



Àmbit social i criminològic

RESEARCH

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Study of reoffending in high risk releases from prison (2010-2013) (EXECUTIVE REPORT)

Authors

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Reoffending in high risk releases from prison

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1. Introduction to the investigation

The General Directorate of Prison Services (GDPS from now on) has interest in knowing which has been the career path followed by the released prisoners who have been evaluated as HIGH risk of violent reoffending by the *RisCanvi* and have gotten out of prison from 1st or 2nd penitentiary degree. This study shows the recidivism of the group, once they have passed some years in freedom. The aim is to obtain significant and complementary information about the inmates of high risk of recidivism to allow the GDPS to have more data before making decisions and to improve relapse and control policies. The study is presented in 3 results blocks:

INDEX OF PRESENTATION OF THE RESULTS

Block 1	Criminogenic characteristics of high risk prisoners released	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Differences from the general profile of the prison population 2. Differences between the released high risk prisoners' profile (No.=365) acc. to the type of violent crime in the sentence: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Sex offence (No.=34) b) Violence against women -VIGE- (No.=77) c) Other types of general violence (No.=198) d) More than one type of violence in <i>basic offence</i> (No.=56)
Block 2	Reoffending by the high risk prisoners released	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Comparison of reoffending by the high risk prisoners released (release in 2010; No.=120) with that of the ordinary prison population² 2. Characteristics of reoffender (2010-2013) 3. Characteristics of reoffender according to type of violent crime
Block 3	Treatment	<p>Differences between the high risk prisoners released according to the type of treatment they have received in prison:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Yes specialised treatment No pharmacological (No.=38) b) No specialised treatment Yes pharmacological (No.=123) c) Yes specialised treatment Yes pharmacological (No.=179) d) No specialised treatment No pharmacological (No.=25)

TECHNICAL FILE OF THE INVESTIGATION

Territorial sphere	Catalonia
Conditions met by the population that is the object of study	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) They were serving a sentence for a violent crime and were released definitively from 1st or 2nd grade or security measure between 2010 and 2013. 2) At the time of release they showed a negative evolution in prison and/or a HIGH prognosis of violent reoffending according to the <i>RisCanvi</i> criteria. This is a tool for structured clinical assessment of the prisoners which is generally and systematically used by the Catalan prison services². <p>The study follow up the whole sample (No.= 365) from the moment of their release until 30/5/2016 to find out if they had reoffended. The monitoring period was from a minimum of 2.5 to a maximum of 6.5 years.</p>
Type of reoffending	Penitentiary reoffending (return to prison, whether preventive or penal) and reoffending with a new <i>community sanction or measure (CSM)</i> .
Source of the data	SIJJ (Community Sanction or Measure Information System) SIPC (Penitentiary Information System of Catalonia)

2. Evolution of high risk releases from prison for the period 2010-2013

Year of release from prison and type of crime	2010		2011		2012		2013	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Sex offences	7	5.8	8	9.4	9	12.3	10	11.5
Violence against women / Gender violence (VIGE)	18	15.0	19	22.4	21	28.8	19	21.8
Violent crimes (general)	73	60.8	46	54.1	30	41.1	49	56.3
More than one type of violent crime	22	18.3	12	14.1	13	17.8	9	10.3
Total	120	100	85	100	73	100	87	100

There are no significant differences between the different years in the type of crimes sent up to the prosecutor's office

Diagram 2. Global distribution according to type of crime

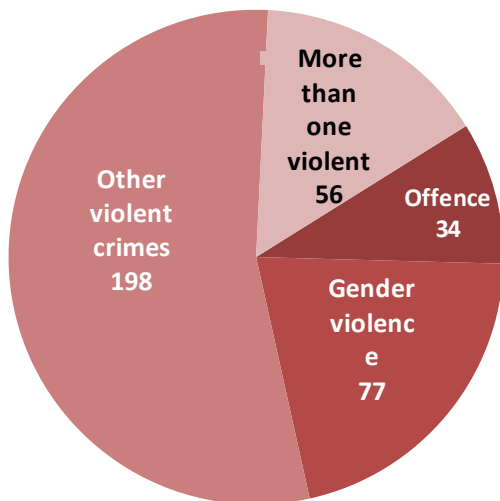


Diagram 3. Global distribution according to territory

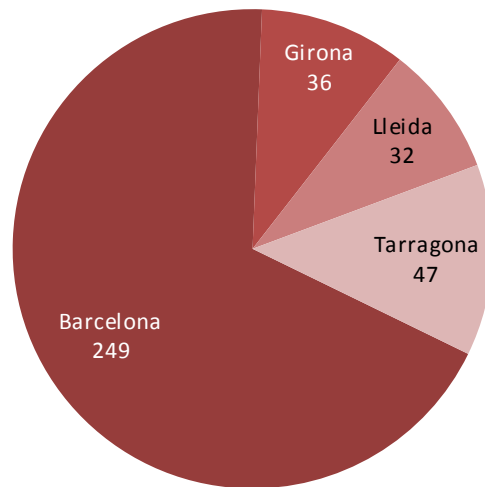


Table 2. Year of definitive release from prison and provincial prosecutor's office the information comes from

	2010		2011		2012		2013	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Barcelona	83	69.7	48	56.5	52	71.2	66	75.9
Girona	14	11.8	11	12.9	6	8.2	5	5.7
Lleida	10	8.4	13	15.3	3	4.1	6	6.9
Tarragona	12	10.1	13	15.3	12	16.4	10	11.5
Total	120	100	85	100	73	100	87	100

There are no significant differences between the different years in the type of crimes referred to the prosecutor's office

High risk prisoners released every year (in percentage terms) have maintained similar within the 4 years of study, in terms of:

- Type of violent crime
- Province where the released prisoner lives

For most of variables studied (262 out of 289) no significant differences have been found according to the year of release. The results for each year are similar, except in the variables set out below. When there are differences, they have to do with a comparison between the group of prisoners from 2010 and those of the 2013 group. From the results of that comparison we observe that in 2013 there are fewer cases than in 2010, but that is because the actions have been adjusted to the most serious cases. There are more regressions, more disciplinary files, greater length of sentences (1000 days difference, with an average length of sentence in 2010 of 1734 days as opposed to 2671.45 days in 2013), while the cases pending and the breach of measures have been reduced. Over those years the percentage of prisoners taking part in treatment programmes and the number of interviews with the prisoners recorded by all the professionals has increased.

Significant differences between groups of high risk prisoners according to year of release (2010 vs. 2013)

penal	% prisoners with expulsion order	In 2013 there is a higher percentage of prisoners with expulsion order than in 2010
	Cases pending	In 2013 there is a lower percentage of prisoners with cases pending than in 2010
	Civil liability	In 2013 there is a higher percentage of prisoners than in 2010
penitentiary	Preventive prison	In 2013 there is a higher percentage than in 2010
	Grade regressions	In 2013 there is a higher percentage than in 2010
	Special supervision modules ⁵	In 2013 there is a higher percentage of prisoners who are there more often than in 2010
	Treatment team interviews	In 2013 there is a higher percentage of interviews than in 2010
	Interviews with jurists	In 2013 there is a higher percentage of interviews than in 2010
	Interviews with educators	In 2013 there is a higher percentage of interviews than in 2010
	Interviews with psychologists	In 2013 there is a higher percentage of interviews than in 2010
	No. interviews with social workers	In 2013 there is a higher percentage of interviews than in 2010
	No. C and D assessments in SAM ⁴	In 2013 there is a higher percentage of bad assessments (C and D) in the motivational assessment system than in 2010
	Drug programmes	In 2013 there is a higher percentage of prisoners on them than in 2010
	Sex offence programmes	In 2013 there is a higher percentage of prisoners on them than in 2010
	Violent crime programmes	In 2013 there is a higher percentage of prisoners than in 2010
	Length of sentence	In 2013 prisoners serve a longer sentence on average (2.671.5 days) than in 2010 (1,648.2 days)
	RisCanvi	Self-harm
Interruption of sentence		In 2012 and 2013 there is a higher percentage of prisoners assessed as <i>moderate</i> risk while in 2010 and 2011 there is a higher percentage of <i>high</i> risk prisoners
Item 9. Increase of seriousness		In 2013 there is a higher percentage than in 2010
Item 10. Conflicts between prisoners		In 2013 there is a higher percentage than in 2010
Item 11. Breach of measures		In 2013 there is a lower percentage than in 2010
Item 12. Disciplinary proceedings		In 2013 there is a higher percentage than in 2010
Item 19. Occupation problems		In 2013 there is a higher percentage than in 2010
Item 30. Drug abuse		In 2013 there is a higher percentage than in 2010
Item 37. Self-harm	In 2013 there is a higher percentage than in 2010	

