



Female Offender Strategy Delivery Plan

Equalities Statement

1. This Equalities Statement relates to the measures that will be included in the Female Offender Strategy Delivery Plan (FOSDP). The MoJ assessment of the Female Offender Strategy is still relevant and therefore this Equalities Statement is supplemental to the Female Offender Strategy Equalities Impact Assessment.
2. This document is a statement of how the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) has demonstrated due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in the design, development and proposed delivery of the ambitions relating to the Female Offender Strategy Delivery Plan. This document also assesses the potential equalities benefits and risks that have been identified from the key measures proposed in the Delivery Plan. It considers any necessary mitigating actions which have been introduced to reduce the likelihood of the risks; and includes an assessment of any equalities benefits that are likely to accrue.
3. The MoJ has a legal duty to consider how the proposed policy proposals are likely to impact on the protected characteristics and take proportionate steps to mitigate or justify the most negative ones and advance the positive ones. MoJ records its fulfilment of its equality duties by completing an EIA.
4. In line with the ongoing nature of the PSED, we will continue to assess the equalities impacts of the Delivery Plan's proposals. We have asked consultation questions during the development of the Female Offender Strategy in 2018, and have worked with stakeholders via Women in the Criminal Justice System Expert Group to develop the FOSPD.

Summary of the Female Offender Strategy Delivery Plan's objectives

5. The Female Offender Strategy¹ published in 2018 set out the Government's aim to reduce crime and see fewer women entering the justice system, going into custody, and reoffending. The Strategy recognised that the drivers of women's offending, and the routes out differed from those of male offenders, and that women often presented with different needs. It noted too, that outcomes for women in the justice system, particularly those on short custodial sentences, were often poorer than for men, and there was a growing evidence base that a tailored and trauma responsive approach was most effective in reducing reoffending.
6. Four years on from the publication of the Strategy, we have reviewed our work programme and vision. We remain committed to the three aims set out in the Strategy but have concluded that to these should be added a fourth, focused on

¹ Female Offender Strategy - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

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effective resettlement in the community. The core objectives of the Female Offender Strategy Delivery Plan (FOSPD) are as follows:

- Fewer women entering the criminal justice system and reoffending;
 - Fewer women serving short custodial sentences with a greater proportion managed successfully in the community;
 - Better outcomes for women in custody;
 - Protecting the public through better outcomes for women on release
7. In developing the FOSDP, we undertook detailed equality analysis for the key proposals, which is summarised in this document; and in line with the ongoing nature of the PSED, we will be updating the analysis in light of any new evidence of equalities considerations, including ongoing stakeholder engagement.

Equality duties

8. Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (“the EA Act”) requires Ministers and the Department, when exercising their functions, to have ‘due regard’ to the need to:
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the EA Act;
 - Advance equality of opportunity between different groups (those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not); and
 - Foster good relations between different groups (those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not).
9. Paying ‘due regard’ needs to be considered against the nine “protected characteristics” under the EA Act – namely race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, religion and belief, age, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity.

Equality considerations

10. Careful consideration of potential equalities issues has been undertaken at each stage of the policy development and decision-making process. Timely advice on potential equalities implications has been provided to Ministers to support the FOSPD.
11. The summary is as follows:
- **Direct discrimination:** The Female Offender Strategy and the Delivery Plan are about testing different ways of working to improve outcomes that are currently worse for women than men. Consequently, the delivery plan sets out a number of initiatives that are to be delivered to women but not to men with the same needs. This raises the risk that sex discrimination claims could be brought by men unless it can be demonstrated that either:

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- one of the single-sex services exemptions in schedule 3 of the Equality Act 2010 applies and it can be shown that not delivering equivalent services to men is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim; or
- positive discrimination under s158 Equality Act 2010 is permitted, it can be clearly identified that women have different needs or suffer a disadvantage compared to men and not delivering equivalent services to men is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
- **Indirect discrimination:** Indirect discrimination occurs where a provision, criterion or practice is applied to a person with a protected characteristic; it puts (or would put) persons who share that protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage when compared with persons who do not have that characteristic; and it puts (or would put) the person concerned at a particular disadvantage. Our initial assessment recognises that offenders with protected characteristics of race (ethnic minority groups) and disability are over-represented in the criminal justice system. We do not consider that the proposals are likely to result in any offenders with any of these protected characteristics suffering a particular disadvantage when compared to someone who does not share the protected characteristic. We will continue to keep this under review, including in these areas (by way of illustration):
 - There is a risk that some digital proposals, for example the digital and data platform to enable all female prisoners to develop personal learning plans, may indirectly discriminate against people with protected characteristics as a result of the 'digital divide' affecting people with learning disabilities and those on low incomes, as well as those from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities who may be particularly digitally illiterate. To mitigate this risk, we will explore adaptations to digital devices to ensure all groups can have equal access.
 - We will monitor outcomes for all female offenders, including by ethnicity, to ensure women with protected characteristics are not facing disadvantage compared to women who don't share a protected characteristic. Data and evidence on outcomes for female offenders, including breakdowns by ethnicity, will be provided as it becomes available, via National Statistics, published survey and evaluation data and other research publications.
 - Through the Women in the Criminal Justice System Expert Group, the government will be held to account by expert providers and the voluntary sector to ensure that impact on women with protected characteristics is considered in the delivery of our commitments.
- **Harassment and victimisation:** We do not consider there to be a risk of harassment or victimisation as a result of these proposals. We aim to ensure all our staff and offenders within our care are treated fairly. The proposals will help prevent instances of harassment and victimisation through the provision of training for staff, including the introduction of training to meet the needs of offenders with the protected characteristics of age and

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disability; and developing a retention framework for all staff within both the male and female prison estate with the advancement of equality of opportunity at its centre.

- **Discrimination arising from disability and the duty to make reasonable adjustments:** We do not consider that the proposals are likely to result in any discrimination against people with disabilities. All of our proposals recognise that we must continue to make reasonable adjustments for disabled offenders to make sure appropriate support is given to enable offenders to access treatment and rehabilitation programmes and feel safe and secure. Promoting a better understanding of the requirements of offenders with mental health needs or conditions such as learning disabilities, autism and ADHD or an acquired brain injury is considered likely to benefit disabled people.
- **Advancing equality of opportunity:** We have taken steps to advance equality of opportunity for different groups of people with protected characteristics within our proposals. This has been done in response to the existing evidence of the differing needs of female offenders including those with shared protected characteristics compared to those who do not share the protected characteristic. Although the measures contained in the FOSPD are designed to improve the treatment and outcomes for all female offenders, there are some specific areas that are likely to advance equality of opportunity for women with protected characteristics:
 - **Fewer women entering the criminal justice system and reoffending:** MoJ will provide multi-year grant funding to community services for women, including specialist services that focus on women from ethnic minority groups.
 - **More women managed effectively in the community:** The production of training materials for court services to give information about local services, women's centres, and efficacy of local interventions will include information for court staff on support available for women with protected characteristics, including women from ethnic minority groups to divert women away from custody into the community.
 - **Better outcomes for women in custody:** The FOSPD will design advocacy services that ensure women (including a focus on ethnic minority and pregnant women) will continue to have their voices heard by improving access and by engaging in the commissioning of these services.
 - **Better outcomes on resettlement:** Initiatives such as better training and employment support and the development of resettlement passports will be tailored to the specific needs of women, and the particular needs of women based on their ethnicity, cultural background or those women who are pregnant or mothers.

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- **Fostering good relations between different groups:** Fostering good relations in the context of the PSED involves, in particular, having due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding. Our aims to implement mandatory training for staff in women's prisons to address the diverse needs of all women in their care intends to improve relationships between staff and women in their care.

Evidence and analysis relating to female offenders:

12. Female offenders aged 18 and over are a minority in the criminal justice system. Whilst women make up half of the adult general population, on 31st December 2022 there were 3,054 adult women in prison, which was just 4% of the total prison population².
13. Whilst studies about female experiences of imprisonment are rare and usually small-scale, evidence suggests that women report negative impacts upon their physical and mental health³ and report more negative effects of long-term imprisonment than men⁴.
14. The type of offending committed by female offenders aged 18 and over differs from that committed by adult men. On average, women serve short custodial sentences for non-violent offences⁵, are a low or medium risk of serious harm to the public⁶, and are persistent, low level offenders⁷. In the year ending June 2022, the average custodial sentence length was 15 months for adult women and 23 months for adult men⁸. Over the same period, 62% of immediate custodial sentences for women were for six months or fewer, compared with 45% of men⁹. The majority (94%) of women serving custodial sentences of fewer than 12 months who have an assessment are low or medium Risk of Serious Harm¹⁰.
15. Women commit less serious offences than men¹¹ and a greater proportion of female defendants are prosecuted by bodies other than the police¹². In the year ending June 2022, women sentenced for theft, summary non-motoring offences and miscellaneous crimes against society also accounted for over half (58%) of all women given custodial sentences of less than 12 months (compared to 47% of men)¹³. 12% of women and 22% of men were sentenced for indictable/triable either way offences¹⁴. Once remanded in custody at Crown Court, women are

