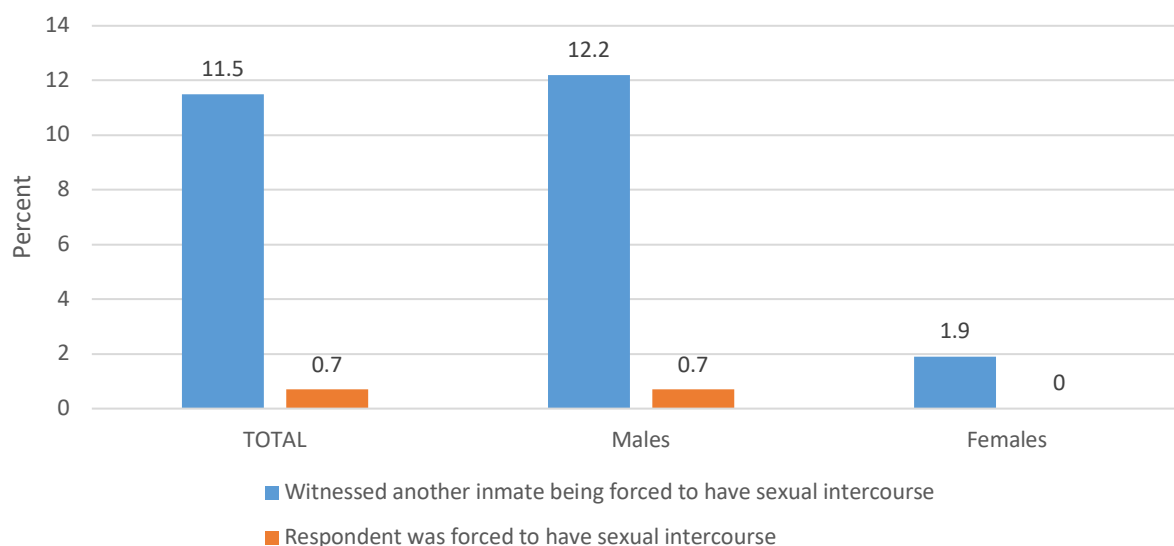
When asked how much money they spent each month on personal needs within the prison, the average was \$1,925.

Sexual Life of Inmates

When asked whether they had conjugal visits within the previous six months, a very small proportion of the inmates (0.5 percent) said that they had; however, conjugal visits are not allowed in the prisons of Trinidad and Tobago, so they may have misunderstood the meaning of the word conjugal. When asked whether they had sexual relations in prison with any person, apart from their spouse or partner, who had visited within the previous six months, again only a very small proportion (0.8 percent) said that they had.

When asked whether, since their arrest, they had witnessed another inmate being forced to have sexual intercourse with other people (Figure 30), 11.5 percent said they had, with males (12.2 percent) claiming to have seen it more than females (1.9 percent). When asked whether, since their arrest, they had been forced to have sexual relations in prison, 0.7 percent of the sample said that they had, with 0.7 percent of males and 0 percent of females saying yes (Figure 30). The data also show that 0.3 percent of inmates on remand and 1.1 percent of convicts were forced to have sexual relations, while a similar proportion of younger (0.7 percent) and older (0.6 percent) inmates were forced to have sexual relations.

Figure 30: Forced Sexual Intercourse in Prison (n=759)



When female inmates were asked if they were using some form of contraception to avoid pregnancy, 5.8 percent said yes and 94.2 percent said no. When asked whether they had been forced to take some form of contraception, all respondents said no.

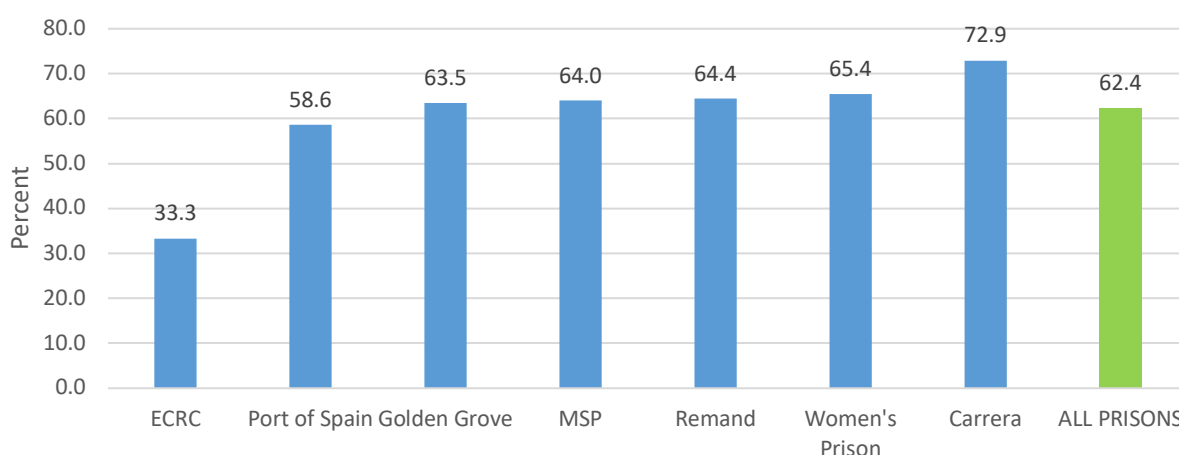
When asked about gynecological examinations in prison, 32.7 percent of female respondents said that they had had an examination, while 67.3 percent said they had not.

Safety in Prison

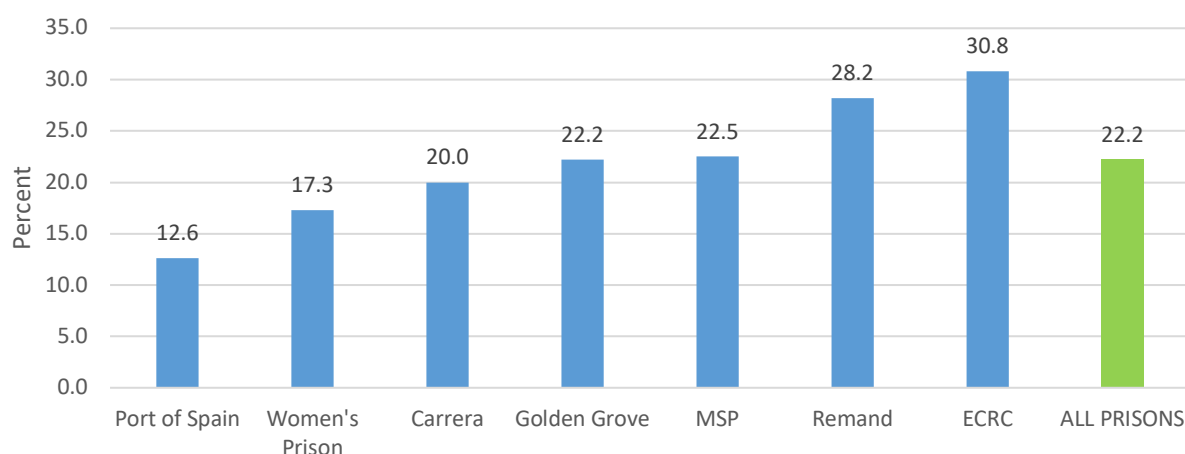
Several indicators were used to assess safety in prison. First, respondents were asked whether they felt safer, just as safe, or less safe in prison compared to in their homes. Of the respondents, 4.2 percent said that they felt safer, 13.8 percent felt just as safe, and 80.8 percent felt less safe.

Given that is quite likely that a prison environment would be perceived as less safe than most communities, residents were asked whether things were stolen from them and whether they had been beaten or had seen someone else being beaten while in prison. Of the respondents, 62.4 percent said that they had been the victim of theft while in prison (Figure 31). Disaggregated by prison, the lowest rate of theft occurred at the ECRC (33.3 percent) and the highest rate occurred at Carrera (72.9 percent).

Figure 31: Had Things Stolen, by Prison (n=759)



When asked whether they had been attacked or beaten within the previous six months in prison, 22.2 percent of the respondents said they had and 77.5 percent said they had not (Figure 32). Disaggregated by prison, the lowest proportion of inmates were attacked or beaten at Port of Spain (12.6 percent) and the largest proportions were at Remand (28.2 percent) and the ECRC (30.8 percent). A larger proportion of younger inmates (27.5 percent) were beaten or attacked than older inmates (19.5 percent), males (22.6 percent) than females (17.3 percent), and inmates on remand (25.0 percent) than convicts (19.6 percent). When asked who attacked or beat them (Table 57), 16.3 percent of the respondents said it was other inmates or prison staff (10.0 percent).