Table 3. Distribution of the high risk prisoners released according to the prison they have been in

CP	No.	%	CP	No.	%	CP	N	%
Men BCN	224	61.4	Tarragona	61	16.7	Women BCN	11	3.0
Quatre Camins	137	37.5	Lledoners	60	16.4	Obert 1 BCN	7	1.9
Brians 1	128	35.1	Girona	44	12.1	Obert Lleida	4	1.1
Brians 2	126	34.5	Joves BCN	40	11.0	Obert 2 BCN	1	0.3
Ponent	94	25.8	Figueres	31	8.5			

Note: a prisoner may have been in more than one prison and so the percentage sum of all the prisons is more than 100%

RESULTS. Block 1: The profile of the high risk prisoners released

3. Differences between the general characteristics of the prison population and those of the high risk prisoners released

Compared with the general profile of the prison population² the high risk release group shows a longer and more violent criminal career, as well as a far more negative behaviour in prison; Spanish prisoners are overrepresented and we would emphasise that half the foreigners have expulsion orders in force at the time of release.

Concerning the RisCanvi variables, the population of high risk prisoners released has a personal biography with far more risk variables (higher percentage of prisoners with a history of violence, dysfunctional childhood, early start of criminal activity, etc.). Moreover, almost all the personality variables show a more conflictive profile. This is also a population with less family and social support.

Diagram 4. Differences in the SIPC variables

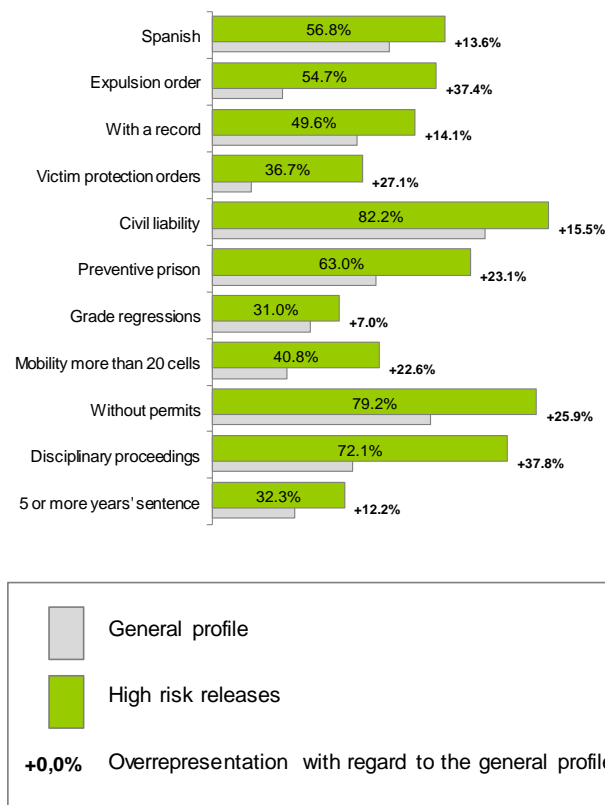
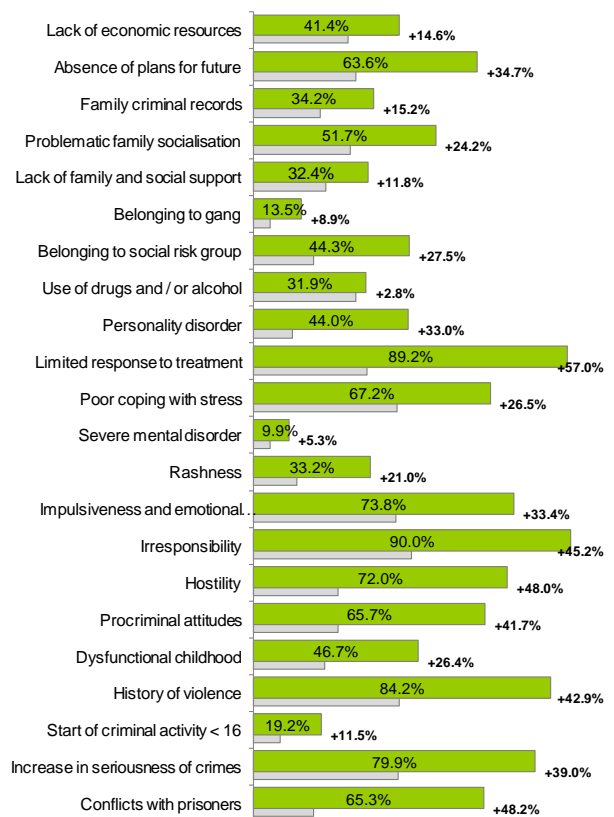


Diagram 5 Differences in the RisCanvi variables



From the results of diagrams 4 and 5 we can conclude that:

The personal characteristics of the high risk prisoners (1), of their social and family environment (2) and of their prison history (3) are far more negative than those of the rest of the prison population. In this context, it seems reasonable that variables related to progress in prison and access to other prison benefits, such as leave permits or progress with the grade, are well below the average.

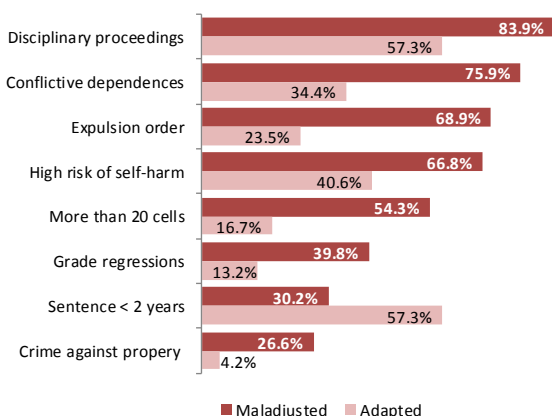
We would emphasise three ideas from the results: first, *limited response to treatment*, 89.2% in the case of the high risk prisoners released and 57 points difference from the general prison population. That variable marks the main difference from the rest: taking part voluntarily in their treatment. Second, concerning the *personality disorders* variable: 44% of presence in high risk prisoners released and a difference of 33 points with the ordinary prison population. Third, the slight percentage difference in the *drug abuse* variable:

despite showing higher percentages than the rest of the prison population, the difference is very low if we bear in mind the differences observed in the other variables. A global interpretation of those diagrams is that the profile of needs of the population that emerges provides a basis for a specialised, high intensity intervention, given its complexity and difficulty.

3.1. Characteristics of the released prisoner with a *maladjusted profile* in prison

Of the group of high risk prisoners released in this section we will analyse the ones pointed out in *RisCanvi* as *high risk of committing intrainstitutional violence* (No.=199 cases, 67.5%), which we will call a **maladjusted profile**, in order to see if their behaviour marks differences in all the variables cross-checked with the other subjects in the group and if that maladjustment has a relation with greater reoffending afterwards.

Diagram 6. Main differences in the *maladjusted*



A higher proportion of the prisoners in the maladjusted group are serving a long sentence, in which the main crime is *against property*, and more often show a high risk of self-harm. The irregular foreigners in this group more frequently have an expulsion order open.

They show a more difficult coexistence in the prison which takes the form of:

They change cells far more than average (*maladjusted* 35.5 cells, *adapted* 16.4 cells)

They are placed in more special supervision modules⁵: (*maladjusted* 54, modules, *adapted* 1.4 modules)

They are involved in more very serious incidents (art.108 RP):

(*maladjusted* 5.8 incidents, *adapted* 1.3)

They are involved in more serious incidents (art.109 RP): (*maladjusted* 6.0 incidents; *adapted* 1.4)

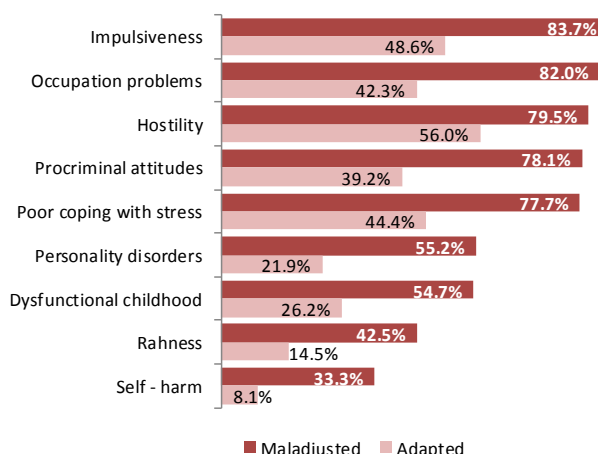
If we look at the *RisCanvi* variables we shall also find great differences between the high risk prisoners released who have been defined as a *maladjusted profile* and the ones who have not. Diagram 7 sets out the ones where the contrast between the two groups is very notable.