² Offender management statistics quarterly: July to September 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

³ The impact of imprisonment on health: what do women prisoners say? - PubMed (nih.gov)

⁴ Gendered Pains of Life Imprisonment | The British Journal of Criminology | Oxford Academic (oup.com)

⁵ Criminal Justice System statistics quarterly: June 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

⁶ MOJ (2018). Supporting data tables: Female offender strategy. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/female-offender-strategy>

⁷ Criminal Justice System statistics quarterly: June 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ MOJ (2018). Supporting data tables: Female offender strategy. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/female-offender-strategy>

¹¹ Criminal Justice System statistics quarterly: June 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

¹² Criminal Justice System statistics quarterly: December 2021 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

¹³ Criminal Justice System statistics quarterly: June 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

¹⁴ Ibid.

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also less likely to go on to receive a custodial sentence compared to male defendants (56% vs 75% respectively)¹⁵.

16. We know that women in custody are particularly vulnerable, with a higher prevalence of mental health issues than male prisoners; higher prevalence of relationship needs¹⁶ and a self-harm rate seven times higher than that for men, with young women (18-24 years old) accounting for 26% of all incidents in 2021 despite being only 10% of the population¹⁷. Women are also more likely to be primary carers for dependent children¹⁸.
17. Female prisoners are twice as likely to report experience of abuse during childhood (53% vs. 27% men)¹⁹. Female prisoners who report having experienced abuse as a child are more likely to report suffering sexual abuse (67%) than male prisoners who have experienced abuse (24%)²⁰. Female prisoners are more likely than male prisoners to have been taken into care, experienced abuse, and witnessed violence in the home as a child²¹.
18. While in custody, women are also more likely than men to present with specific needs, including a higher prevalence of relationship needs (85% compared to 71%), accommodation (71% compared to 62%), drugs (53% compared to 49%), alcohol (29% compared to 20%) and employability needs (71% compared to 65%)²².
19. The imprisonment of mothers also results in poor outcomes for children. A higher proportion of imprisoned mothers report living with their children prior to imprisonment than imprisoned fathers (~60% vs. ~45%)²³. Evidence also suggests that the imprisonment of mothers has a greater impact on the living arrangements of dependent children than the imprisonment of fathers²⁴. Other research supports this, with one study suggesting that only 5% of women prisoners' children remain in their own home once their mother has been sentenced²⁵. International evidence has found that children with incarcerated parents are at increased risk of antisocial and offending behaviour²⁶.
20. Immediate outcomes for women on release from prison are generally thought to be poor compared to men. Over half of adult women (56.1%) and almost half of

¹⁵ Criminal Justice System statistics quarterly: December 2021 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

¹⁶ Identified needs of offenders in custody and the community from the Offender Assessment System, 30 June 2021 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

¹⁷ Safety in custody: quarterly update to June 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

¹⁸ Female offenders and child dependents (publishing.service.gov.uk)

¹⁹ Prisoners' childhood and family backgrounds - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

²⁰ Ibid

²¹ Gender differences in substance misuse and mental health amongst prisoners - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

²² Identified needs of offenders in custody and the community from the Offender Assessment System, 30 June 2021 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

²³ Prisoners' childhood and family backgrounds - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ MOTHERS IN PRISON (makejusticework.org.uk)

²⁶ Children's antisocial behavior, mental health, drug use, and educational performance after parental incarceration: a systematic review and meta-analysis - (nih.gov)

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adult men (47.3%) released from custody between April to June 2016 reoffended within a year²⁷.

21. Between December 2021 and December 2022, 1,931 women were returned to custody after a licence recall (25,842 men were recalled over the same time period). Failure to keep in touch and non-compliance are the most common reasons women are recalled²⁸.
22. Accommodation and employment outcomes are particularly poor for women leaving custody compared to men. In 2021/22, 37% of women did not have settled accommodation three months after release from prison (compared to 35% of men), with 7% of women released homeless or rough sleeping²⁹. 6% of women were employed six months after release, compared to 15% of men³⁰.
23. Based on the evidence, we have identified a number of disadvantages suffered and needs which are particularly prevalent amongst adult female offenders. We also know that there is evidence that a gender-informed approach that addresses the causes of women's offending, including previous abuse and trauma, is more effective than a gender-neutral approach in rehabilitating female offenders and addressing their often-complex needs³¹.
24. We therefore believe that we are meeting the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty by developing the Female Offender Strategy Delivery Plan. The FOSPD and its associated work support the policy aim of reducing female offending and reoffending, benefitting women in contact with the criminal justice system and wider society.