Figure 32: Attacked or Beaten within Previous Six Months, by Prison (n=759)**Table 57: Attacked or Beaten by ____ (N=761; percent)**

Other inmates	16.3
Prison staff	10.0
Police	0.3
Defence Force personnel	0.0
Immigration officer	0.0
Other	0.1

When asked whether they had seen other inmates being beaten, 88.1 percent of the respondents claimed that they had (Figure 33). Disaggregated by prison, the lowest proportion of inmates who witnessed other inmates being beaten was at the Women's Prison (65.4 percent) and the largest proportions were at the MSP (91.5 percent), Carrera (92.9 percent), and Port of Spain (94.6 percent). When asked who did the beatings, 69.5 percent of the respondents said other inmates, 76.1 percent said prison staff, and 1.6 percent said the police (Table 58). The Defence Force and immigration officers were not involved in any beatings of prisoners.

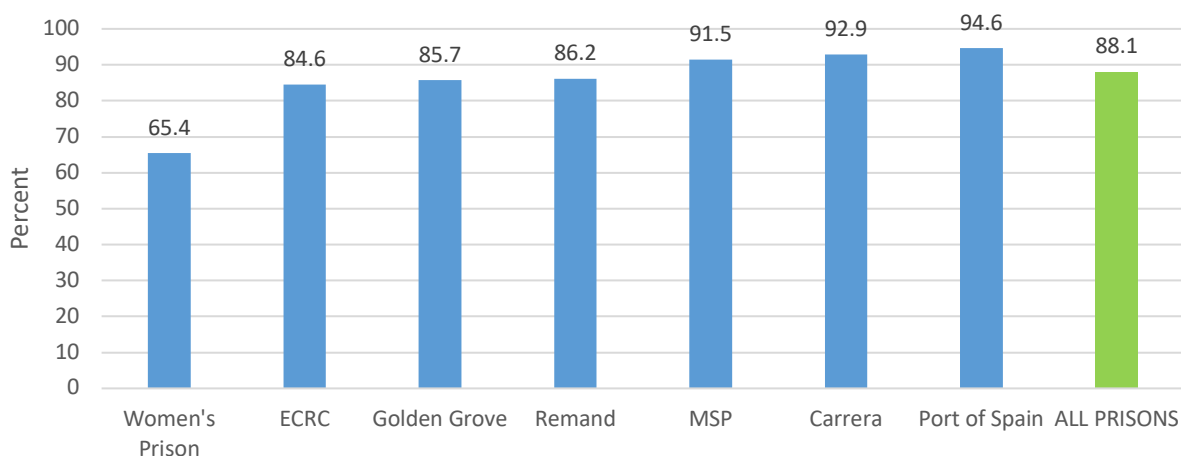
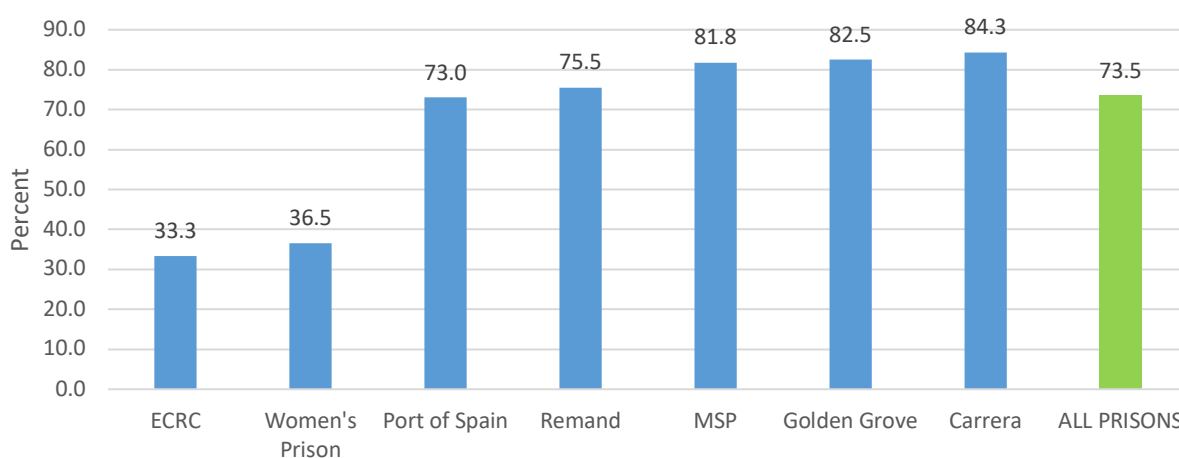
Figure 33: Witnessed Other Inmates Being Beaten, by Prison (n=759)

Table 58: Other Inmates Attacked or Beaten by ____ (N=761; percent)

Other inmates	69.5
Prison staff	76.1
Police	1.6
Defence Force personnel	0.0
Immigration officer	0.0
Other	0.0

Alcohol and Drugs Inside Prison

When asked whether they had seen other inmates use drugs or alcohol within the prison (Figure 34), 73.5 percent of the respondents said they had. The prisons with the lowest proportion of drug and alcohol use were the ECRC (33.3 percent) and the Women's Prison (36.5 percent). The prisons with the highest reported use were the MSP (81.8 percent), Golden Grove (82.5 percent), and Carrera (84.3 percent). Note that these figures do not indicate the proportion of inmates who actually use substances in prison, since many people may see a single person using drugs or alcohol. As such, while this measure is a useful indicator, other factors, such as the openness of drug and alcohol use or the freedom with which inmates move about and can observe others, can affect this measure. Later in the survey, inmates were asked about their personal use of drugs and alcohol, which provides a more accurate estimate of use in prison.

Figure 34: Have Seen Other Inmates Use Drugs or Alcohol, by Prison (n=759)

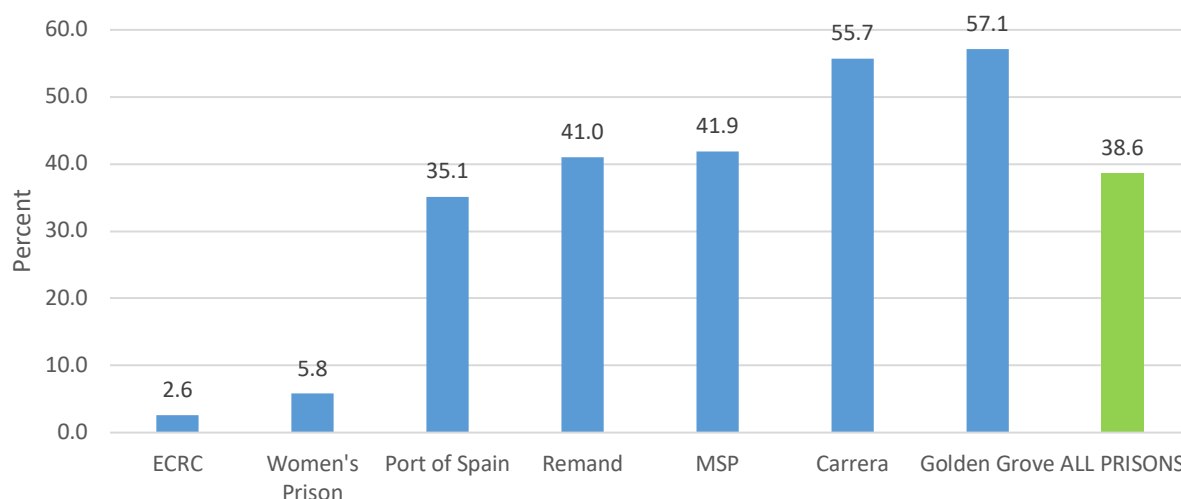
Respondents who had seen others use drugs or alcohol were asked which ones (Table 59). The most frequently used drugs were marijuana (71.4 percent) and alcohol (56.2 percent), though it is also notable that 5.1 percent claimed that they saw others use cocaine while in prison.

Table 59: Drugs Inmates Saw Others Using in Prison (N=761; percent)

Marijuana	71.4
Alcohol	56.2
Cocaine/crack	5.1
Pills	0.7
Inhalants	0.1
Other	2.1

Respondents were then asked whether they had used drugs or alcohol within the prison within the previous month. Of the inmates, 38.6 percent said they had (Figure 35), with the lowest levels of use at the ECRC (2.6 percent) and the Women’s Prison (5.8 percent) and the highest levels at Carrera (55.7 percent) and Golden Grove (57.1 percent).

While the data in Figure 35 is a better indicator of drug and alcohol use than that in Figure 34, the order from lowest use to highest by prison is essentially the same. This indicates that the observations of others using drugs and alcohol is consistent with the actual level of use within the prisons, highlighting which facilities are priorities in terms of use reduction.

Figure 35: Used Drugs or Alcohol within the Previous Month, by Prison (N=761)

Looking at other metrics, younger inmates (49.8 percent) used drugs or alcohol more than older inmates (32.5 percent), convicts (40.5 percent) more than those on remand (37.6 percent), and males (41.2 percent) more than females (5.8 percent). When asked which drugs they used, the largest proportion of inmates (35.7 percent) said marijuana, followed by alcohol (12.1 percent) (Table 60). The findings for personal drug use shown in Table 60 are consistent with the observations of drugs used shown in Table 59.