The *RisCanvi* personality variables (impulsiveness, hostility, procriminal attitudes, personality disorders, etc.) are the ones that show the greatest contrast between the *maladjusted profile* and the adapted profile.

We find that a higher proportion of the ones with the *adapted* profile have a medium educational level and abuse alcohol more.

Use of methadone also marks differences: the *maladjusted* 25.9% as opposed to the 9.6% of the *adapted*.

Diagram 7. Differences picked out in *RisCanvi*



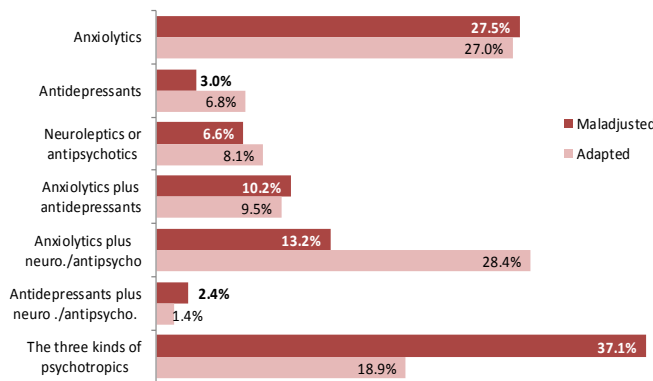
Without being so strongly contrasted, but also with significant differences, we find that the *maladjusted* stand out negatively in the following variables:

- They started their criminal activity younger
- They have had histories of violence
- They have relatives with criminal records
- Their socialisation is problematic
- They belong to social risk groups
- They are younger when they commit the crime
- Their educational level is low
- They are serving longer sentences
- They spend more continuous time in prison
- There is a higher proportion with regressions
- There is a higher proportion who abuse drugs

On the other hand, there are no differences between the two groups (*maladjusted* and *adapted*) in:

- Severe mental disorder
- Promiscuous sexual behaviour
- Limited response to treatment
- Low IQ
- Lack of economic resources
- Lack of family and/or social support

Diagram 8. Are they taking psychotropic medication?



There are only significant differences between groups when we consider the ones taking the three types of psychotropics (there is a higher proportion in the *maladjusted* group) and the ones taking anxiolytics plus neuroleptics/antipsychotic (there is a higher proportion in the *adapted* group).

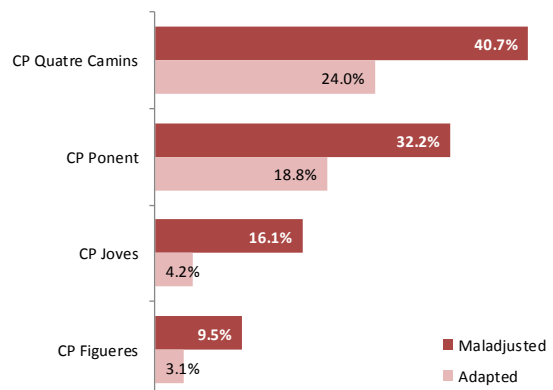
When it comes to the different types of main crimes for which they are serving the sentence, the proportion of *maladjusted* and *adapted* that commit them is similar in all of them, except in the crimes *against property*. 91.8% of the ones who have committed a crime *against property* are in the *maladjusted* group.

We wanted to find out if there is more specific attention paid by the members of the treatment team to this group (if only in terms of the number of interviews).

We have already seen how the high risk prisoners released are distributed according to the prisons they have been in, but now we are interested in specifying whether the distribution between the *maladjusted profiles* and the ones who are not is similar in all the prisons. And the answer is 'No' in 4 prisons that have a higher proportion than they should (see diagram 9). In the other 10 prisons analysed, however, the same proportion is maintained.

Quatre Camins prison is the one with the highest proportion of cases of high risk prisoners with *maladjusted profile* released of the total and Joves has the more differentiated percentage between *maladjusted* and *adapted*.

Diagram 9. Prisons with differences in the *maladjusted*



4. Differences between prisoners according to the type of violent crime committed

Diagram 10. Distribution according to type of violent crime

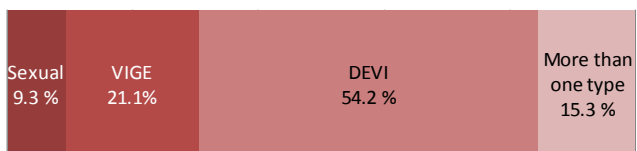


Table 4. Distribution when there is more than one type of violence

Type of violence	No.	%
VIGE - DEVI	34	60.7
Sexual - DEVI	21	37.5
VIGE- Sexual – DEVI	1	1.8
Total	56	100

One of every ten of the total of high risk prisoners released is a *sex offender*; one of every five has committed *gender violence*; and half other *violent crimes* (*against persons* and *robbery with intimidation and/or violence*). Another 15% have committed crimes classified as *more than one type of violent crime* and for which they are serving the *basic sentence*. Of this last group (56 prisoners) 60% have committed crimes of *gender violence* together with *other types of violence*.

Do the different types of violent crime receive similar sentences? No.

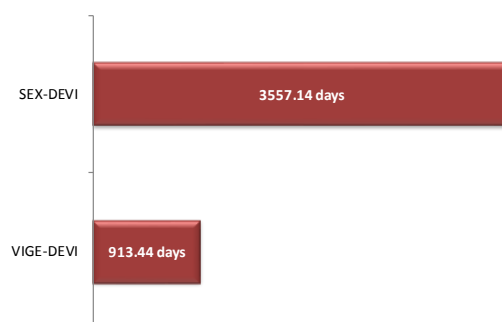
Moreover there is a great dispersion. *Sex offences* are the most severely punished in terms of length of sentence. The length of sentence is similar between *other violent crimes* and the ones that have *more than one type*, with no statistically significant differences. *Gender violence* crimes, however, are the ones that receive shorter sentences with statistically significant differences from the others. If there is more than one type of violence, the *gender* crimes double the length of sentence.

Table 5. Length of sentence according to type of violence

Type of violence	No.	Average in days	Stand. Dev.
Sexual	34	2,553.9	3,136.6
VIGE	77	**412.0	360.6
DEVI	198	2,424.6	2,731.5
More than one type	56	1,927.6	2,759.4
Total	365	1,935.8	2,600.8

** Statistical significance with regard to the other types of violence; p ≤ 0.01

Diagram 11. Length of sentence when there is more than one type of violence



**

Are the characteristics of the prisoners released according to the type of violence in which the crimes they have committed are classified different?

Yes.

Table 6 shows the differences that mark outstanding statistical significance (they appear in bold type and larger letters). In appendix 1 we can find all the variables with the different percentages.

Those convicted of *violent crimes* (DEVI) are the ones who show a more persistent profile in crime. A higher percentage have started to commit crimes earlier, their criminal career has lasted longer, they have problems associated with the use of substances and their problems are part of their marginal and criminal lifestyle. The sentences are long and the prison time is the most complicated of the three groups compared, with disciplinary proceedings, regressions and time in special supervision modules and in 1st grade imprisonment. There is a great risk that they will perpetrate violent acts (against themselves or others) inside the institution. This is the group with the highest percentage of prisoners with personality disorders.

Table 6.

