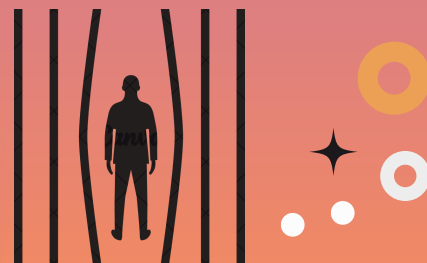


In the initial phase of the research, the focus was on identifying the target group comprising adult males and females who have had experience with the criminal justice system. The aim was to gain a comprehensive understanding of the specific workplace challenges encountered by ex-offenders during their reintegration process. A systematic search of scientific databases was conducted, yielding a total of 26,795 papers. Through a rigorous screening process, 23 papers were deemed relevant and met the inclusion criteria. The literature review shed light on the various social difficulties faced by ex-offenders in the workplace. These challenges encompassed issues related to stigma, prejudice, lack of social support, limited communication skills, and the difficulties of adapting to work environments.

## Exploring Social Difficulties and Interpersonal Communication Skills in Work Reintegration

As part of the RECOMMIT project, the consortium partners, led by UCLan Cyprus, have undertaken an extensive research endeavour involving a literature review and a confirmatory Delphi exercise. The goal of this research is to identify the workplace challenges and effective Interpersonal Communication Skills (ICS) that are relevant to the work reintegration of ex-offenders.



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The findings obtained thus far underscore the necessity of tailored training programs that focus on developing and enhancing Interpersonal Communication Skills (ICS) among former detainees. The aim is to empower them with the necessary skills for successful workplace reintegration. By addressing the identified social difficulties and nurturing effective interpersonal skills, the RECOMMIT project strives to contribute to the social reintegration and civic engagement of pre-release offenders. Ultimately, the project seeks to increase their prospects of obtaining and retaining employment post-release, thereby promoting their overall well-being and reinforcing crime desistance.

Building upon the findings of the literature review, the research team developed a set of Delphi questions. These questions were designed to further validate and refine the identified workplace challenges and effective ICS. The ongoing Delphi exercise involves engaging stakeholders, including ex-offenders, inmates, employers, and service providers. By gathering their expert opinions and insights, the project ensures that the identified workplace scenarios and interpersonal skills are relevant and applicable in real-life work settings. In alignment with ethical standards, the RECOMMIT project prioritizes the protection of participants' rights. Consequently, a Research Proposal titled "Expert Delphi Study on Social Difficulties in Work Reintegration of Reformed Individuals" was submitted to the Cyprus National Bioethics Committee to obtain ethical approval. This step ensures that the research study adheres to ethical guidelines and upholds the highest standards of integrity.

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