Table 60: Personal Drug Use in Prison (N=761; percent)

Marijuana	35.7
Alcohol	12.1
Cocaine/Crack	0.1
Inhalants	0.0
Pills	0.0
Other	0.8

When asked how often in the previous month in prison they used drugs (Table 61), 23.8 percent of the inmates said daily, 5.9 percent said two to four times a week, 4.2 percent said once a week, and 3.5 percent said less than once a week.

Table 61: Frequency of Drug Use in Prison (n=294; percent)

Daily	23.8
2–4 times a week	5.9
Once a week	4.2
Less than once a week	3.5
DK	1.2

When asked how easy it was to get drugs in prison (Table 62), 17.6 percent said it was very easy and 28.0 percent said it was easy, but 25.8 percent said it was difficult and 20.9 percent said it was very difficult. On average, inmates said they spent \$1,990 a month on drugs.

Table 62: Difficulty of Getting Drugs in Prison (n=759; percent)

Very easy	17.6
Easy	28.0
Difficult	25.8
Very difficult	20.9
DK	7.5

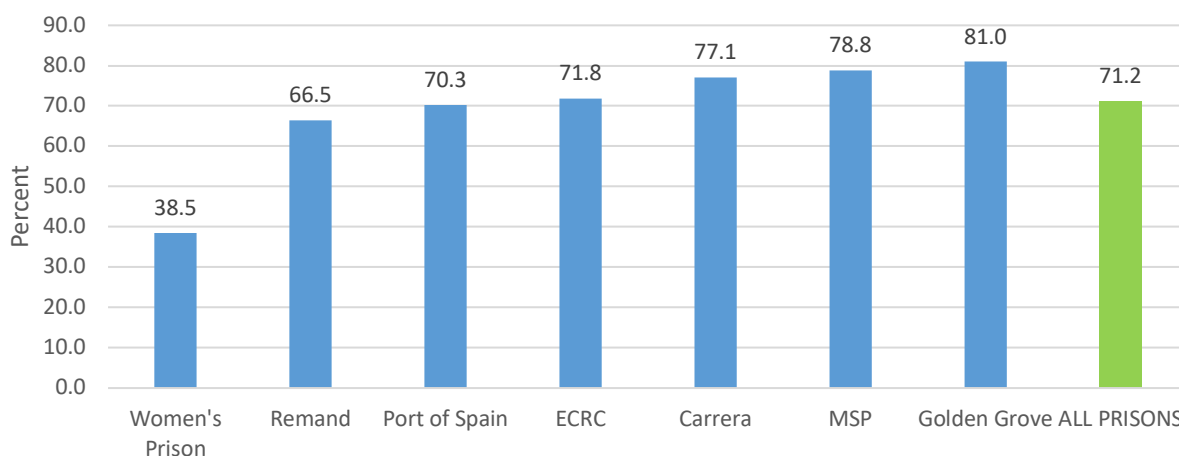
Finally, respondents were asked who brings drugs into the prisons (Table 63), and the majority (71.2 percent) said prison staff, 4.7 percent said police officers or guards, 1.4 percent said relatives or visitors, and 0.3 percent said military personnel or soldiers.

Table 63: Drugs Brought into Prison by ____ (n=759; percent)

Prison staff	71.2
Police officers/guards	4.7
Relatives or visitors	1.4
Military personnel/soldier	0.3
DK/other	22.0

Across all prisons, 71.2 percent of the inmates claimed that prison officers bring drugs into prison (Figure 36). Disaggregated by prison, the facility with the lowest proportion of inmates making this claim was the Women's Prison (38.5 percent) while the prisons with the largest proportion making this claim were Carrera (77.1 percent), the MSP (78.8 percent), and Golden Grove (81.0 percent).

Figure 36: Prison Staff Bring Drugs In, by Prison (n=759)



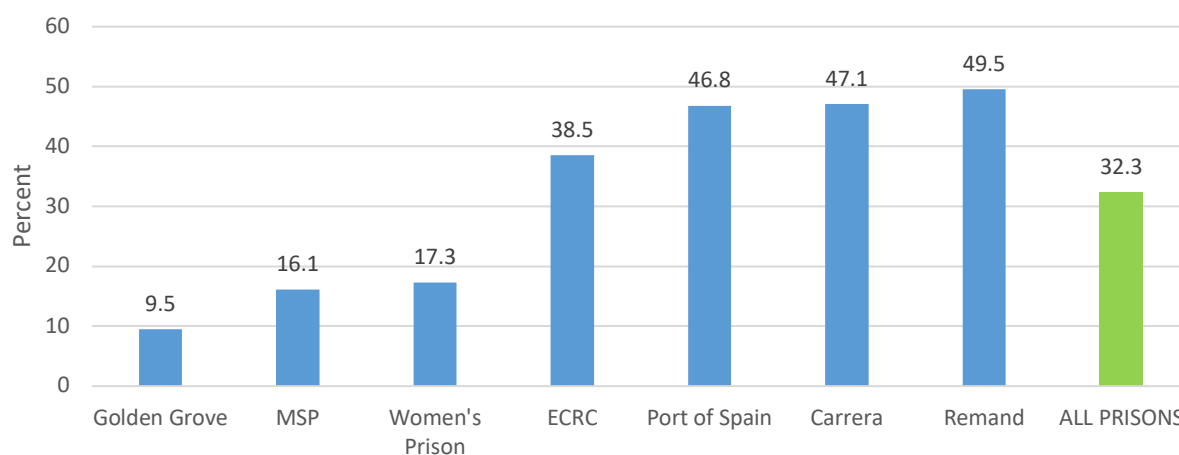
Activities and Programs for Social Reintegration

When asked about assistance they received from psychologists and social workers within the prison (Table 64), 3.4 percent of the respondents rated it as very good, 7 percent as good, and 14.6 percent as normal, compared to 12.5 percent who said it was poor and 13.5 percent who said it was very poor. Of note, 32.3 percent said that such services were not provided within the prisons and 16.4 percent did not know.

Table 64: Rating of Assistance from Psychologists and Social Workers in Prison (N=761; percent)

Very good	3.4
Good	7.0
Normal	14.6
Poor	12.5
Very poor	13.5
We don't have such assistance	32.3
DK	16.4

Figure 37 shows, for each facility, the proportion of inmates who were not aware that psychology and social work services existed. The lowest proportions were at Golden Grove (9.5 percent), the MSP (16.1 percent), and the Women's Prison (17.3 percent). Far more inmates were unaware of such services at Remand (49.5 percent), Carrera (47.1 percent), and Port of Spain (46.8 percent). These findings suggest that inmates need to be better informed that the services of psychologists and social workers are available in the prison, especially in facilities where a large proportion of the inmates are unaware of such services.

Figure 37: Not Aware that Social Workers and Psychologists Provide Services in Prison (N=761)

When asked what activities they engaged in while in prison (Table 65), 53.5 percent of the respondents said that they engaged in sports, 48.0 percent were involved in educational activities, 19.2 percent were doing vocational activities, 67.1 percent were involved in prison cleaning and maintenance, and 16.2 percent were engaged in other forms of labor. Of those who worked within the prisons, 13.7 percent claimed that they were paid for their work.

Table 65: Activities in Prison (N=761; percent)

Prison cleaning or maintenance work	67.1
Sports activities	53.5
Educational activities	48.0
Vocational activities	19.2
Other labor	16.2

Of the respondents, 12.2 percent said they learned a trade while in prison (Table 66), with older inmates (13.4 percent) somewhat more likely than younger ones (10.4 percent) to learn a trade, convicts (22.6 percent) much more likely than those on remand (2.8 percent), and females (25 percent) more likely than males (11.3 percent). It is interesting to note that when female inmates reported on a previous incarceration, they indicated that they were not involved in learning a trade (see Table 29). This change from females not being involved in a trade in the past to being involved currently may reflect a change in prison policy that gives female inmates more access to learning a trade.

Responses showed that very few respondents learned each specific trade (Table 66). For example, only 0.3 percent learned about computers, 0.8 percent were learning about the food and beverage industry, and 0.9 percent about electrical services. The largest group was 1.8 percent of respondents learning about buildings and the construction industry.