Variables with significant differences according to the main type of violent crime					
		Sex offence %	VICE %	DEVI %	
personal	identifying	Nationality	foreign; 38.2	Spanish; 89.6	Spanish; 72.7
	biographical	Age first time in prison	32	34.8	29
		Dysfunctional childhood	18.5	48.1	54.0
		History of violence	63.3	92.7	83.3
		Start of criminal activity		after 30; 40.3	before 16; 28.2
	behaviour	Drug abuse	17.2	51.0	41.9
		Alcohol abuse	26.7	58.5	17.0
		Personality disorder	38.1	28.0	50.0
		Psychotropic medication	61.8	88.3	82.3
	penal	Victim protection order	29.4	61.0	28.3
		Length of sentence	> 5 years; 44.1	<2 years; 85.7	> 5 years; 43.9
		Type of victim	unknown; 61.3	partner/ex; 72.3	unknown; 48.7
Number of victims		More than 1 victim; 22.6	More than 1 victim; 4.8	More than 1 victim; 24.1	
Intoxication during crime		25.0	20.0	37.6	
Cases pending		46.7	87.5	58.3	
Return for earlier offence		2.9	15.6	6.6	
Breach measures		32.3	83.6	52.9	
penitentiary	In more than 20 cells	47.1	10.4	50.0	
	Special supervision modules	70.6	41.6	63.6	
	Disciplinary proceedings	70.6	54.5	78.3	
	Regressions	21.2	17.6	41.1	
	Incompatibility DG/prison	23.5	7.8	24.2	
	Granted permits	17.6	7.8	28.3	
	Treatment for drugs?	14.7	32.5	37.4	
	High risk self-harm	29.0	58.5	63.3	
	High risk intrainstit. viol.	61.3	53.8	76.0	

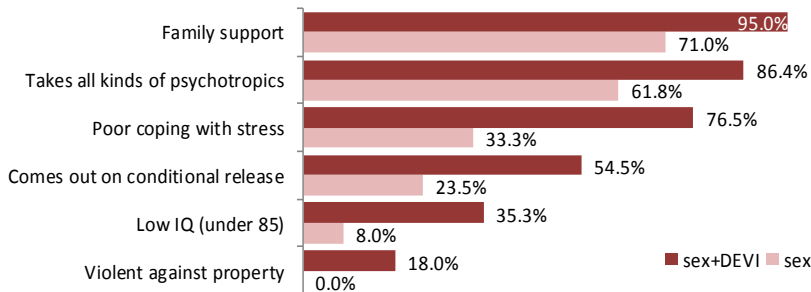
Gender violence perpetrators are the group with most Spanish nationals and people who are older when they go to prison for the first time. They have problems with drugs and alcohol. They have short sentences but this is also the group with most cases pending. Their time in prison is not particularly conflictive although they receive a good deal of pharmacological treatment. The sentence is usually completed in full in 2nd grade and without permits or programmed outings, despite moderate conflictiveness in the prison.

The *sex offenders* have long sentences and moderate risk variables in all the other ones.

4.1. Differences between the sex offender and the sex offender with a range of violence

We wanted to find out whether there are differences between the ones who have a sex offence as the main crime and the ones who accumulate other types of violent crime in the sentence.

Diagram 12. Differences between sex offenders and sex offences+DEVI



We find few differences between the two groups in the global set of variables. The outstanding ones are to do with personality, an aspect in which we find differences between the ones who have a low IQ and in *poor coping with stress* (both aspects overrepresented in the *sex offenders with a range of violence*). Another notable variable is that they take psychotropics and drugs of all kinds in a greater proportion.

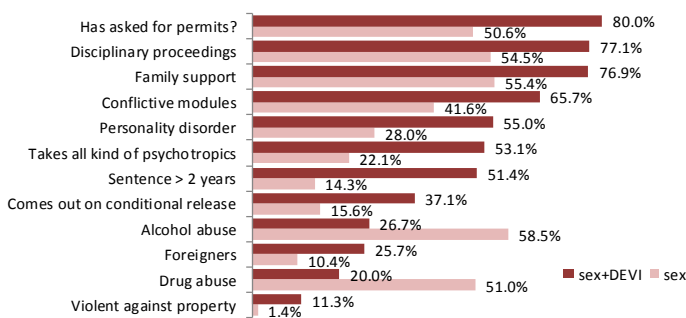
This group of *sex offenders with a range of violence* has a higher percentage of family support than the ones who only commit sex offences.

If we compare the prisons, Brians 1 has a higher percentage of prisoners from the *range of violence* group: 59.1% of this group are in this prison.

On the other hand, the percentage of sex offenders is more distributed around the other prisons. The ones that have the most in rising order are: 29.1% for Brians1; 38.2% for Quatre Camins, 50.0% for Brians2 and Homes, 64.7% (we must bear in mind that a prisoner may have been in more than one prison).

4.2. Differences between offenders who commit violence against women (VIGE) and the polyviolent offender against women (VIGE + DEVI)

Diagram 13. Differences between VIGE and VIGE+DEVI



The ones who commit only VIGE crimes show a higher percentage of drug and alcohol abuse.

For the other variables where there are differences between the two groups, the highest percentages are the *polyviolent gender criminals*. As risk variables a higher percentage of prisoners in this group has disciplinary proceedings, passes through special supervision modules, has personality disorders, uses all kinds of psychotropics and has longer sentences).

We must be very prudent in the interpretation of the results of these groups, since the criminogenic characteristics and needs are quite different within each one. Among the VIGE there are prisoners serving a sentence for breaching restraining orders or similar and/or coming from failed community sanction or measure (CSM).

In both types of crime (sex offences and gender crimes) we find similar variables in the *polyviolent criminals* group:

- They have been released without being put on conditional release
- There is a higher percentage using psychotropics and drugs of all kinds

RESULTS. Block 2: Reoffending by the high risk prisoners released

5. Rate of reoffending by the high risk prisoners released⁵ and comparison with the rate of the general prison population

Diagram 14. Comparison of rates

Rate general prison population

Rate high risk prisoners released



The high risk prisoners released have 5 points more reoffending than the ordinary prison population.

6 of every 10 high risk prisoners released have not returned to the Catalan penal execution system in the following 6.5 years of monitoring

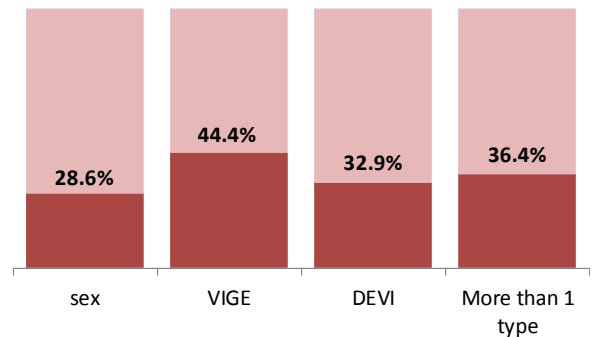
Table 7. Rate according to main crime committed in the basic offence. Comparison with rate of ordinary prison population

Main type of crime (just one crime)	Rate high risk prisoners released	Rate ordinary prison population
Against persons	31.4%	22.3%
Sex offences	41.7%	19.5%
Against property	54.5%	43.8%
Drugs	*	14.1%
Traffic	*	19.1%
Others	33.3%	26.6%

* There are not enough cases (2 drugs, 1 traffic) to give a rate

The high risk prisoners released are more often reoffenders than the ordinary prison population in all categories of main crime studied (Table 7), notably the sex offenders.

Diagram 15. Rate of the high risk prisoners released according to the type of violent crime (bearing in mind all the crimes committed within the basic offence)



The ones who have committed a *gender violence* crime in the sentence they have just served are the ones who show the highest rate of reoffending, although the differences are not statistically significant (diagram 15).

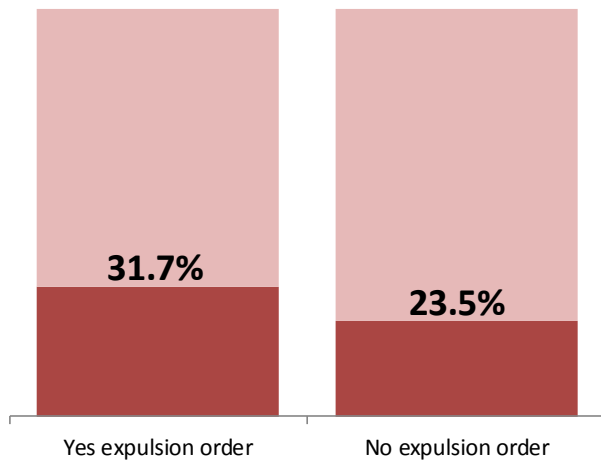
Table 8. Rate of reoffending according to type

Type of rate	Rate
General reoffending	35.0%
Violent reoffending	25.0%
Sexual reoffending	3.3%

Maladjusted behaviour in prison (disciplinary proceedings, number of changes of cell, etc.) **IS NOT ASSOCIATED** with subsequent reoffending.

