

Long Abstract – Monographic Section

INVESTING IN THE SOCIAL REINTEGRATION CARE FOR DETAINEES: TRENDS AND NEW PERSPECTIVES OF THE ITALIAN WELFARE SYSTEM

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The Struggle to find one's place. A research/study on prisoner reentry process in Italy

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What are the Effects of Incarceration on Post-Release Marginalization?

This study examines the impact of reentry pathways in a metropolitan area in northern Italy, focusing on how formerly incarcerated individuals continue to face stigmatization and marginalization even after completing their prison sentences.

While the prisoner reentry process has been extensively studied in international research, it remains underexplored in the Italian context. Two key factors contribute to this gap: first, understanding the post-incarceration phase requires a critical examination of the pre-incarceration phase, including the nature and goals of imprisonment, as well as the selectivity of carceral processes. Second, conducting qualitative research with former prisoners is inherently challenging due to the difficulties of accessing this population.

The concept of the Prisoner Reentry Process is framed as a cyclical phenomenon, encompassing three main stages: the period before release, the act of release itself, and the post-release phase, in which individuals attempt to reintegrate into society. The post-release phase, in particular, is marked by significant challenges, as reflected in high recidivism rates. Often referred to as the "revolving door," recidivism rates typically range from 50% to 70% within five years, contributing to a cycle of reoffending and reincarceration, with substantial social and economic costs.

Incarceration disrupts not only familial and emotional ties but also access to employment, housing, and social services, exacerbating the vulnerabilities of those most at risk of criminalization, such as undocumented migrants, individuals with mental health or substance use issues, and those living in poverty or social exclusion.

This study uses a qualitative approach, including in-depth interviews with 15 formerly incarcerated individuals and focus groups with practitioners involved in rehabilitation programs, to explore how stigma and marginalization persist in post-release trajectories. It also examines the role of the metropolitan environment as a space where formerly incarcerated people continue to struggle with reintegration into society.