Table 66: Trades Learned in Prison (N=761; percent)

Building	1.8
Welding	1.2
Electricity	0.9
Food & Beverage Services	0.8
Computers	0.3
Auto skills	0.3
Ceramics	0.3
Cosmetology	0.0
Other	8.5
Total	12.2

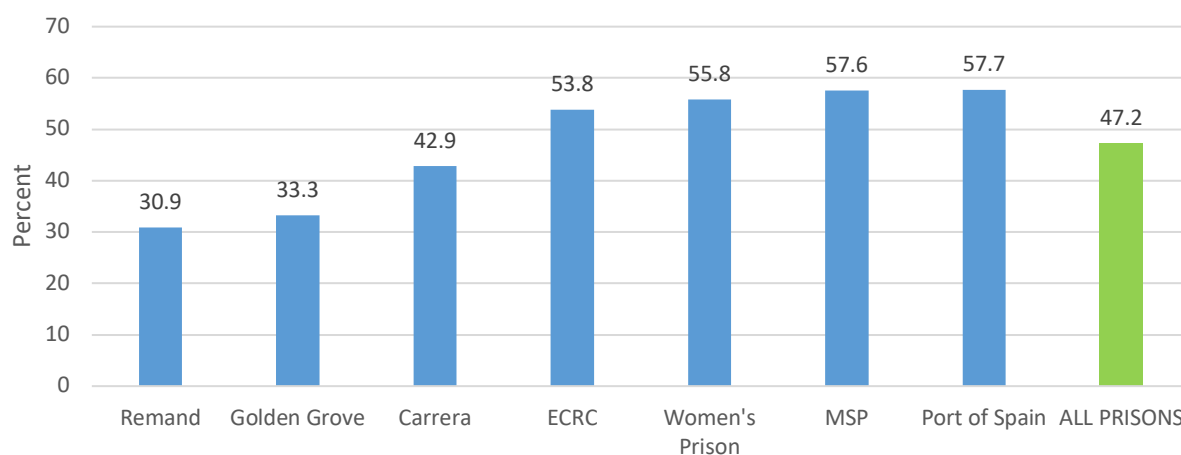
When asked why they did not work while in prison (Table 67), most frequently inmates said that the prisons did not provide work (46.6 percent), but many respondents said they did not like to work (7.0 percent), they did not like the jobs that were available (4.8 percent), or that the available jobs were not profitable (4.2 percent).

Table 67: Reasons Inmates Did Not Work (n=457; percent)

The prison does not provide any work	46.6
Because I don't like to work	7.0
Because I don't like the jobs that are available	4.8
Because it's not profitable	4.2
Because they don't have material and/or tools to perform work	0.4
Because I have no money to pay the shop	0.2
Other	36.8

Educational Experiences During Current Period of Incarceration

Earlier in this report, we looked at educational experiences during inmates' previous periods of incarceration. In contrast, this section looks at inmates' experiences during their current period of incarceration. Across all prisons, 47.2 percent of the inmates reported that they attended school while in prison (Figure 38). Disaggregated by prison, the locations with the highest proportion of inmates engaged in educational activities were Port of Spain (57.7 percent), the MSP (57.6 percent), and the Women's Prison (55.8 percent), while Remand (30.9 percent) and Golden Grove (33.3 percent) had the lowest proportions. Looking at other metrics, younger inmates (53.2 percent) engaged in educational activities more than older inmates (44.5 percent) and female inmates (55.8 percent) more than male inmates (46.7 percent), however those on remand (48.7 percent) and convicts (46.0 percent) were involved at about roughly the same proportion.

Figure 38: Attended School during Current Period of Incarceration (N=761)

For those who engaged in educational activities, 16.6 percent did elementary courses, 25.4 percent did O Level courses, and 1.6 percent did A Level courses. When asked how useful they thought their educational activities would be when they were released (Table 68), 26.0 percent thought they would be very useful and 15.1 percent said quite useful, compared to 3.3 percent who felt that their studies would not be very useful and 1.6 percent who said they would not be useful at all.

Table 68: Usefulness of Education in Prison after Release (n=359; percent)

Very useful	55.2
Quite useful	32.0
Not very useful	7.0
Not useful at all	3.3
DK	2.5

Of all respondents, 18.4 percent said they did not attend school because it was not a choice since no classes were available and 12.9 percent said that they had no interest in studying (Table 69).

Table 69: Reasons Inmates Did Not Attend School (N=761; percent)

It was not a choice (no school or classes available)	18.4
I have no interest in studying	12.9
I dropped out right away because I didn't like it	1.3
Teachers would not come	0.3
Teachers were pretty bad	0.0
Other	17.6

To gain insight into how they spent their time, inmates were asked what other activities they did during a day (Table 70). The largest proportion (22.7 percent) indicated that they spent their days sleeping, 19.5 percent said that they spend most of their days studying, 16.7 percent said working, 12.9 percent

were involved in sporting or leisure activities, 4.7 percent watched television, 2.1 percent spent the majority of their days cleaning, and 21.3 percent engaged in other activities.

Table 70: Spent most of your days at the prison? (N=761; percent)

Sleeping	22.7
Studying	19.5
Working	16.7
Practicing in sports or leisure activities	12.9
Watching TV	4.7
Cleaning	2.1
Other	21.3

Note: Respondents were allowed more than one answer and 1,105 responses were received from the 761 inmates.

Beyond Prison: Expectations for Re-entry

Several questions were asked to gain an understanding of inmates' expectations for life after release. When asked who they were likely to live with once they left prison (Table 71), the majority of respondents (53.2 percent) indicated that they would return to their family home, 10.5 percent would go to their partner's home, 2.5 percent would go live with friends, and 27.2 percent would go live with some other person(s). Of note, 6.2 percent did not yet know where they would live once they were released from prison. It is encouraging that 56.9 percent of the inmates had already spoken to someone about where they would go on release; however, 39.8 percent had not yet spoken to anyone about this issue.

Table 71: Will Live with ___ on Release (N=761; percent)

Family home	53.2
Partner	10.5
Friends	2.5
I don't know yet	6.2
Other	27.2

Overall, 93.4 percent of the respondents knew who they would live with once they left prison, with younger (94.1 percent) and older (93.2 percent) inmates and those on remand (93.3 percent) and convicts (93.4 percent) knowing in roughly equal proportions. The findings also showed that 93.7 percent of males and 90.4 percent of females knew who they would live with on release.

Of the respondents, 68.9 percent said that they had a partner and/or children, and of those inmates, 61.3 percent said they were considering going back to their partner and/or children.

Respondents were also asked whether they would go back to live in the same neighborhood they lived in before they were incarcerated and 54.9 percent said they would. Inmates were also asked whether on release they would spend most of their time with the people they knew prior to their incarceration or whether they would prefer to be around new people, and 22.5 percent said that they would go back to the same people, whereas 68.1 percent said that they would prefer to be around new people.

When asked where they plan to work on release (Table 72), a large proportion said they had a job waiting for them (38.9 percent), 18.5 percent said they would apply for any job, 17.6 percent preferred to apply for a job related to their trade, and 3.9 percent said that they would look to their friends or relatives to find a job, while 20.7 percent had not yet considered the matter.

Table 72: Plans for Work on Release (N=761; percent)

I already have a job waiting for me	38.9
I'll apply for any job	18.5
I'll apply for a job related to my trade	17.6
I'll look for a job among my acquaintances or relatives	3.9
I haven't thought about it yet/DK	20.7

When asked whether they thought they would have support from family and friends/acquaintances when they were released (Table 73), the majority of the respondents expected support from family (85.2 percent) and friends/acquaintances (49.3 percent), however 6.3 percent believed their family would reject them and 23.5 percent felt similarly about their friends/acquaintances. Some respondents did not know whether their families (5.9 percent) or friends/acquaintances (21.4 percent) would support or reject them.

Table 73: Support from Family and Friends/Acquaintances on Release (N=761; percent)

	Friends/ Acquaintances	Family
They'll support me	49.3	85.2
They'll ignore or reject me	23.5	6.3
Other	5.4	2.2
DK	21.4	5.9

Interestingly, older inmates (7.5 percent) were more likely to feel that their family would reject them than younger inmates (4.5 percent), but it was opposite when considering friends/acquaintances, with younger inmates (25.3 percent) more likely to expect rejection than older inmates (22.8 percent). Inmates on remand were more likely to believe that both their families (7.2 percent) and their friends/acquaintances (25.8 percent) would reject them than convicts (families, 5.2 percent; friends/acquaintances, 20.9 percent). Females (9.6 percent) were more likely than males (6.1 percent) to believe that their families would reject them, but males (24.5 percent) were more likely than females (11.5 percent) to believe that their friends would ignore or reject them.

To get a sense of respondents' concerns, they were asked to indicate what they were most afraid of when they get released (Table 74). The top concern, cited by 37.6 percent of respondents, was that they would be rejected by their families, followed by being arrested again (36.3 percent), being killed because of what they did (29.6 percent), not finding a job (23.1 percent), and not having a place to live (16.0 percent).

