

Since 1999, New Zealand's prison population has increased rapidly as a result of Labour's increase in police numbers of around 2,500, a much high crime resolution rate by the Police, and tougher laws on bail, sentencing and parole.

Four new prisons and around 3,300 additional prison beds have been created to cope with a 71 percent increase in prison numbers since the latter part of the 1990s. Increased security in prisons has resulted in a sharp decline in prison escapes, down 84 percent since the late 1990s. Tougher measures, including drug dogs, have helped reduce contraband entering prisons and drug tests show a decline in drug taking by two thirds from 34 percent down to 14 percent.

Prison Numbers

Labour will increase its **focus on dealing with the causes of crime**, including by addressing neglect and abuse of children in dysfunctional families.

Labour will work to further **reduce the supply of and demand for illegal drugs and reduce abuse of alcohol**.

Labour will put **increased resources into early interventions** to nip offending in the bud, and will continue to work to bring down reoffending rates through the **provision of meaningful rehabilitation programmes**.

Upgrading Prison Security and Facilities

Labour will continue the process of **improving prison security** and work through a programme to replace obsolete and uneconomic prison facilities beginning with Mt Eden.

Gang Members in Prisons

Under **Labour**, continued **association with criminal gangs while in prison will count against getting parole**.

Contraband in Prisons / Telephone Jamming and Monitoring

Labour will bring into force its **Corrections Amendment Bill**, which will make it harder to bring contraband into prisons and make it easier to detect such items and punish those who use and peddle them.

Drug and Alcohol Treatment

Labour will continue to **expand Prison-based drug and alcohol treatment programmes** subject to the level of need and the availability of skilled drug and alcohol rehabilitation personnel.

Work in Prisons

Labour will seek to create nearly **1,000 new jobs for prisoners** – providing work habits, experience and skills – to reduce reoffending by 2010.

Literacy and Numeracy

Labour will provide for literacy and numeracy training for around 1,850 prisoners per year.

Mental Health Needs

Labour will put in place a **mental health screening tool** to better identify and make provision for mental disorders suffered by inmates.

Other Rehabilitation Programmes

Labour will continue to develop programmes such as Kia Marama and Te Piriti which deal with child sex offenders, where New Zealand has achieved world-leading success in preventing reoffending.

Labour will further expand other programmes such as Maori Focus Units and Faith Based Units which have achieved promising results, subject to full evaluation of their success.

Community Corrections

Labour will continue to ensure that **Community Corrections** is adequately resourced.

Privatisation

Labour opposes private prisons.

Prevention

Labour will give **priority to funding proven and effective programmes to tackle youth offending**.