People may show a very high institutional maladjustment in the prison but that does not mean a larger number of new crimes detected after their release from prison.

Diagram 16. Rate of reoffending by foreigners according to whether or not they had an expulsion order



Another notable datum has to do with expulsion orders for irregular foreigners. In the profile of the high risk prisoner released we have explained that 54.7% (of the 41 cases of irregular foreigners) had an expulsion order open.

We wanted to find out whether they had returned to prison for a new crime. In 13 cases (31.7%) they have reoffended, which means that the expulsion has not been applied and they have stayed in Catalonia without documents. There are no significant differences between the two groups in terms of reoffending.

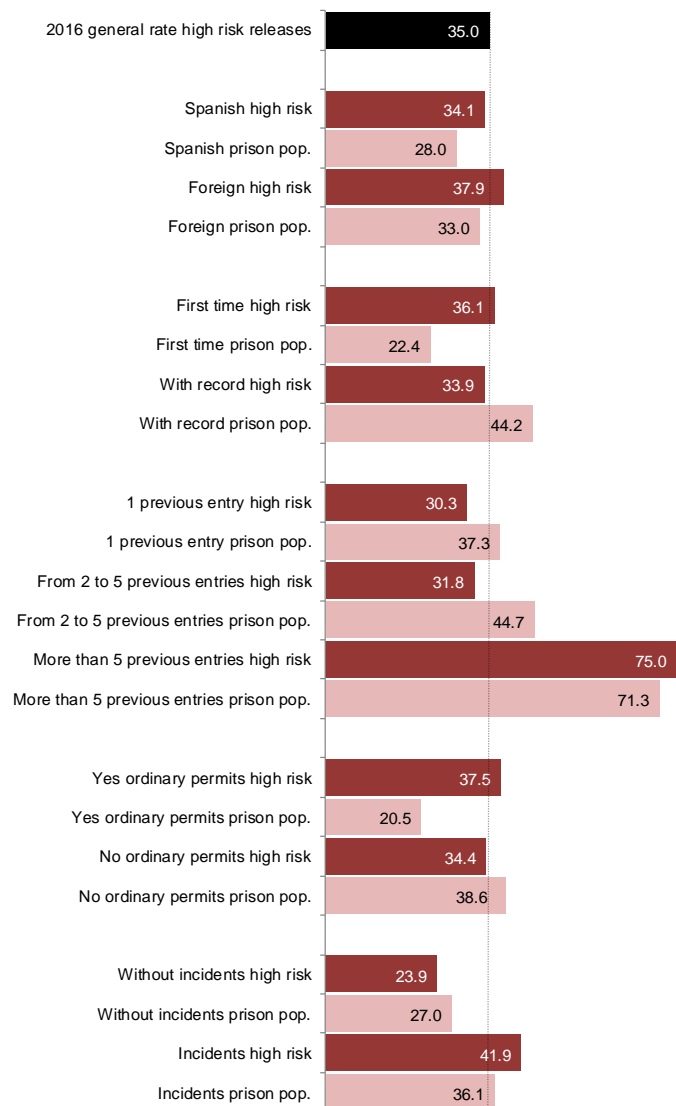
The fact of having an expulsion order pending execution or not having one at the time of the release of the high risk prisoners is not a variable that has any influence on reoffending more.

From diagram 17, which gives the specific rates for reoffending compared with the general population, an outstanding fact is that the high risk prisoners released have higher rates of reoffending than the ordinary prison population, as was to be expected from their profile.

We should emphasise the variables *having been to prison 5 times before* and *having disciplinary proceedings* as substantial predictors of new reoffending.

On the other hand, *being granted permits*, which in the ordinary prison population was a good predictor of not reoffending, does not discriminate one group from the other here.

Diagram 17. Specific reoffending rates according to variables



6. Time taken to reoffend and other characteristics of reoffending

361.05 days

average time taken to reoffend by the high risk prisoners released

336.14 days

time taken to reoffend by the general prison population

The high risk population takes more time to reoffend than the general prison population. Nevertheless, the averages vary greatly according to the type of crime committed, as shown in Table 10.

Table 9. Time taken to reoffend by the high risk prisoners released in 2010 by intervals (reoffending in penal execution)

Monitoring interval	No.	% valid	% accumulated
0- 3 months	14	27.5	27.5
3 to 6 months	4	7.8	35.3
6 months to 1 year	14	27.5	62.7
1-2 years	12	23.5	86.3
2-3 years	4	7.8	94.1
3-4 years	2	3.9	98.0
4-5 years	1	2.0	100.0
5-6 years	0	0.0	
6-6.5 years	0	0.0	
Total	51	100	

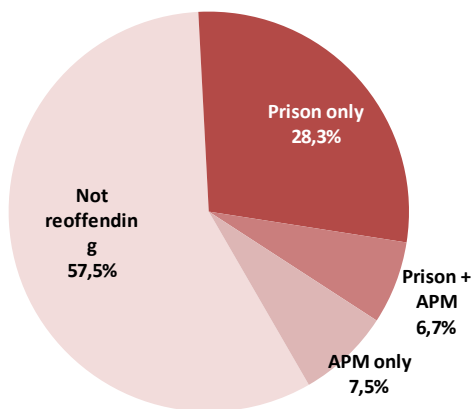
Once again it is demonstrated in this investigation, as in earlier ones, that 4 years is **enough monitoring time** to detect reoffending by adult offenders in prison. None of the high risk prisoners released in 2010 have reoffended from the 5 years of monitoring and they may be considered **reformed**.

Table 10. Time taken to reoffend according to the main crime committed in the basic offence

	Against property	Other crimes	Sex offences	VIGE	Against persons
High risk prisoners released	98.2 days	274.0 days	339.5 days	354.8 days	476.6 days
Gen. prison. pop.	313.2 days	336.5 days	433.1 days	353.53 days	388.7 days

Note: we have ignored the drugs and traffic crimes for the few cases represented in the group of high risk prisoners released, as we mentioned above

Diagram 18. Type of measure imposed on the released high risk reoffender



The penal responses received by the high risk prisoners released are very similar to those of the general prison population except that as a percentage they receive twice as many CSM (4 points more).

The rate of reoffending in penal execution for the general prison population (2014) was 33.9% (return to prison + alternative penal measures)

This rate (return to prison + CSM) for the high risk population released is **42.5%**.

Table 11: Crimes committed in the first reoffending

Crime category	No.
Against persons	37.0%
Sex offence	7.4%
Against property	24.1%
Drugs	3.7%
Traffic	3.7%
Others	24.1%
Violent crime	55.6%
Non-violent crime	44.4%

7. Profile of the high risk released reoffender (2010/2013)

This analysis group consists of all the reoffenders who return to the penal execution system (including the ones who return to prison and/or the ones sentenced to an CSM) over the 4 years' monitoring. However, we should bear in mind that the monitoring time has not been the same in all cases, as we have already pointed out in the technical file of the investigation. Table 12 shows the main differences between reoffenders and non-reoffenders and picks out only the variables where we have found statistically significant differences. In appendix 2 we can find all the variables with the different percentages.