Table 74: Most Afraid Of ____ (N=761; percent)

My family rejecting me	37.6
Being arrested again	36.3
Being killed because of what I did	29.6
Not finding a job	23.1
Not having a place to live	16.0
Getting sick or developing an addiction	11.4
Being attacked or hurt	7.0

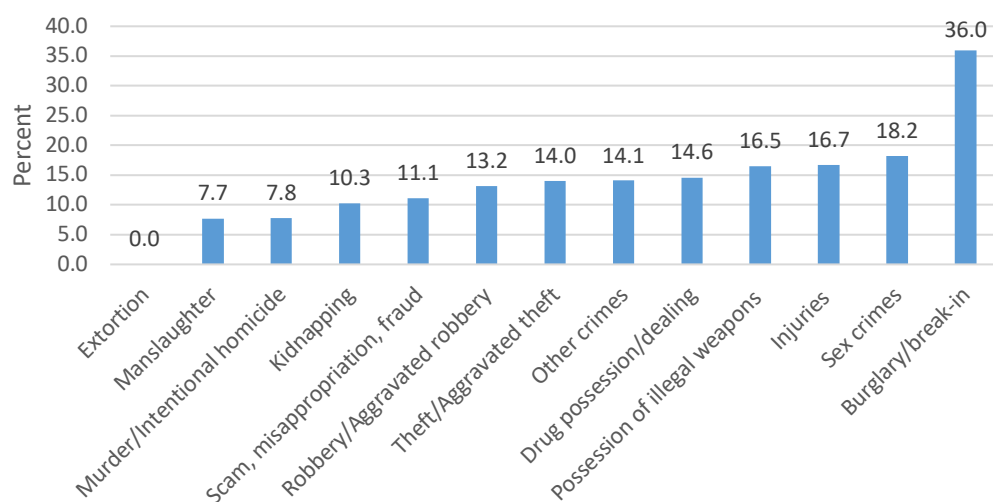
When asked if they would be arrested again after being released from prison (Table 75), only 2.5 percent said that most probably they would be rearrested and 10.0 percent said they probably would be; however, 26.9 percent said they probably would not get rearrested and 54.9 percent they most probably would not.

Overall, 12.5 percent of the respondents felt that it was likely (probably) or very likely (most probably) that they would be rearrested, with males (13.3 percent) believing it was more likely than females (1.9 percent), younger (12.2 percent) and older inmates (12.4 percent) feeling similarly, and convicts (14.9 percent) somewhat more likely than those on remand (10 percent) to believe they would be rearrested.

Table 75: Likelihood of Being Rearrested (N=761; percent)

Most probably yes	2.5
Probably yes	10.0
Probably not	26.9
Most probably not	54.9
DK	5.3

Disaggregated by type of crime committed (Figure 39), respondents incarcerated for burglaries/break-ins were the most likely to believe that they would be rearrested after they were released (36.0 percent), followed by those who committed sexual offenses (18.2 percent), those who committed injuries (16.7 percent), those who possessed an illegal weapon (16.5 percent), and those who committed drug offenses (14.6 percent).

Figure 39: Probably or Most Probably Would Be Rearrested, by Crime (N=761)

When asked how they thought things would go for them after they were released compared to their situation before they were arrested (Table 76), a large proportion of respondents were optimistic and said that things would be better (71.9 percent), but 6.8 percent thought that things would be the same and 13.1 percent felt that things would be worse, while 7.8 percent did not know how things would be.

Table 76: Things Would Be ____ After Release Compared Situation Before Arrested (N=761; percent)

Better	71.9
The same	6.8
Worse	13.1
DK	7.8

When asked if they knew of any government agencies that could assist prisoners in finding a job or a home after release (Table 77), 26.4 percent said they did, but 72.1 percent were not aware of such agencies. When asked about NGOs, such as churches, human rights organizations, or special groups that help people coming out of jail (Table 77), 53.1 percent were aware of such NGOs but 45.6 percent were not.

Table 77: Aware of Government Agencies and NGOs that Assist Released Prisoners (N=761; percent)

	Government Agencies	NGOs
Yes	26.4	53.1
No	72.1	45.6
DK/DA	1.1	0.9

Conclusion and Recommendations

This report presents the findings of the 2018 Survey of Inmates in Trinidad and Tobago. Data collected focused on several areas: sociodemographic profile, childhood, and life history; criminal careers and inmate profiles; legal procedures and criminal process; and prison conditions. Data were collected from a random sample of 761 inmates, or 19.9 percent of the prison population. The findings are representative of all prisons in Trinidad and Tobago. The sampling procedure produced findings with a margin of error of 3.2 percent and a confidence interval of 95 percent.

Main Findings

Sociodemographic Profile, Childhood, and Life History

The average age of respondents was 35.7 years, with 19.4 percent having some primary level schooling, 64.4 percent having some secondary schooling, and 5.6 percent having some tertiary level education. Of note, 1.4 percent never attended school. Of inmates surveyed, 51.5 percent were physically punished by their parents and 34.3 percent witnessed domestic violence in the home when they were children. Of the respondents, 45.6 percent said their parents or guardians used alcohol frequently when they were a child and 25.6 percent said their parents or guardians used illegal drugs, such as marijuana or cocaine. The data also revealed that 52.8 percent had a family member(s) who was in prison at some point and 20.9 percent had a family member(s) currently in prison. In the month before their arrest, 74.5 percent of the respondents were employed and on average they earned a monthly salary of \$9,875 (US\$1,473). With respect to drug use, 76.3 percent of the inmates had used marijuana one or more times in their lifetime, with the average age of first use being 15 years, and 10.8 percent had used cocaine or crack cocaine within their lifetime, with the average age of first use being 24 years.

Criminal Careers and Inmate Profiles

The most prevalent crime committed by the respondents was intentional homicide/murder. Of the sample, 38.8 percent had been charged with murder, with more males (39.4 percent) than females (30.8 percent) imprisoned for this crime. The next most prevalent crime was drug-related offenses, which were committed by 13.5 percent of the sample, with more females (30.8 percent) committing such offenses than males (12.3 percent). Other crimes included possession of illegal weapons (13.5 percent), theft or aggravated theft (11.3 percent), robbery or aggravated robbery (8.9 percent; 9.3 percent of males and 3.8 percent of females), kidnapping (3.8 percent), burglaries/break-ins (3.3 percent), and sexual offenses (2.9 percent). Crimes committed by less than 2 percent of the respondents were manslaughter (1.7 percent); injuries (1.6 percent); scam, misappropriation, and fraud (1.2 percent); and extortion (0.3 percent).

Some respondents said that they had used drugs or alcohol before committing their crime. This was most common prior to burglaries/break-ins (52.0 percent of all such offenses), injuries (50.0 percent), and robberies (41.2 percent). The data also show that 31.7 percent of inmates carried unlicensed firearms when committing their crime. Of the respondents, 10.5 percent indicated that the crime they committed was entrusted to them by a gang.

Questions were asked to assess recidivism. Of the sample, 27.7 percent said they had committed crimes other than the one they were charged within the six months before they were incarcerated. The crimes that

these recidivists said they most frequently participated in were drug-related (16.0 percent), followed by robbery (9.7 percent), possession of illegal weapons (5.8 percent), theft (2.1 percent), and injuries (1.7 percent). Another measure of recidivism is having been arrested for crimes other than the one for which they were currently incarcerated. Of the respondents, 47.7 percent had been arrested for other crimes.

Ownership and use of firearms was fairly common. Of the respondents, 45.7 percent had previously owned a firearm, with males (48.7 percent) owning them far more than females (5.8 percent). On average, inmates owned their first firearm at 17 years of age. Of those that owned firearms, 36.5 percent said that they purchased the weapon. Of the sample, 39.6 percent said that they had previously used a firearm, and 18.0 percent had injured or killed someone with a firearm, with a larger proportion of the male inmates (19.2 percent) having done so than females (1.9 percent).

The data indicate that 7.0 percent of the sample belonged to gangs. A larger proportion of males (7.3 percent) than females (1.9 percent) were gang members and more convicts (10.2 percent) than inmates on remand (4.1 percent). Gang membership also differed by prison, with Carrera having the highest level (24.3 percent), followed by the ECRC (10.3 percent), and Golden Grove (9.5 percent), and the Women's Prison (1.9 percent) having the lowest. Of the sample, 38.8 percent said they knew of gang members outside of prison who committed offenses because gang leaders ordered them to do so from inside prison.

Legal Procedures and Criminal Process

Of the respondents, 35.2 percent said that they were on remand, 16.3 percent said they were currently on trial, and 47.0 percent had been sentenced. On average, inmates had been in prison for a period of 4.4 years, with those on remand in for an average of 4.2 years, those on trial in for an average of 4.6 years, and those already sentenced in for an average of 4.7 years.

Of the inmates surveyed, 30.5 percent said that force was used to coerce them to testify or change their statement at a police station, with a larger proportion of males (31.7 percent) than females (13.5 percent) experiencing such tactics, and convicted inmates (30.3 percent) and those on remand (30.8 percent) experiencing them to roughly the same degree. Bribes also occurred, with 31.9 percent of respondents claiming that police officers attempted to elicit bribes from them and 13.8 percent making the same claim with respect to prison staff. Overall, 37.7 percent of inmates claimed that they were approached for bribes at some point while in custody.

Prison Conditions

Based on the number of people who slept in a cell compared to the number the cell was designed to accommodate, 37.2 percent of the respondents said that their cell was overcrowded and 62.8 percent said it was not. Using this method, Remand's overcrowding rate was 83.2 percent, Carrera's was 52.9 percent, and Port of Spain's was 52.7 percent. Overcrowding was also assessed by how many people in an inmate's cell did not have a bed. Using this method, 33.4 percent of respondents were housed in overcrowded cells, with Remand's overcrowding rate being 80.5 percent, Carrera's being 52.9 percent, and Port of Spain's being 47.7 percent.