Consideration of Protected Characteristics

25. This section sets out how we have considered, promoted or otherwise advanced our proposal with reference to the following protected characteristics, including how other protected characteristics interact with the protected characteristic of sex.

Sex

26. Women in custody are significantly more likely than men to have reported five or more different adverse experiences occurring before the age of 16³². There is a focus on transforming the whole custodial estate in the Prisons Strategy White Paper to improve and modernise the facilities and this will benefit the larger proportion of male offenders who are high risk³³ and, on average, sentenced to

²⁷ MOJ (2018). Supporting data tables: Female offender strategy. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/female-offender-strategy>

²⁸ Offender management statistics quarterly: July to September 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

²⁹ Community Performance Annual, update to March 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ For example, Gobeil, R., Blanchette, K., & Stewart, L. (2016). A Meta-Analytic Review of Correctional Interventions for Women Offenders: Gender-Neutral Versus Gender-Informed Approaches.

³² How Does a History of Trauma Affect the Experience of Imprisonment for Individuals in Women's Prisons: A Qualitative Exploration (tandfonline.com)

³³ MOJ (2018). Supporting data tables: Female offender strategy. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/female-offender-strategy>

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custody for longer sentences than female offenders. In the year ending June 2022, the average custodial sentence length was 15 months for adult women and 23 months for adult men³⁴. Over the same period, 62% of immediate custodial sentences for women were for six months or fewer, compared with 45% of men³⁵.

27. Evidence shows that sex shapes experiences of custody and justice, such as the particularly high (73%) reoffending rates of women who receive shorter custodial sentences, which has been linked to higher levels of self-harm within the estate³⁶. 71% of women in prison report having a mental health problem³⁷ according to the Prison Reform Trust.
28. There are elements of the Delivery Plan which constitute direct discrimination because whilst the majority of other initiatives being taken are available to meet the needs of male offenders there are some initiatives that are not available for men who have the same needs. Those that are shared include email reply systems and video calling in the custodial estate, a new Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) framework, the extension of Childcare Resettlement Licence to primary carers as well as sole carers and guaranteed routine access to telephone contact for primary carers in court custody suites.
29. However, there is a wide geographical distribution of the 12 women's prisons across England and, as a result, women can often be held and released a long way from their home address. This can result in children needing to travel long distances to visit their mothers. Therefore, the roll out of in-cell telephony and facilities for overnight family visits which have been included in the designs for the expansion of the women's estate have been prioritised for women to ensure they are treated fairly in comparison to men.
30. Testing new approaches to maintain family ties such as piloting social workers in women's prisons and residential women's centres will allow the department to measure the impact of new interventions with a view to expanding to men, if successful.
31. There are a number of pilots that are being tested across both men and women such as Problem-Solving Courts, of which 1 site is specifically focussed on women, and the Pre-Sentence Report pilot. There are also a number of approaches that will only apply to women due to their specific needs. This includes Mother and Baby Units in the women's estate, the publication of the Women's Prisons Health and Social Care Review and the introduction of health and perinatal pathway managers in closed women's prisons.
32. In addition, in the year ending in June 2022, women accounted for 75% of defendants prosecuted for TV licence evasion, 69% of defendants prosecuted for truancy of a child, and 58% of defendants proceeded against for benefit fraud,

³⁴ Criminal Justice System statistics quarterly: June 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

³⁵ Ibid

³⁶ Bromley Briefings Prison Factfile: Winter 2022 | Prison Reform Trust

³⁷ Ibid

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where the defendant's gender was known.³⁸ We will explore options for wider piloting of the previous small-scale TV licence evasion pilot where women are disproportionately affected.

