



URBAN INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AND PUBLIC SERVICE ACCESSIBILITY IN QUEBEC

A provincial overview



REGROUPEMENT
DES CENTRES D'AMITIÉ
AUTOCHTONES DU QUÉBEC

December 2018

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Canada 

Québec 

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

NAFC	National Association of Friendship Centres
CA	Census Agglomeration
CAVAC	Centre d'aide aux victimes d'acte criminel (Crime Victims Assistance Centres)
CMA	Census Metropolitan Area
CS	Census Subdivision
INRS	Institut national de la recherche scientifique
IVAC	Indemnisation des victimes d'actes criminels (crime victim indemnity)
RCAAQ	Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec

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THE REGROUPEMENT DES CENTRES D'AMITIÉ AUTOCHTONES DU QUÉBEC (RCAAQ)

Founded in 1976, the provincial association represents and unites 11 Native Friendship Centres in Quebec, which are also members of the National Association of Friendship Centres (NAFC). Holding a shared vision, all affiliated Centres¹ are located in urban areas in Quebec with significant Indigenous populations. In addition to serving as front-line service hubs for Indigenous people in urban areas, the Quebec Native Friendship Centres stimulate cultural revitalization, identity affirmation and citizen mobilization for urban First Nation and Inuit people. The Quebec Native Friendship Centres Movement,² which is the largest service delivery infrastructure for urban Indigenous in Quebec, aims to improve the quality of life of Indigenous people in urban areas, promote culture and build bridges between peoples.

The RCAAQ is a key player in addressing urban Indigenous issues and in ensuring the delivery of services to Indigenous people in cities. Through its expertise and unifying mission, the RCAAQ helps develop concrete solutions and innovative public policies that foster the wellness of Indigenous

citizens living in or passing through Quebec's urban areas. In this regard, the RCAAQ has been working for many years to better document and understand the Indigenous presence in Quebec cities and towns via research, evaluation and consultation.

Research fits into the RCAAQ's primary strategic orientation of contributing to better knowledge and understanding of urban Indigenous realities. All of the RCAAQ's research and assessment projects lend a prominent place to the voice of urban Indigenous individuals, families and communities. All research findings contribute to the elaboration of effective solutions, particularly with respect to urban Indigenous people's access to public services in Quebec.

¹ At the moment, the RCAAQ's member organizations are: Chiboumama Eenu Friendship Centre, founded in 1969, the Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre, founded in 1974; the Centre d'amitié autochtone de La Tuque, founded in 1975; the Senneterre Native Friendship Centre, founded in 1978; the Centre d'amitié autochtone de Lanaudière, founded in 2006; the Centre d'amitié autochtone de Sept-Îles, founded in 2006; Native Montreal, founded in 2012; the Maniwaki Native Friendship Centre, founded in 2016; the Centre d'amitié autochtone du Lac-St-Jean, founded in 2016; MAMUK, managed by the Maison communautaire Missinak in Québec city and founded in 2018; and, the Centre d'amitié autochtone de Trois-Rivières, which became a full member of the RCAAQ in 2018.

² The Quebec Native Friendship Centre Movement is made up of the RCAAQ, the Centres or other urban indigenous organizations affiliated and all members of the Indigenous civil society supporting them.

BACKGROUND

In Quebec, the Indigenous population's socio-demographic characteristics are distinct from those of the general population: individuals are on average younger, families are often larger, and members are significantly more mobile than in the non-Indigenous population (Lévesque, 2016). We also know that the demographic growth of the Indigenous population is faster than that of the greater Quebec population and that it is even greater in urban areas than in the territorial communities.³ Thus, the urban Indigenous presence⁴ has continued to grow and diversify in recent decades in Quebec (Lévesque and Cloutier, 2013).⁵

Making up more than half of Quebec's Indigenous population,⁶ urban Indigenous people can no longer be excluded from the public social, political, economic and legal debates that have an impact on Indigenous Peoples and on Quebec society as a whole. While many Indigenous people are required to travel to urban areas—often to receive specialized services or to flee difficult family or community situations—many also intentionally choose to move to cities in search of personal or professional fulfillment and achievement. Moreover, a growing number of Indigenous people in Quebec are born in cities, and there is now a second or even third generation of urban Indigenous dwellers (Lévesque, 2016).

The Indigenous presence in cities is therefore a relatively new and complex phenomenon in Quebec. In fact, the urban Indigenous population is extremely diverse culturally and linguistically, but also in terms of age, gender, income level, region of origin, family background, schooling, sexual orientation and occupation. However, social, political, economic and administrative issues related to the urban Indigenous presence are still poorly understood and documented in Quebec. Indeed, there is a significant gap in scientific knowledge about this population, and in turn this lack can be an obstacle to the development of services that adequately meet urban Indigenous needs. This situation is exacerbated by a generalized lack of knowledge, among decision-makers and the greater Quebec population, about Indigenous cultures and about the historical, political and legal context specific to Indigenous Peoples.