With respect to toilet facilities, 25.8 percent of the respondents said the toilets were very clean and 22.1 percent said they were somewhat clean compared to 13.0 percent who said they were somewhat dirty and 37.3 percent who said they were dirty. Combining the responses of somewhat dirty, dirty, and no toilets by prison signaled that the toilet facilities needed attention, particularly at Remand, where 94.7 percent of the inmates said the toilets met this criteria, followed by Carrera (82.9 percent) and Port of Spain (76.6 percent).

Of the respondents, 50.5 percent said they had access to toilets at night, but 49.3 percent said they did not. Disaggregated by prison, all inmates at Golden Grove, the MSP, and the ECRC had access to toilet facilities at night, while at Remand no one did. At the Women's Prison, only 55.8 percent of inmates had access at night, at Carrera the proportion dropped to 22.9 percent, and at Port of Spain to 0.9 percent.

Of the respondents, 62.4 percent said they received medical care from the prison when they got sick, while 36.0 percent said they did not receive such care when it was needed. When they got sick, it took an average of 2.3 days for an inmate to see a doctor or nurse. Of the respondents, 1.2 percent said the healthcare in prison was very good, 4.5 percent said it was good, and 14.1 percent said it was normal. However, 22.6 percent said the healthcare was poor and 18.4 percent said it was very poor. The majority of respondents received medications from the prison (48.9 percent) or their families (34.0 percent), however some bought them with their own money (1.7 percent) or got them from other inmates (0.5 percent) and some said they were unable to get their medications (5.8 percent). When asked about dental care, 21.6 percent of the respondents said they received it when they needed it, but 59.8 percent did not receive such care when it was needed.

Of the respondents, 5.9 percent said that their family members were treated very well whenever they came to the prison, 19.1 percent said they were treated well, and 38.1 percent said they were treated so-so. However, 18.4 percent said family members were treated badly and 13.9 percent said they were treated very badly. Across all prisons, 32.3 percent of the inmates claimed their relatives were treated badly or very badly by prison staff.

Of the sample, 11.5 percent said they had witnessed another inmate being forced to have sexual intercourse, with males (12.2 percent) seeing it more than females (1.9 percent). When asked if they had been forced to have sexual relations in prison, 0.7 percent of the respondents said they had, all of them male.

Of the respondents, 62.4 percent said they had been the victim of theft while in prison. Disaggregated by prison, the lowest rate of theft occurred at the ECRC (33.3 percent) and the highest rate at Carrera (72.9 percent). When asked if they had been attacked or beaten within the previous six months while in prison, 22.2 percent of the respondents said they had but 77.5 percent said they had not.

Of the inmates, 38.6 percent said they had used drugs or alcohol within the prison in the previous month. Drug and alcohol use was lowest at the ECRC (2.6 percent), followed by the Women's Prison (5.8 percent), and highest at Carrera (55.7 percent) and Golden Grove (57.1 percent). When inmates were asked which drugs they used, the largest proportion said marijuana (35.7 percent), followed by alcohol (12.1 percent). When asked how frequently they used drugs in prison, 23.8 percent of the inmates said they used drugs

daily, 5.9 percent said two to four times a week, 4.2 percent said once a week, and 3.5 percent said less than once a week. When asked how easy it was to get drugs in prison, 17.6 percent said it was very easy and 28.0 percent said it was easy, while 25.8 percent said it was difficult and 20.9 percent said it was very difficult. Regarding who they believed brought in the drugs, 71.2 percent of the respondents said prison staff, 4.7 percent said police officers or guards, 1.4 percent said relatives or visitors, and 0.3 percent said military personnel or soldiers.

Of the inmates, 12.2 percent said they learned a trade in prison, but very small numbers of respondents were involved in each specific trade: computers (0.3 percent), food and beverage industry (0.8 percent), electrical services (0.9 percent), and buildings and the construction industry (1.8 percent). During the current period of incarceration, 47.2 percent of the inmates reported that they attended classes or school. Of those who did academic studies, 16.6 percent did elementary courses, 25.4 percent did O Level courses, and 1.6 percent did A Level courses.

The majority of respondents (53.2 percent) indicated that they would return to their family home when they left prison, 10.5 percent would go to their partners, and 2.5 percent would live with friends, while 6.2 percent did not know. A large proportion (38.9 percent) said that they already had a job waiting for them on release, 18.5 percent said they would apply for any job, 17.6 percent preferred to apply for a job related to their trade, and 3.9 percent said they would look to friends or relatives to find a job, while 20.7 percent had not yet considered the matter.

When asked what they were most afraid would happen after they were released, 37.6 percent of the respondents were afraid of being rejected by their families, followed by being arrested again (36.3 percent), being killed because of what they did (29.6 percent), not finding a job (23.1 percent), and not having a place to live (16.0 percent).

Of the respondents, 2.5 percent said they would most probably be rearrested after their release and 10.0 percent said they probably would, however 26.9 percent said they probably would not and 54.9 percent said they most probably would not.

When asked if they were aware of NGOs that help prisoners who are released, 53.1 percent were aware of such organizations, but 45.6 percent were not. Of the respondents, 26.4 percent were aware of government agencies that provided similar services, while 73.6 percent were not aware of such agencies.

Priority Areas that Require Attention and Recommendations

A number of findings stand out in this report and point to the need for attention in specific areas.

The survey highlighted that a large proportion of inmates experienced physical punishment in their homes when they were children and lived in homes where parents/guardians frequently used drugs or alcohol. In addition, many inmates grew up in homes with domestic violence. Several inmates also had family members who were in prison. These findings point to potential risk factors for criminal offending. Further analysis—for example, comparisons with non-institutionalized populations—is required to determine which of these factors are important predictors for criminal offending. *This finding indicates the need for*

deeper research to understand how criminal behaviors may be transmitted through family culture or circumstance and to seek options to break inter-generational cycles of incarceration.

The second most prevalent reported crime was drug-related offenses. Much debate surrounds how to deal with drug-related offenses, since many individuals imprisoned for drug crimes do not have a drug problem. While it is generally accepted that incarceration is appropriate for drug trafficking or where drugs are used prior to the commission of a crime, dealing with substance use disorders warrants further consideration. Advocates of a medical model support drug treatment/rehabilitation over incarceration for such offenders. When individuals with a drug use disorder are incarcerated but their addiction is not addressed, there is a high likelihood that they will revert to drug use on release, will return to prison, and/or will experience a drug-related death.

The immediate concern for the Prison Service is how to manage offenders with substance use disorders. It is important that drug users/addicts, regardless of whether they have committed other crimes, be provided access to effective drug treatment programs. For those who have committed other offenses, drug use/addiction may be a risk factor that predisposes them to criminal behavior. If those who used drugs but did not commit other offenses are not treated for their addiction, they will likely go right back to using drugs subsequent to their release from prison. *Therefore, we recommend that a range of substance abuse treatment programs and prevention measures be examined to determine which ones are most effective and can be put in place in a correctional setting. Additionally, given scarce resources, substance use treatment and prevention efforts should be targeted to those individuals who need it the most, such as those with chronic addiction or addiction to damaging substances (crack/cocaine). Follow-up support and community treatment services should also made available on release from prison so that continued care can help these individuals avoid relapse and live healthy, drug-free lives.*

Treatment for drug addiction can be done in prison, but it is just as effective in a community setting. In some provinces in Canada, drug treatment programs have been implemented wherein medical facilities provide drug users/addicts with drugs that are free of impurities and administered in controlled doses using sterile equipment. Programs like this circumvent the transmission of diseases and overdosing. At the same time, one of the conditions for accessing drugs at medical facilities is that users/addicts must undergo a drug rehabilitation program. This is usually highly successful when done under a medical setting and many drug users/addicts are willing to undergo such treatment. *We recommend that policymakers and legislators consider the merits of using drug courts and diverting drug addicts/users out of the prison system and into mandatory drug treatment programs.*

Given the prevalence of drug-related offenses, it is also important to consider what can be done about drug manufacturers and traffickers. Traditional approaches in Trinidad and Tobago have relied on law enforcement and suppression. Another option is legalization/decriminalization. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago is currently consulting on the issue of legalizing or decriminalizing marijuana. *We recommend that careful consideration be given to decriminalization/legalization. While international literature points to various advantages and disadvantages, Trinidad and Tobago's unique cultural and social context must be included in any analysis of the benefits and drawbacks of decriminalization/legalization.*

This study used two measures of recidivism. One is based on crimes committed in the six months prior to the current offense and for which the offender was not necessarily arrested. This method put the recidivism rate at 27.7 percent. The other is based on prior arrests during no particular timeframe. This measure put the rate at 47.7 percent.¹¹ These recidivism rates suggest that there may be challenges with reintegration that affect inmates' ability to stay out of crime once released. Reintegration is different from re-entry into society and it cannot be assumed that inmates will be able to successfully reintegrate into society on release. Efforts at reintegration must look at both the individual and their environment, both before and after release. International research suggests that the prison environment itself can create difficulties for reintegration. For example, inmates may develop attitudes and values that are conducive to criminal offending (Cid, 2009). They may be labeled and may internalize such labels (Lemert, 1972). Inmates may also become integrated into criminal networks and groups (Cullen, Jonson, and Nagin, 2011). Therefore, special attention should be paid to the prison environment to ensure that it is conducive to rehabilitation. *We recommend that research be conducted into factors within the prisons in Trinidad and Tobago that may hinder the reintegration process. If such factors exist, measures should be taken to counteract the effects.*