Age

33. In 2021, women aged 25+ accounted for the largest proportion of adult women (and adult men) prosecuted, sentenced, and given a community or custodial sentence³⁹. As of December 2022, the most common age group for female prisoners was 30-39, accounting for 38% of the women's prison population (33% of men's population). 9% of the female prison population are young adult women (aged 18-24), while 15% are aged 50 or over⁴⁰.
34. Work with young adults in the prison estate has focussed mainly on young men: The Young Adult Strategy began in January 2021, a maturity screening tool for young adult men was introduced into the male estate in July 2019 and is live across all prisons holding young adult men, and a pilot of a new transitions process and use of this new unit at HMP/YOI Deerbolt commenced at the beginning February 2021. As such, there is less support for young adult women compared to young adult men.
35. MoJ aims to level up the provision for young women and produce a Young Women's Strategy, which will be inclusive of all women between the age of 18 – 25 years old. The strategy will cover transition from Youth Custody Sites and those women who come directly into the estate, and will set out the expected service provision from early days in custody to release into the community. In addition to the strategy, there will be two bespoke residential units piloted within our prisons, to allow our young women to live and be cared for in a therapeutic environment taking account of their diverse and complex needs, with the aim of reducing the severity and instances of self-harm.

Disability

36. We recognise that the definition of disability extends to both physical and mental health impairments.
37. Prisoners with disabilities are overrepresented amongst the female offender population and we anticipate this strategy would have a positive impact in relation to this protected characteristic as far as female offenders are concerned.
38. OASys data shows that of offenders (custody and community) with an assessment at 30 June 2017, 21% of women and 10% of men had a mental

³⁸ Criminal Justice System statistics quarterly: June 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

³⁹ Offender management statistics quarterly: July to September 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

⁴⁰ Ibid

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health problem identified; 38% of women and 25% of men had a disability identified; and 32% of women and 28% of men a learning difficulty/challenge⁴¹.

39. The HMPPS and NHSE jointly commissioned Women's Prisons Health and Social Care review will include consideration of health needs and provision of primary care, mental health and substance misuse services.
40. The Prisons Strategy White Paper has committed to reforms to the prison estate which are being developed to reflect the composition of the prisoner population, which includes: a significant number of prisoners who may have conditions such as learning disabilities, autism and ADHD or an acquired brain injury; prisoners with a learning and/or mental health disability.

Gender reassignment

41. The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to discriminate against or harass any person because they are proposing to undergo, are undergoing, or have undergone gender reassignment. Data on gender reassignment is limited.
42. There were 230 transgender prisoners on 31st March 2022, an increase from 197 in 2021. Of these, 187 prisoners reported their legal gender as male, 43 as female. Where ethnicity was known, 10% of the transgender prison population were from ethnic minority background, a decrease from 11% in 2020/21⁴².
43. The figures give an estimate of the number of transgender prisoners and are likely to underestimate the true number. There may be some transgender prisoners who have not declared that they are transgender or had a local transgender case board, and some who have a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC). We do not anticipate the strategy will have any adverse impact on those who share this protected characteristic.

Pregnancy/Maternity

44. Data on the number of women in contact with the criminal justice system who become pregnant is not available. In the 12 months ending March 2022, there were an average of 29 pregnant women at any one time in the female prison estate⁴³. In the 12-months ending March 2022, 88 applications were received for admission into an MBU, more than the previous year when 62 applications were received. Applications have been falling every year since 2016/17, but increased again in 2021/22. Of the applications which resulted in a recommendation from an Admissions Board, 43 applications were approved and 17 refused⁴⁴.

⁴¹ MOJ (2018). Supporting data tables: Female offender strategy. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/female-offender-strategy>

⁴² HMPPS Offender Equalities Report 2021/22 (publishing.service.gov.uk)

⁴³ HMPPS Annual Digest, April 2020 to March 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

⁴⁴ HMPPS Annual Digest 2021/22 (publishing.service.gov.uk)

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45. In 2019, the Joint Committee on Human Rights made a recommendation for collecting and publishing data on pregnancy in custody. We have already implemented this recommendation and in 2021, published our first statistical report on pregnancy and births in the HMPPS Annual Digest, to make this more transparent for the public. We continue to develop this collection, in consultation with stakeholders.
46. For mothers remaining in the custodial estate, there will be a range of provisions which will help mothers to maintain family ties (where it is appropriate) whilst in custody, such as Mother and Baby Units, piloting up to 3 social workers in women's prisons, extension of the provision of Family Engagement Workers in all women's prisons, the completion and publication of the Women's Health and Social Care Review with NHSE and delivery of its recommendations and the introduction of pregnancy support workers in all female prisons and a perinatal pathway across all of the estate.
47. The HMPPS Policy Framework on Pregnancy, Mother and Baby Units and Maternal Separation from Children up to the Age of Two in Women's Prisons, was published on 20 September 2021. This document outlines learning from the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) and introduces wider reforms to the care of pregnant women in custody.

