

Profile Comparison of Gender Diverse Offenders and the General Offender Population

Gender diverse offenders and offenders at men's institutions were higher risk and need relative to offenders at women's institutions; however, all three study groups had high rates of correctional program completion.

Why we did this study

Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) recently completed an initial profile of gender diverse offenders, which highlighted that they were a heterogeneous group assessed as high static risk and dynamic need with low reintegration potential and an entrenched criminal history.¹ However, previous research did not explore how gender diverse offenders compare to the broader federal offender population. Therefore, this study was undertaken to provide a comparative profile of federal gender diverse offenders during incarceration compared to the general in-custody population.

What we did

A total of 155 gender diverse offenders were included in the study between December 27, 2017 and September 5, 2021. Federal offenders housed in men's ($N = 11,783$) and women's institutions ($N = 542$) were included as comparison groups. Demographic, sentence, and offence information were examined, as well as criminogenic risk and need information and indicators of institutional behaviour (e.g., institutional incidents and disciplinary charges).

What we found

On average, gender diverse offenders were older than offenders in women's institutions but were similar in age to offenders in men's institutions. Similar proportions of the gender diverse offender group and offenders in women's institutions were Indigenous (48% and 46%, respectively), with over half of both groups incarcerated in the Ontario or Prairie Regions. Overall, gender diverse offenders and offenders in men's institutions were less likely than offenders in women's institutions to be on their first federal sentence, with gender diverse offenders being most likely to be serving a long-term sentence (ten years or more or an indeterminate sentence), to have committed a violent offence or to have a history of sexual offending.

The criminogenic risk and need profile of gender diverse offenders were similar to the general population at men's institutions, although over one-third of gender diverse offenders and offenders at women's institutions had identified responsivity concerns. In addition, gender diverse offenders were more likely than the other two groups to be classified as maximum security at admission.

Almost half of all study groups had a guilty disciplinary charge while gender diverse offenders were more likely than the other two groups to have institutional incidents, particularly behavioural, assault related, or contraband incidents. Gender diverse offenders and offenders at women's institutions were more likely to be assigned to correctional programming; however, among those assigned, all three groups had high rates of completion (91% to 98%). Over half of gender diverse offenders and offenders at women's institutions participated in educational interventions compared to a third of offenders at men's sites. Participation in institutional employment was also higher for gender diverse offenders and offenders at women's sites.

What it means

Further emphasizing the heterogeneous nature of the gender diverse offender population, this study situates the federal gender diverse offender sub-population within the broader general offender population.

For more information

Smeth, A., Farrell MacDonald, S., & Cram, S. (2024). *Profile Comparison of Gender Diverse Offenders and the General Offender Population* (Research Report R-483). Ottawa, Ontario: Correctional Service of Canada.

To obtain a PDF version of the full report, or for other inquiries, please e-mail the [Research Branch](#). You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

¹ Farrell MacDonald, S., Smeth, A., Cram, S., Garrel, S., & Derkzen, D. (2022). *Examination of gender diverse offenders* (R-442). Ottawa, ON: Correctional Service of Canada.