There may be factors specific to the individual that also require attention while they are imprisoned. Andrews et al. (1990) indicate that, if rehabilitation approaches are to be successful, they should focus on criminogenic needs, should ensure responsivity, should be aware of the level of risk of the individual, and should have professional discretion and program integrity. The Prison Service is already trained in using the Levels of Service Case Management Inventory, an actuarial assessment tool that measures the risks and needs factors of adult offenders. This tool facilitates the approach suggested by Andrews et al. (1990). *We recommend that the Prison Service ensures that the Levels of Service Case Management Inventory assessments are used to develop individualized rehabilitation and reintegration plans that adhere, as much as possible, to the principles of Andrews et al. (1990).*

While the Prison Service has more control over what happens inside the prisons, successful reintegration also requires institutional planning, services, and follow-up after the inmate is released. Inmates leaving prison face a host of challenges, including access to employment, housing, social support, and other basic needs. They may return to environments that encourage reoffending, such as communities with criminal gangs. Thus, there is clear need for institutional post-release services to support individuals as they attempt to reintegrate into society, as well as, those on probation or parole. These post-release services must focus on the individual and their environment. The finding that a large proportion of inmates are concerned about rejection by their families on release highlights the importance of post-release services. Since many inmates plan to return to their families, rejection creates severe hardships and increases the likelihood that they will recidivate. Access to jobs is another pressing issue. While almost 40 percent claimed that they had a job waiting for them, the majority of respondents were not in this fortunate position and could face serious difficulties as a result. Lack of access to jobs after release can occur as a result of a difficult economic climate (as the one that currently exists) but can also occur because of stigma associated with prisoners or as a result of inadequate or inappropriate skills and education. Almost half of all inmates were not aware of NGOs that

¹¹ By way of comparison, the 2012 Inspector of Prisons Report indicated that in 2010 the recidivism rate was 47 percent compared to 61 percent in 2011. The report defines recidivists as “offenders who have returned to prison to serve sentences within a three (3) to five (5) year period after being released” (p. 36).

help inmates after they are released, while three quarters of inmates were not aware of government agencies that provide similar services. This is another mechanism that can be used to assist inmates with reintegration.¹² This also signals the need for the Prison Service to provide information to inmates as they near release, such as leaflets and referrals to appropriate services. *We recommend that careful consideration be given to developing a government program to help people leaving prison or serving their sentence in the community under parole or probation. Services should target the specific needs of male and female offenders during their post-release reintegration and should connect individuals with organizations in the community working with former offenders to provide support in accessing employment and financial services, psychological counseling, family support, substance abuse treatment, accommodation, services for sexual offenders, services for mentally ill offenders, etc. In addition, we recommend that the prison system start documenting not only the failures of the reintegration process—individuals returning to prison—but also its successes. Documenting the progress of individuals reestablishing their life and successfully desisting from crime can provide important insights into the reintegration process, a better understanding of its facilitators and barriers, and alternative measures of system effectiveness.*

Findings from the survey suggest that in-person visits are the exception rather than the rule. Roughly 17 percent of the inmates never had visits from family, just under 10 percent saw them only once a year, and almost two-thirds received visits once a month or less. One of the main barriers for visitation was distance, as family members lived far away from the prison. *We recommend that family ties be encouraged and supported because evidence suggests that visitation reduces and delays recidivism (Bales and Mears, 2008). The Prison Service should incarcerate individuals close to their home and their communities as a low-cost policy option. Additionally, it should adopt policies that encourage visitation and should welcome friends and relatives by making the prison environment as comfortable as possible by providing spaces where families can interact with inmates.*

The treatment of visitors is also important. Of the respondents, 32 percent felt that relatives were treated badly or very badly by prison staff. Many misunderstandings can occur when visitors enter prisons. For example, they may not understand the rationale behind procedures required to ensure security. Explanations from prison staff can go a long way to help mitigate such misunderstandings. Ultimately the prisons provide a service and part of that service relates to how they interface with the public who, by law, have the right to visit their friends and relatives. Even more importantly, visitation rights allow inmates to maintain ties with family and friends. These ties go a long way to supporting the psychological stability of inmates and their loved ones, and ultimately facilitate the reintegration process. *We recommend that the Prison Service review its visitation policies to reduce unnecessary barriers and encourage practices that are humane and respect the families and friends of inmates. We also recommend that training be undertaken to sensitize staff to the importance of treating visitors with respect and dignity and so that staff interaction with the public will help create a positive image for the Prison Service, encouraging friends and family members to visit.*

¹² Examples of prisoner reintegration programs include The Serious and Violent Offender Re-entry Initiative (U.S.), The South Oxnard Challenge Project (U.S.), Youth Justice Board's Education, Training, and Development Project (U.K.), The Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Forensic Transition Program (U.S.), and The Male Adolescent Program for Positive Sexuality (Australia).

Firearm access, ownership, and use were also found to be problematic, as evidenced by the ease with which inmates accessed firearms, the proportion of inmates who owned firearms, and the proportion who had injured or killed someone using a firearm. These findings are consistent with data from the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, which show that a very high proportion of murders are gang-related and that approximately 75 percent of all murders are committed with firearms. The challenges related to firearms and gangs, while largely outside of the control of the Prison Service, require attention from law enforcement agencies. An example of a highly successful intervention in Trinidad and Tobago that reduced firearm use in conflict situations involving gangs is Project REASON, which is based on the Cure Violence model (previously known as Chicago Cease Fire).¹³ This program was implemented in 16 communities in East Port of Spain from 2014 to 2017 and resulted in a 45 percent decline in violence in these communities (Maguire, Oakley, and Corsaro, 2018). *We recommend, given the very high proportion of murders that are committed with firearms and that are gang related, that consideration be given to the wider implementation and institutionalization of evidence-based violence reduction programs with a proven track record (e.g., Cure Violence) and that strategies be developed to reduce the flow of firearms into Trinidad and Tobago and to discourage the use of firearms.*¹⁴

Another issue outside the control of the Prison Service but that was flagged as important was the lengthy delays in the trial process, which points to the need for changes in the judicial system that will reduce the wait period for processing criminal matters. *Approaches can involve procedures within the judicial system but could also involve diversionary strategies where less serious offenders (e.g., first time offenders, juvenile offenders, non-violent offenders, the mentally ill, the elderly, and offenders with substance use disorders) are diverted out of the criminal justice system. These programs can reduce the costs of criminal justice, as well as the harmful consequences of incarceration, while also enhancing public safety. Trinidad and Tobago is currently working on developing probation services and mechanisms—a step in the right direction concerning alternatives to incarceration and diversionary strategies. We recommend a review of the practical operation of the existing non-custodial dispositions to assess their processes and to plan necessary reforms to boost their use and effectiveness.*

Of note, inmates on remand are presumed innocent until proven guilty and as such have specific rights and are subject to separate treatment appropriate to their status. The findings in this report show that inmates on remand represented close to 60 percent of the total prison population. *Thus, we recommend that strategies to reduce the use of pretrial detention should be a priority for the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. Strategies could include developing protocols and training for key judicial actors so that detention prior to trial is used as a measure of last resort with set custody limits. Further, mechanisms should be put in place to adequately track periods of detention to prevent individuals on remand from being held in custody for excessive periods of time prior to trial, to release pretrial detainees after the time spent in custody has exceeded those limits, and to ensure that bail amounts are set proportional to the means of the defendant.*

Another key finding from the survey was that individuals on remand were frustrated and complained bitterly about the conditions of their imprisonment. A tour of the main Remand facility at the Golden Grove

¹³ For more information, see the Cure Violence Global website at: <https://cvg.org/>.

¹⁴ Examples of firearm reduction programs include The Weapons Interdiction Team Program (California), the Firearms Investigative Task Force Program (U.S.), and the Firearm Buyback Programme (Australia).