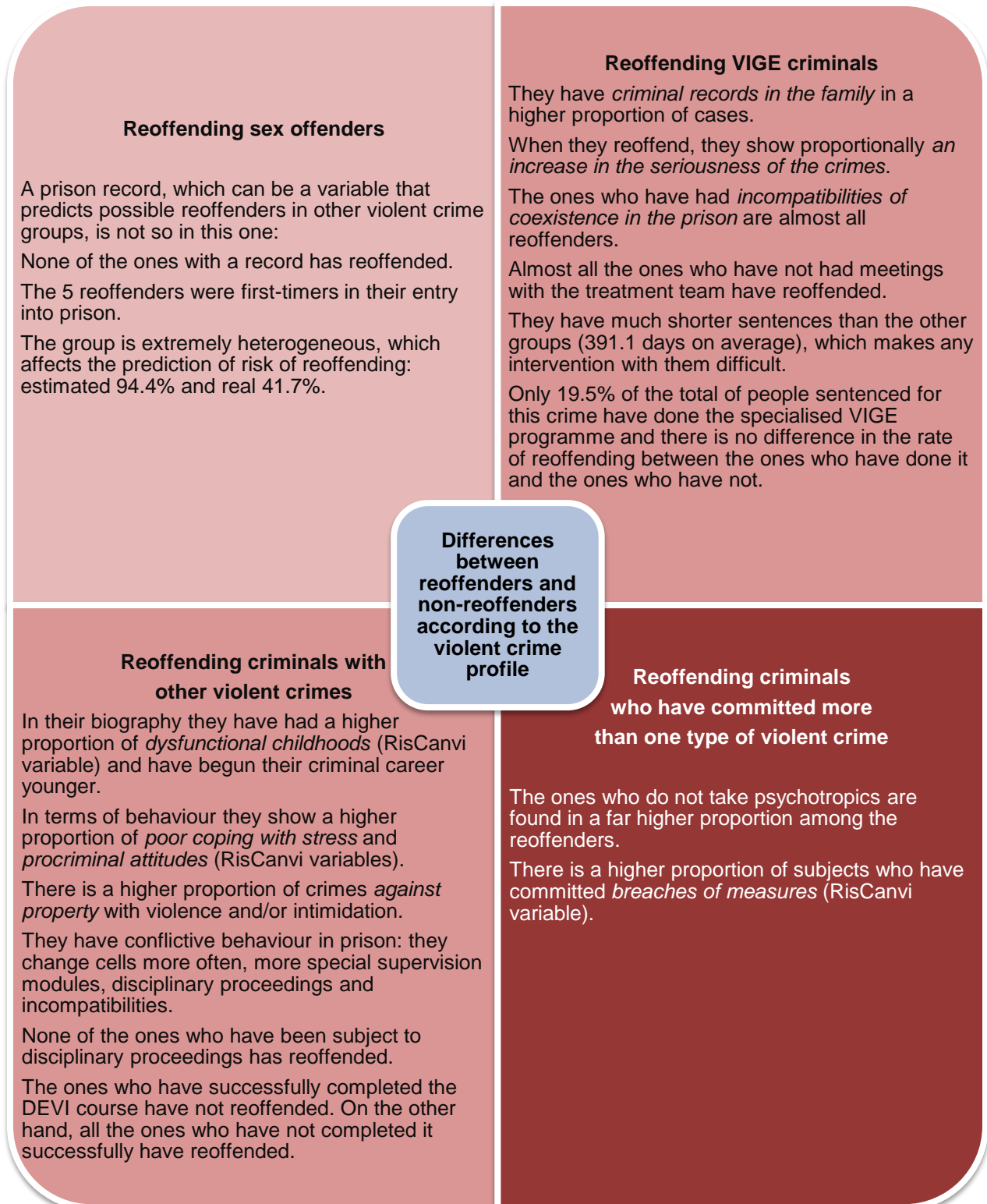
Table 12. Variables with significant differences according to the reoffending of the high risk prisoners released

		Non-reoffenders	Reoffenders	
personal	biographical	Dysfunctional childhood	40.7%	56.3%
		Start of criminal activity	Over 30 28.9%	Before 16 28.1%
		Age first time in prison	31.9	28.1
		Age at basic sentence crime	34.4	31.3
		Age at release 2010	40.6	37.1
	behaviour	Drug abuse	30.1%	46.1%
		Psychotropic medication	77.8%	91.1%
		Takes methadone	15.9%	27.6%
penal	Number previous imprisonments	0.94	1.41	
	Type of basic offence crime	Sex offence 14.8%	Property 20.7%	
	Breach measures	52.1%	69.2%	
penitentiary	Disciplinary proceedings	67.8%	79.3%	
	Serious incidents (art.109)	3.3 incidents	6.0 incidents	
	Special supervision modules	3.1	5.1	
	Number of cells	25.6	35.2	
	Incompatibility DG/prison	16.1%	27.4%	
	Completed DEVI programme	Successfully 100.0%	Successfully 63.6%	
	% C and D assessments in SAM ⁶	59.1%	66.3%	
	No. interviews educator	12.8	8.2	
	No. interviews social worker	9.7	6.6	

In the other variables studied (remember that the total is 289) we have found no significant differences. We can observe a certain parallelism between the outstanding features of the reoffenders and the *maladjusted* profile defined above. That can be explained by the fact that the number of *maladjusted* profile cases is double that of the *adapted* profile. However, we should remember that we have found no direct relation between *maladjusted* behaviour in the prison and being a more persistent reoffender.

8. Profile of the reoffender according to the type of violent crime

On page 11 we presented the differences in the profiles of the high risk prisoners according to the type of crime committed: sex offences, gender violence, other violent crimes and more than one type of violent crime. Below, for each of those 4 groups, the variables that mark differences between reoffenders and non-reoffenders are presented.



RESULTS. Block 3: Treatment

9. Specialised treatment and pharmacological treatment: characteristics

Table 13. High risk prisoners released distributed according to whether they have undergone specialised treatment and taken psychotropic medication

		Specialised treatment	
		NO	YES
Psychotropic medication	NO	25 (6.9%)	38 (10.4%)
	YES	123 (33.7%)	179 (49.0%)

Of the high risk prisoners released in these 4 years of study (2010-2013), 59.4% had been doing specialized treatment during their sentence and a higher percentage (82.7%) had been given psychotropic medication.

The results we present below are intended to bring out the differences between the 4 groups: NONO (No treatment, No medication); YESNO (Yes treatment, No medication); NOYES (No treatment, Yes medication) and YESYES (Yes treatment, Yes medication).

In appendix 3 we can find all the variables with the different percentages.

What are the main characteristics that differentiate each of the 4 groups? We have selected the ones that stand out in each of them in the following diagram.



10. Impact of the treatment on reoffending and on other variables

Table 14. Treatment and rates of reoffending

	Prison rate	CSM rate	Pen.Exec rate (prison + CSM)
NONO	8.0%*	8.0%	16.0%*
YESNO	18.4%*	5.3%	21.1%*
NOYES	34.1%*	7.3%	39.8%*
YESYES	34.6%*	10.6%	41.3%*
General	31.0%	8.8%	37.0%

The ones who have needed psychotropic medication reoffend more, with statistically significant differences, than the ones who have not.

* Statistically significant differences $p \leq 0.05$. Note: the penal execution rate is not the sum of the other two: there are subjects who have reoffended more than once and have received both responses (CSM and prison).

Table 15 shows the relation between the treatment received by the prisoners and the proportion who have been assessed by professionals as high risk of institutional violence and violent reoffending using RisCanvi.

Table 15. Treatment and prognosis of high risk

	High risk intra-institutional violence	High risk violent reoffending
NONO	55.6%	100.0%
YESNO	59.5%	91.9%
NOYES	63.3%	94.4%
YESYES	73.3%	94.7%
General	67.5%	94.6%

There are no statistically significant differences in the assessments of any of the groups

Most of the subjects have a prognosis of violent reoffending (a far higher rate than the one that actually occurs). That justifies the fact that in most of the cases the specialised programme according to the crime committed is imposed as part of the treatment. Does it have an impact on reoffending? No, as we can see in Table 16. There are no differences between the ones who have done the specialised treatment and the ones who have not. For that reason alone this has a minimum impact on the later reoffending behaviour of those subjects.

Table 16. Relation between specialised treatment and reoffending

	Prison rate	CSM rate	Pen.Exec. rate (prison + CSM)
Have NOT done specialised treatment	29.7%	7.4%	35.8%
HAVE done specialised treatment	31.8%	9.7%	37.8%
General	31.0%	8.8%	37.0%

There are no statistically significant differences. Note: the rate of penal execution is not the sum of the other two: there are subjects who have reoffended more than once and have received both responses. There are no statistically significant differences between rates.

Relation between success⁷ with the specialised treatment and reoffending

Do the prisoners who complete specialised treatments with a positive assessment reoffend less than the ones who do not have such an assessment?

The DEVI programme yes.

- All the ones who have not successfully completed the programme (both YESNO and YESYES) have reoffended (8 subjects).
- None of the YESNO who has successfully completed the programme has reoffended (10 subjects).
- 60% of the ones who have successfully completed the programme in the YESYES group have not reoffended (20 subjects).

On the VIGE, SAC and Toxicomanies programmes, we have not found differences, when it comes to reoffending, between the ones who have *successfully* completed and the ones who have not.