Race

48. Black women are more than twice as likely to be arrested than white women⁴⁵. Further, when sentenced, the odds of imprisonment for ethnic minority women are higher compared with white women⁴⁶. In the year ending June 2022, 19% of ethnic minority female offenders⁴⁷ received immediate custody, compared to 18% white female offenders. Similarly, the average custodial sentence was 3 months longer for black female offenders (19 months) compared to white female offenders (16 months)⁴⁸.
49. As of December 2022, 83% of the female prison population were white, 7% black/black British, 6% mixed, 3% Asian/Asian British, and 1% identified as Other Ethnic Group⁴⁹. Ethnic minority men are even more over-represented, accounting for 28% of the male prison population (13% black/black British; 8% Asian/Asian British; 5% Mixed; and 2% Other Ethnic Group).
50. The 2022 Public Accounts Committee report on Improving the Outcomes for Female Offenders⁵⁰ recommended MoJ should work with specialist providers and experts to establish a set of actions it needs to take to deliver equality of outcomes for ethnic minority women.

⁴⁵ Arrests - GOV.UK Ethnicity facts and figures (ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk)

⁴⁶ Analysis of Gender as a Factor associated with Custodial Sentences for Breach of a Court order (publishing.service.gov.uk)

⁴⁷ This includes offenders of Asian, black, mixed and 'other' backgrounds.

⁴⁸ Criminal Justice System statistics quarterly: June 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

⁴⁹ Offender management statistics quarterly: July to September 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

⁵⁰ Improving outcomes for women in the criminal justice system (parliament.uk)

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51. Since publication of the Female Offender Strategy, we have established the Female Offender Minority Ethnic Working Group (FOME) with government and voluntary sector representatives to improve outcomes for ethnic minority and non-British national women.
52. Additionally, the FOSDP will include specific measures to actively improve outcomes for ethnic minority and non-British national women in the criminal justice system. These include:
- Working with courts and criminal justice partners to raise awareness of the specific issues faced by women who offend, including different cohorts such as ethnically diverse and non-British national women. We will do this by making up-to-date information and evidence of good practice available.
 - We will improve the health and wellbeing outcomes for women in our care and in particular, design advocacy services that ensure women (including a focus on ethnic minority women) will continue to have their voices heard by improving access and by engaging in the commissioning of these services.
 - The Female Offender Minority Ethnic Working Group (FOME) will continue to oversee workstreams and existing projects aimed at improving outcomes for ethnic minority and non-British national women. FOME is leading on a number of workstreams, developing guidance to help ethnic minority women to navigate the criminal justice system.
 - We are also developing cultural competence training for staff that work with women that will look at the impacts of culture, faith, and sustaining family relationships.

Religion or belief

53. Data on the female and male prison population by religion as of December 2022 is published in the Offender Management Statistics⁵¹. We do not anticipate this strategy would have an adverse impact in relation to this protected characteristic as far as adult female offenders are concerned.
54. The Independent Monitoring Boards report on Race Equality highlighted instances where women in contact with the justice system have experienced discrimination in relation to their religion⁵². For example, some women highlighted instances where their religion was not recognised which meant their dietary needs were not met, particularly during periods of religious importance.
55. The FOSDP aims to improve the wellbeing of women in custody through the development of in-house cultural competency training for staff working with non-British national and ethnic minority women in offender management and rehabilitation, to increase awareness of the impact of culture, faith and sustaining family relationships.

⁵¹ Offender management statistics quarterly: July to September 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

⁵² Report shows continuing discrimination for Black, Asian and minority ethnic women in prison - Independent Monitoring Boards (imb.org.uk)

Sexual orientation

56. In relation to sexual orientation, we do not consider the female offender strategy to have any adverse impacts.

57. Overall figures for prisoners are published annually: in 2021/22, of those who declared their sexual orientation, 97% of prisoners identified themselves as heterosexual, while gay/lesbian and bisexual offenders accounted for 1.3% (909) and 1.5% (980) respectively of the total prison population⁵³.

Marriage / civil partnership

58. In relation to the marital/civil partnership status of female offenders, we do not consider the FOSDP to have any adverse impacts. Diverting women out of the criminal justice system should in fact have a positive impact on marriages and civil partnerships.

Welsh Language

59. We have considered our responsibilities under the Welsh Language Act 2010 as part of communications regarding the FOSDP. The FOSDP will also be published in Welsh.

⁵³ HMPPS Offender Equalities Report 2021/22 (publishing.service.gov.uk)