Prison Complex revealed that there were many conditions that were less than ideal. The facility was overcrowded, with very small cells, inadequate toilet facilities, poor ventilation and lighting, and insufficient space to properly segregate prisoners. Indeed, generally, compared with the other prison facilities, the conditions at Remand were worse.¹⁵ *We recommend that urgent attention be given to upgrading or rebuilding the Remand facility at the Golden Grove Prison Complex. Among other things, upgrading these facilities will help alleviate the stress of lengthy trial delays and, importantly, will reduce the likelihood that people being held on remand will be forced into a life of crime.*

Of the respondents, 30.5 percent said that someone had used some form of force to compel them to testify or change their statement. While much of this use of force occurred outside of the Prison System, it represents a perversion of justice. Further, usually, once force related to testimony comes to light during the trial process, it is typically used as grounds for dismissal. *We recommend that law enforcement personnel be educated about the drawbacks of using force to affect testimony since ultimately it does not serve the administration of justice. We also recommend that the criminal justice system, including the police and the Prison Service, improve and expand education for the general public, individuals in conflict with the law, and detainees to inform them of their rights, especially as they relate to legal representation and due process at each stage of the justice system. Further, we recommend that the Prison Service develop links with Legal Aid so that both sentenced and on remand individuals have access to proper legal representation.*

Regarding medical care, over a third of the respondents indicated that they could not get medical care when it was needed. Also access to medical care took an average of 2.3 days. Despite this, a very large proportion of inmates received medications from the prisons once it was needed. For dental care, nearly 60 percent of inmates said that they could not access it when needed. Though providing medical and dental services in prison represents challenges, such essential services must not be neglected. *We recommend that dental and health facilities and services be assessed to determine weaknesses and that steps be taken to remedy them. Additionally, the Prison Service should strengthen partnerships with the Ministry of Health and local hospitals to provide higher quality healthcare services inside the facilities. Where female inmates are concerned, we recommend that gender-specific healthcare needs be addressed since, for example, over two-thirds of the female inmates indicated that they had not received a gynecological examination while in prison.*

The findings show some areas of concern regarding victimization of inmates while in prison. A large proportion of inmates were victims of theft, with the highest rates occurring at the Women's Prison and Carrera. Close to a quarter of the respondents had been attacked or beaten within the previous six months, with the highest rates being at Remand and the ECRC. Sexual victimization appears to be minimal, with less than 1 percent of inmates saying that they had been forced to have sexual relations while in prison. However, this figure may underestimate the prevalence of sexual violence as respondents may be unwilling to report that they experienced this form of victimization. In comparison, over 10 percent of the inmates reported that they had witnessed another inmate being forced to have sex against their will, though many may have witnessed the same incident. Violence in prison is difficult to deal with because it

¹⁵ However, overcrowding was also a serious concern at Port of Spain and Carrera, and there were very negative ratings of toilet facilities at Carrera and Port of Spain.

has complex links with factors such as managerial strategies, informal governance mechanisms, prison characteristics (e.g., overcrowding, prison size, staff, and access to programs), and individual traits. Findings in this report related to indicators of violence were disaggregated by prison, offering guidance regarding the facilities where emphasis should be placed.¹⁶ *We recommend that the information presented in Appendix 2 be carefully considered and measures be taken to reduce victimization and other problems (e.g., sexual violence, assault, theft, and drug use) at those prisons with excessively high levels of each of the indicators. We also recommend strengthening internal mechanisms for reporting and investigating acts of misconduct, and for imposing consequences for violence inside the prison.*

Nearly 40 percent of the inmates had used drugs or alcohol within the prison in the previous month, with use highest at Carrera and Golden Grove. Over 70 percent of the respondents said that prison staff brings drugs into the prisons. Drug use in prison is a complex issue. On one hand, the consumption of drugs or alcohol is illegal in prison. However, discussions with prison officers indicated that giving inmates access to drugs such as marijuana can be used as a reward system to calm inmates and make it easier to work with them. Despite this, the data suggest that there may be an underground economy where inmates can purchase illegal substances. *We recommend that illegal use of drugs and alcohol in prison receive serious attention and that measures be taken to reduce supply. Measures could include revamping staff training and integrity, increasing remuneration to achieve a fair wage, and reducing the prevalence of corruption, as well as, strengthening disciplinary systems for misconduct committed by correctional staff. To reduce contraband, sniffer dogs could be used at points of entry and laws regarding bringing illegal substances into the prisons should be strictly enforced.*

Findings show that vocational studies are not to be widely accessed in prison, with less than 15 percent of inmates learning a trade compared to almost 50 percent who did academic studies. Expertise can lead to lucrative careers on release and inmates should be encouraged to learn a trade. Having said this, the data showed that during their previous incarceration female inmates did not learn a trade, whereas in their current period of incarceration they did, which shows progress in terms of willingness or ability to access vocational studies. It is also encouraging to note that inmates are able to do O and A Level studies while in prison. Some inmates expressed the willingness to pursue their degrees while in prison, and, given that the majority of tertiary education institutions in Trinidad and Tobago now offer their courses in an online format, it may be possible for access to be given to inmates. While this will come with some challenges, allowing inmates the opportunity to earn degrees will go a long way toward reintegration efforts. *We recommend that female inmates be encouraged to become more involved in learning a trade as this can provide an important means of earning income on release. We also recommend that the Prison Service develop links and memoranda of understanding with various tertiary education institutions to deliver university courses to individuals in custody through various modes (e.g., online, in person, or during day release) so that inmates can access university-level education more readily while in prison.*

¹⁶ See Appendix 2 for a summary of the main indicators of violence and problems within the prisons disaggregated by prison.

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Appendix 1: Serious Crimes in Trinidad and Tobago, 1990–2018

	Murder	Woundings, Shootings	Rape, Incest, Sexual of- fense	Serious In- decency	Kidnapping	Burglaries & Break-ins	Robbery	Fraud	Larceny & Larceny Motor Vehicles	Larceny Dwelling House	Narcotics Offenses
1990	84	391	367	67	13	7546	3115	245	2331	299	1211
1991	97	453	384	77	16	7313	3099	396	2434	318	1078
1992	109	420	485	98	16	7938	3786	415	2545	390	963
1993	111	608	284	87	41	8419	4722	332	2743	355	1080
1994	140	533	254	70	46	7635	4490	447	2834	367	1098
1995	122	501	309	99	56	6542	3858	399	2781	326	1118
1996	107	505	295	116	81	6835	4075	537	3196	352	1259
1997	101	370	514	206	80	6682	3393	572	2686	432	1209
1998	97	319	572	156	100	6112	2780	417	2686	379	1300
1999	93	340	476	180	136	5475	3629	411	2882	388	1334
2000	120	387	545	167	156	5623	4094	522	3042	400	1225
2001	151	499	545	134	135	5016	4269	308	2961	323	485
2002	171	655	641	149	235	4930	4675	425	3164	403	509
2003	229	784	643	88	235	4863	4590	459	3210	365	505
2004	261	643	581	52	177	5214	3885	329	3364	429	589
2005	386	801	738	59	280	4548	4883	300	4081	408	495
2006	371	657	903	81	214	4973	5633	322	4560	452	542
2007	391	680	825	76	178	4958	4965	236	5365	453	604
2008	547	771	724	55	155	4855	5043	234	6157	446	536
2009	506	689	760	44	155	5744	6040	548	5415	606	549
2010	473	623	696	61	119	5207	5075	211	5438	623	519
2011	352	535	650	59	122	4220	3718	225	4018	481	486
2012	379	579	933	95	185	4321	4436	219	4652	536	437
2013	407	542	550	70	116	2967	2958	307	3650	370	474
2014	405	558	829	80	97	2592	2672	223	3106	289	439
2015	420	600	625	70	110	2111	2469	592	2655	237	453
2016	462	526	497	32	80	2210	2618	1031	2619	242	396
2017	495	718	531	19	108	2176	2913	568	2938	246	469
2018	517	721	757	31	153	2026	3246	545	2650	194	469

	Murder	Woundings, Shootings	Rape, Incest, Sexual of- fense	Serious In- decency	Kidnapping	Burglaries & Break-ins	Robbery	Fraud	Larceny & Larceny Motor Vehicles	Larceny Dwelling House	Narcotics Offenses
Average: all years	279.4	565.8	583.2	88.9	124.0	5139.7	3970.0	406.0	3453.9	383.1	752.8
Average: last 5 years	459.8	624.6	647.8	46.4	109.6	2223.0	2783.6	591.8	2793.6	241.6	445.2
Average Rate: last 5 years	34.1	46.4	48.1	3.4	8.1	165.1	206.7	44.0	207.5	17.9	33.1

Source: Crime and Problem Analysis Branch of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service.

Note: Rates are per 100,000. 2016 population estimates are used to compute rates (UN population estimates 1950 to 2100). As of the 2011 census the total population was 1,324,699. The UN estimate of the population as of 2016 was 1,346,468.

Appendix 2: Indicators of Violence and Problems within the Prisons (percent)

	Gang Members	Witnessed Inmate Forced to Have Sexual Intercourse	Victim of Theft	Attacked or Beaten in Previous Six Months	Witnessed Inmate Being Beaten	Witnessed Inmates Use Drugs or Alcohol	Used Drugs or Alcohol in Previous Month
Carrera	24.3	17.1	72.9	20.0	92.9	84.3	55.7
ECRC	10.3	7.7	33.3	30.8	84.6	33.3	2.6
Golden Grove	9.5	12.7	63.5	22.2	85.7	82.5	57.1
MSP	5.1	10.2	64.0	22.5	91.5	81.8	41.9
Port of Spain	3.6	12.6	58.6	12.6	94.6	73.0	35.1
Remand	4.7	13.3	64.4	28.2	86.2	75.5	41.0
Women's Prison	1.9	1.9	65.4	17.3	65.4	36.5	5.8
SAMPLE	7.0	11.5	62.4	22.2	88.1	73.5	38.6