Relation between success⁸ of the specialised treatment and granting of permits

Do the prisoners who complete specialised treatment with a positive assessment have more ordinary leave permits? No

If we compare the prisoners who have *successfully* completed a programme and the ones who have not, we find that there are no significant differences between them when it comes to being granted permits. And that occurs on the 4 specialised programmes (SAC for sex offences, VIGE for gender violence crimes, DEVI for violent crimes and Toxicomanies).

Successfully completing the specialised programme is not a guarantee of being granted permits.

Relation between disciplinary proceedings and following the treatment programme

Do a higher proportion of the prisoners with the most disciplinary proceedings take part in specialised programmes?

We find a relation between having disciplinary proceedings and completing the DEVI programme:

- 92.3% of the ones who have disciplinary proceedings in the YESNO group (12 subjects) and 95.8% of the YESYES group (46 subjects) have done the programme.
- For the other programmes (SAC, VIGE and Toxicomanies) we have not found any relation between these variables.

If we now look at the **number of interviews** of the treatment professionals with each of the groups, Table 17 reflects the average number of meetings and the significant differences.

Table 17. Groups and number of interviews (average) with the treatment professionals

	Educ.	Jurist	Psychol.	Soc. worker
NONO	4.4**	1.6**	1.4**	6,1
YESNO	17.3**	5.8**	5.6**	7.3
NOYES	4.8**	1.2**	3.3**	6.8
YESYES	15.0**	4.6**	7.9**	10.3
Average	11.1	3.4	5.7	8.5

** Statistically significant differences $p \leq 0.01$.

The time put in by all the professionals is significantly greater in the cases when the prisoner is doing treatment, except in the case of the social worker, who does a similar number of interviews.

Is there a relation between the **number of interviews** treatment professionals hold with the prisoner and the level of **risk assessed** in RisCanvi?

We have found a certain relation, although we should be very prudent in our interpretation because the number of low risks is very small owing to the selection of the sample.

Table 18. Relation between number of treatment interviews and predicted risk

	Predicted risk	Intrainstit. violence	Violent reoffending
Average interviews educator	High	12.8	12.2
	Medium	11.0	8.0
	Low	19.9**	29.5**
	Total	12.8	12.8
Average Interviews jurist	High	4.0	3.6
	Medium	2.6	0.8
	Low	8.9**	14.5**
	Total	4.0	4.0
Average interviews psychologist	High	7.3	6.5
	Medium	5.0	9.8
	Low	5.7	7.1
	Total	6.6	6.6
Average interviews Social worker	High	11.2	9.9
	Medium	7.2	9.4
	Low	9.7	13.3
	Total	10.0	10.0

** Statistically significant differences $p \leq 0.01$.

For the **number of interviews** with treatment professionals and the relation with the prisoners' **disciplinary proceedings**, Table 19 collects the only significant results to emerge. The social educator holds far more meetings with the ones with disciplinary proceedings than the groups treated with psychotropic medication. That is also the case of the psychologist where there is treatment. The results for the NONO and YESNO cases are not shown because there is no statistical difference.

Catalan prisons also use as an instrument for treatment the **SAM (motivational assessment system)**, in which the prisoner obtains a score for correct behaviour which gives him the right to certain small privileges and/or prison benefits. Every quarter the 4 levels: A, B, C and D grade the prisoner's behaviour, the first being the best and C and D the poorest. We have created a percentage variable of the poor assessments (C and D) over the total quarterly assessments done and we have produced it with different personal variables for the prisoners, prison treatment and reoffending to see if there is a relation with the positive or negative results obtained in the SAM.

Table 20 shows the results, with the significance and the noteworthy variables in each case.

Table 19. Disciplinary proceedings and average of interviews with the treatment professionals

	Discipl. proc.	Edu.	Jurist.	Psychol.	Soc. worker
NOYES	Yes	5.9**	1.2	3.8	5.7
	No	2.9**	1.2	2.4	8.7
YESYES	Yes	16.7**	5.1*	8.8*	11.0
	No	7.5**	2.3*	4.5*	7.3

* Statistically significant differences $p \leq 0.05$.

** Statistically significant differences $p \leq 0.01$.

Table 20. Relation between % of C and D assessments and the total assessments done with the SAM and certain control variables

Variable measured	Percentage of C and D assessments of the total of assessments done	
Personal		
Drug abuse (1)	No 60.9%	Yes 67.4%
Alcohol abuse (1)	No 59.3%**	Yes 73.1%**
Limited response to treatment (1)	No 52.6%*	Yes 65.9%*
Personality disorder (1)	No 62.0%	Yes 64.9%
Poor coping with stress (1)	No 55.3%**	Yes 67.9%**
Procriminal attitudes (1)	No 58.7%	Yes 64.4%
Rashness (1)	No 62.0%	Yes 63.6%
Impulsiveness + emotional instability (1)	No 53.6%**	Yes 67.6%**
Hostility (1)	No 52.4%**	Yes 66.9%**
Irresponsibility (1)	No 47.5%**	Yes 66.0%**
Takes psychotropics?	No 50.0%**	Yes 64.4%**
Takes methadone?	No 60.3%*	Yes 68.9%*
Penitentiary and treatment		
Disciplinary proceedings	No 55.5%*	Yes 64.2%*
Regressions	No 65.4%*	Yes 58.6%*
Interruptions of sentence	No 63.0%**	Yes 41.1%**
Granting of permits	Yes 41.0%**	No 67.3%**
Interviews treatment team	Found 62.4%	Not found 55.8%
Drugs programme	Successful 57.3%*	Unsuccessful 68.0%*
SAC programme	Successful 42.5%	Unsuccessful 58.7%
VIGE programme	Successful 42.5%	Unsuccessful 58.7%
DEVI programme	Successful 43.9%**	Unsuccessful 72.4%**
Prediction and reoffending		
Risk of ininstitutional violence (1)	Low 55.2%	High 63.6%
Risk of violent reoffending (1)	Low 56.2%	High 64.3%
Risk of interruption of sentence (1)	Low 64.6%	High 60.0%
Prison reoffending	No 59.3%*	Yes 67.2%*
Global reoffending	No 59.1%*	Yes 66.3%*

* Statistically significant differences $p \leq 0.05$. **Statistically significant differences $p \leq 0.01$
Prova T for equality of averages. (1) RisCanvi variable

In general all the personality and prison intervention risk factors correlate with the most negative percentages of the everyday behaviour assessed through the SAM, except for *regressions* and *interruptions of sentence*, which surprisingly correlate in reverse.

Concerning the specialised treatment the results are uneven: some have a relation with the results of the SAM (drugs and DEVI) and others do not (SAC and VIGE). To end this analysis of Table 19, we see that some negative percentages on the SAM do correlate with subsequent reoffending.

12. Conclusions

1. The prisoners who are the object of this study show many violent reoffending risk factors, more than the rest of the ordinary prison population.

There are many risk variables (personal characteristics, the social and family environment and penal and prison career) with far higher prevalence percentages than the rest of the prison population (up to 40/50 points difference depending on the variable).

2. High risk releases made each year of the studied period (2010-2013) have maintained similar and without significant differences regarding: type of violence committed and province of residence of the released inmate.

By type of violence: DEVI (violent crime) 54.2%; VIGE (gender violence), 21.1%; sexual (sex offence), 9.3%; more than one type of violence, 15.3%.

By province of residence: Barcelona accumulates 68.4%, Tarragona 12.9%; Girona 9.9% and Lleida 8.8%.

3. Over the period studied (2010-2013) the personal, social and criminological variables of the subjects have not changed either, although the selection of cases has been adjusted to the most serious ones in terms of penal situation and prison behaviour.

That means that we find differences between the data for 2013 and 2010 in some penal and prison variables. In 2013, the prisoners show higher proportions of: longer sentences; demands for civil liability; expulsion order processes; application of preventive prison.

For the variables linked to the conditions of serving the sentence we find a higher percentage of prisoners with: regressions, disciplinary proceedings, entry into special supervision modules and, more often, conflicts between prisoners and a higher percentage of low assessments (C and D) on the SAM.

4. The rate of prison reoffending of the high risk prisoners released is 35.0%. If we add to prison reoffending the cases that reoffend and are sentenced to an CSM the rate of penal execution is 42.5%

6 out of 10 high risk of recidivism inmates released haven't reappeared in the catalan penitentiary system during the following 6,5 years after monitoring. In relation with the ordinary prison population it is a rate 5 points higher; lower, for example, than the rate for the prisoners who leave directly from 1st grade (44.0%) and similar to the rate for the ones who leave from 2nd grade.