Studies such as this one are thus needed, both to document urban Indigenous realities and to improve the overall relationships with Indigenous people in Quebec.

³ By "territorial communities" we mean the Indian reserves designated by the *Indian Act*, as well as the Cree and Naskapi reserved lands and the Northern Villages of Nunavik.

⁴ The term "urban Indigenous presence" refers to the Indigenous people who live in or are passing through urban areas which are outside territorial communities.

⁵ For example, the Indigenous population of the cities of Chibougamau, Joliette, La Tuque, Montréal, Québec City and Trois-Rivières all increased by 85% or more between 2006 and 2016 (Statistics Canada, 2008 and 2018).

⁶ According to Statistics Canada's 2016 Census data, it is estimated that 55% of First Nations live off-reserve and that 15% of Inuit live outside of Nunavik in Quebec (Statistics Canada, 2018).



METHODOLOGY

In 2016 and 2017, the RCAAQ conducted extensive data collection to better understand the realities, needs and concerns of the urban Indigenous population regarding access to the public services offered in Quebec. As part of this large-scale province-wide research project, an 82-question survey was distributed to Indigenous adults of all ages, living in or passing through 13 different cities in Quebec.

In each city, pollsters were trained by the research team to recruit participants, distribute the surveys, and ensure smooth data collection. The 13 cities where the survey was distributed are: Chibougamau, Joliette, La Tuque, Maniwaki, Montréal, Québec City, Roberval, Saguenay, Senneterre, Sept-Îles, Shawinigan, Trois-Rivières and Val-d'Or.⁷

A total of 1,723 adults filled out the survey, which focused, on the one hand, on participants' socio-demographic situations and, on the other, their experiences with and impressions of social services, the justice system, victim support services, the education system, the healthcare system, and employment assistance services.

This study draws on the largest urban Indigenous sample yet to be collected in Quebec, which explains the great interest it has stirred. At the provincial level, the sample size confers trust in the results at over 95% for all answers.

It should be noted that as part of this same research project, focus groups were also conducted in three regions of Quebec with key players from Indigenous communities and the Quebec service network. Focus groups were used to complete and fine-tune the research results.

Survey responses and the qualitative data collected during the focus groups were compiled and analyzed. The results provide a provincial overview of the needs of Indigenous people living in or passing through cities. The results also provide a better understanding of the factors that limit the Indigenous people's access to public services provided in the Quebec network.

⁷ Some participants responded from a city where there is no Friendship Centre (Shawinigan) while others answered from a city where the Friendship Centre had existed for less than a year at the time of the data collection (Roberval and Maniwaki).

The following table presents the number of survey participants in each city. The last two rows present general data on the Indigenous population in each city according to the 2016 Census from Statistics Canada.⁸

Table 1: Distribution of respondents in cities and general data

City	Number of respondents	% of respondents who are First Nations members	The city's Indigenous population ⁹	% of Indigenous people in the city
Chibougamau	46	98	520 (CS)	7.0%
Joliette	50	100	930 (CA)	2.0%
La Tuque	112	98	1,200 (CS)	11.2%
Maniwaki	58	94	890 (CS)	24.4%
Montréal ¹⁰	163	66	34,750 (CMA)	0.9%
Québec City	464	91	11,515 (CMA)	1.5%
Roberval	106	99	970 (CS)	10.3%
Saguenay	183	99	6,705 (MCA)	4.3%
Senneterre	50	98	175 (CS)	6.3%
Sept-Îles	96	98	5,250 (CA)	18.7%
Shawinigan	50	99	830 (CA)	1.6%
Trois-Rivières	142	99	2,280 (MCA)	1.5%
Val-d'Or	85	91	2,905 (CA)	8.8%
Other cities	118	–	–	–

At the provincial level, the collected data has been used to present a representative portrait of the urban Indigenous population in Quebec with respect to all the survey's targets. At the local level, however, it must be noted that the sample is not large enough to represent each city's Indigenous population. Local data allow us to identify trends, but do not accurately represent the realities and needs of the Indigenous population in each city.¹¹

These results are major because this study is one the first of its scope on urban Indigenous realities in Quebec. However, given the limited data we have on the urban Indigenous population, the findings

and trends that emerge from this survey must be considered as lines of inquiry or as a starting point for future research and exploration into the various issues. Finally, it is expected and hoped that the results of this survey will support and guide the process of reflection and construction that is needed around service delivery for urban Indigenous people in Quebec.

⁸ The data of the 2016 Census is organized by city size into Census Metropolitan Areas (CMA), Census Agglomerations (CA) or Census Subdivisions (CSD). It should be noted that CSDs always exclude the population of neighbouring or landlocked Indian reserves, while CMAs and CAs include these numbers.

⁹ Number of people who self-identified as Indigenous (First Nation, Inuit or Métis) and declared their main residence in the city, according to 2016 Census data from Statistics Canada.

¹⁰ Please note that 22% of participants in Montréal are Inuit.

¹¹ Remember that the size and composition of this sample frame (i.e. the urban Indigenous population of Quebec) are unknown. These conditions impose a more flexible data collection strategy and therefore call for caution in the interpretation of results, especially in regard to the sample's subgroups.