5. In the population which is the object of the study, showing oneself to be *maladjusted* in prison is not associated with being a more likely reoffender, nor with being violent.

Although 67.5% of the cases studied that have been assessed with a high risk of committing *intra-institutional violence* according to the RisCanvi (what the study has labelled "*maladjusted group*") and although this profile presents a greater proportion than the ones who have been classified as *adapted*, risk variables (personal, penal and penitentiary characteristics), this maladjusted behaviour in prison does not mean that once they are released there is a higher rate of reoffending or that when they do reoffend it is more frequently with a violent crime.

6. The study confirms that a prisoner who has not reoffended after 5 years' monitoring could be considered *reformed*

This is a recurrent datum in scientific literature. In our studies with adult offenders we have discovered that from the 4th year the reoffenders push up the rate a maximum of 2 or 3 points. And in this one specifically (with a monitoring time between 5.5 and 6.5 years) we have also seen that the last reoffender committed a new crime after 1,538 days, 4.2 years after leaving prison. There are no reoffenders detected after the 5th year of monitoring.

7. In the case of the high risk prisoners released, serving a longer sentence in prison has no kind of impact on reoffending

The rate of the ones who have sentences less than 2 years is 38.5%, whilst the rate of the ones who are serving ones longer than 5 years is 36.7%. The difference is not statistically significant.

The average length of sentence in 2010 was 1,734 days and the average for 2013, 2,671.5 days. Although the length of sentence over the period 2010-2013 has increased by almost 1000 days, there are no statistically significant differences in the time they take to reoffend or the rate of reoffending.

8. 59.4% of the high risk prisoners released have done at least one specialised treatment programme. 82.7% have received psychotropic medication while serving the sentence

The ones who have received psychotropic medication are more frequent reoffenders: of the NOYES (no treatment, yes medication) 39.8% reoffend; and of the YESYES (yes treatment, yes medication) 41.3%. On the other hand, the NONO (no treatment, no medication) and the ones who have only received treatment (YESNO, yes treatment, no medication) show lower rates of reoffending (16.0% and 21.1% respectively). The differences are significant.

9. The different types of violent crime involve quite different characteristics and needs of intervention for each group of prisoners

The prisoners who commit violent crimes except for gender and sex offences (DEVI group) coincide with the most persistent criminal and prison career and the most complex personal and social problems.

The prisoners who commit gender violence crimes (VIGE group) are the ones who complete the least specialised treatment and at the same time the ones who serve the shortest sentences. The ones who have more than 1 type of violent crime have a VIGE crime included in more than 60% of the cases.

The sex offenders included in the study are quite diverse and far higher risk than the ones studied in the ordinary population and therefore a specialised intervention by the treatment team is justified.

10. The DEVI programme is the only programme that shows a change association with the rate of reoffending.

None of the YESNO who have completed the programme successfully has reoffended (10 subjects). 60% of the YESYES group who have completed the programme successfully have not reoffended (20 subjects). All the ones who have not completed the programme successfully (both YESNO and YESYES) have reoffended (8 subjects).

11. Having completed a treatment successfully is not related to starting to be granted permits

Completing a specialised programme successfully is not associated with starting to be granted leave during the sentence.

12. In the group of the high risk prisoners released, being granted permits is not a predictor of not reoffending

Which does happen in the rest of the ordinary prison population. The granting of ordinary permits during the sentence is associated in all the studies we have done with the prisoners released who are not reoffenders. On the other hand, among the ones who have not been granted permits and are released directly and definitively from prison we find a higher proportion of reoffenders.

13. Prediction of the risk of violent reoffending in the high risk prisoners released is a highly complex assessment

It is clear that the study group is filtered precisely by the selection of the *high risk of reoffending* itself. The *problem* is that, in this group which is already so selected, we rarely succeed in predicting the ones who will reoffend and the ones who will not (94.6% false positives).

The risk assessment tool used systematically since 2010 (RisCanvi) has considerably improved the focusing of the needs to be met in the different types of people sentenced, but the study shows that, once the high risk ones have been selected through the RisCanvi, more precise tools are required to select again, and now in the high risk group to distinguish the ones who show the most risk from the ones who do not when those prisoners share highly complex characteristics and needs.

13. Proposals

1. It is necessary to identify the high risk prisoners as soon as possible, especially the ones who are susceptible to becoming part of this group of special complexity (not waiting for the moment just before the release) and invest specific and specialised resources for their treatment (following the Risk-Need-Responsiveness model).

One possibility would be to set up a specialised and highly trained team to manage these cases in each prison. They would propose the measures to be taken and guide the decision-making of the Treatment Board, the Management Centre and the Prison Supervision Judge.

2. To improve the prediction of the risk of reoffending in the specific group dealt with in this study. To use the right instruments to complement the information obtained from the RisCanvi which enable us to better explain the differences between the prisoners in this group (specific tests -PCL-R, SVR-20, SARA, HCR-20- or others) and intervene in consequence.
3. To carry out a specific assessment of the SAC, DEVI, VIGE and Toxicomanies treatment programmes which are used in prisons. To assess the efficiency and efficacy of each programme according to its goals and to the reoffending associated with a real benefit from the programmes (changes in the prisoner). The study must serve to adjust the contents of the programmes and see what they are useful for and what they are not, and why not, and to think, if necessary, of new intervention strategies.
4. To specifically review the management of VIGE cases with a short sentence (less than 2 years): the treatment programmes and the intervention strategy.
5. To promote greater coordination between the treatment teams and the medical teams in tackling the cases of special complexity and risk. It is important for both teams to have shared information and act in coordination. Moreover, we must guarantee continuity after release and adherence to the treatment in the community.
6. To draft an intervention plan 1 year before the release (release plan) that contains specialised actions: individual, group, family and community. To appraise the possibility of introducing the assignation of a mentor to accompany the prisoner following the lines of action that are being marked in the research project currently being executed, *Transition from prison to the community*.
7. To pass on these results to prison professionals, especially when designing strategies for improving the issues we have identified. To see whether that leads to some type of specific training for particular groups of professionals or to monitoring and assessment of projects.
8. To improve coordination of the high risk release procedure and assess the effect of any actions that begin with its activation.

Notes and bibliographic references

Notes:

¹SGPRS (2014): *Release procedure for prisoners with a high risk of reoffending in violent crime or with security measures for violent crimes*. Report of activity 2014. Internal document

²Capdevila, M. (coord.) et al. (2015): *Rate of prison reoffending 2014*. Barcelona. CEJFE. Available on the web:

http://justicia.gencat.cat/web/.content/home/ambits/formacio_recerca_i_docum/recerca/cataleg_d_investigacions/per_ordre_cronologic/2015/taxa_reincidencia_2014/taxa_reincidencia_2014_cat.pdf

³To be able to compare the rate of reoffending of the high risk prisoners released with the ordinary prison population in this chapter we have taken the No.=120 prisoners released in 2010. All the results are presented only from this sample.

⁴SAM is the acronym of Sistema d'Avaluació Motivacional (Motivational Assessment System), used in prisons as a tool for the modification of behaviour by obtaining quarterly levels of classification, which give the right to prison benefits and other improvements. Levels A and B would be optimal and levels C and D would be deficient.

⁵The special supervision modules are used for stabilising high containment institutional behaviour for cases of prisoners with extreme risk of escape or persistent extreme dangerousness where the educational and technical intervention is intensive and specialised to guarantee aspects of internal security or containment of crisis situations (*Rehabilitation model in Catalan prisons*, 2011:62). The special departments where the prisoners are completing 1st grade prison are also included. Available on the web:

http://justicia.gencat.cat/web/.content/enllacos/pdf/model_rehabilitacio_presons_catalanes.pdf

⁶It is considered that a specialised treatment programme is *successful* when the subject scores a positive assessment of more than 66% of the coefficient resulting from weighing *attendance* at the sessions, *attitude* in terms of involvement in the content and *participation* in doing the exercises proposed. The 3 items, assistance, attitude and participation, are scored at each session and globally as a percentage of success each quarter.

⁷To find out about the description of each of the RisCanvi variables and in general all the ones used in this work chapter 2 of methodology of the study mentioned on the *Rate of prison reoffending 2014* can be consulted.

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