PRESENTATION OF THE RESULTS

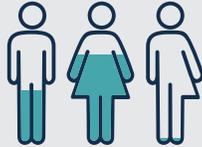
First, the survey findings provide a better understanding of the reality of urban Indigenous people via the descriptive analysis of participants' individual and socio-demographic characteristics. Second, more extensive analysis of the data shed new light on the quality of interactions between Indigenous people and the Quebec public services network, as well as the accessibility of these services. Third and finally, some participants were grouped according to common variables, which allows us to profile some specific groups, such as post-secondary students, families and sexual minorities. Topic sheets thus complete the present provincial overview of urban Indigenous realities and public service accessibility.

IN-DEPTH PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS



LANGUAGE USED TO ANSWER THE SURVEY

86% FRENCH
14% ENGLISH

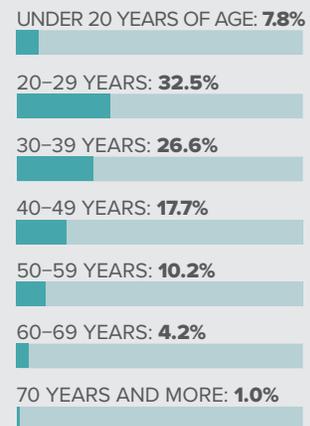


GENDER

36% — MALE
63% — FEMALE
1% — OTHER



AVERAGE AGE: 35 YEARS



PERSONAL SITUATION



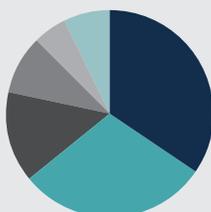
- > FULL-TIME: **21.7%**
- > PART-TIME: **6.7%**
- > SEASONAL WORKERS: **3.8%**
- > FREELANCERS: **2.9%**



- > SOCIAL ASSISTANCE: **23.0%**
- > EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE: **4.8%**
- > WITHOUT INCOME: **4.7%**



ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME



- **34%** — LESS THAN \$10,000
- **29%** — \$10,000-19,999
- **14%** — \$20,000-29,999
- **9%** — \$30,000-39,000
- **5%** — \$40,000-49,999
- **9%** — \$50,000 AND MORE

NATION

- 9.1%** — ALGONQUIN
- 33.6%** — ATIKAMEKW
- 8.2%** — CREE
- 37.4%** — INNU
- 2.4%** — INUIT
- 2.2%** — HURON-WENDAT
- 0.2%** — MALISEET
- 1.4%** — MI'KMAQ
- 0.7%** — MOHAWK
- 0.9%** — NASKAPI
- 3.5%** — OTHER

PRESENCE IN URBAN AREAS

- 15.6%** — FOREVER
- 33.5%** — FOR MORE THAN 5 YEARS
- 22.5%** — 1-5 YEAR(S)
- 15.5%** — LESS THAN 1 YEAR
- 12.8%** — PASSING THROUGH



“The language barrier is very difficult because often, French is the person’s third language.”*

Excerpt translated from the French

“Quebecers don’t know us. They should find out who we are if they want to better serve us and understand our specificities.”*

Excerpt translated from the French

Participants’ profiles show the diversity in the urban Indigenous population in terms of age, socio-economic status, time spent in the city, nation of origin and language. These data are consistent with the preliminary results of another provincial survey, conducted in 2009 and 2010 with almost 1,000 Indigenous people in the 10 cities with a Native Friendship Centre.¹² This smaller provincial survey revealed intense mobility dynamics, close city-community ties, large families and a great diversity of backgrounds, languages and life choices among urban Indigenous people (Lévesque, 2016).

“When I need help but can’t find this help within my family, I feel a little lost.”*

Excerpt translated from the French

“We don’t know what services there are in town.”*

Excerpt translated from the French

“Documentation should be available in English.”*

¹² To learn more: Rolando Lambrana and Jonathan Abitbol, 2013. “La tournée provinciale de l’Alliance de recherche ODENA. Bilan de la phase 1” Cahier Odena No. 2013-01, Alliance de recherche Odena, Réseau de recherche et de connaissances relatives aux peuples autochtones (DIALOG) and Regroupement des centres d’amitié autochtones du Québec, Montréal.

HIGHLIGHTS

PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS



63% reported a household income of less than \$20,000.



33% are unemployed (living either from Employment Insurance benefits, from last-resort assistance or with no source of income).



65% are parents (**42%** have at least one child age 5 or under).



31% have been a victim of crime (**26.7%** of men and **33.3%** of women).



49% do not have a high school diploma.

40% consider themselves as “drop-ins” (with discontinuous schooling experience including dropping out and going back to school later).



86% have already lived on-reserve.

49% have lived in an urban area for more than 5 years.



HIGHLIGHTS

INTERACTIONS WITH PUBLIC SERVICES



70% have used services in the Quebec health and social services network, but **18%** reported that their needs were not met.

22% declared not being adequately familiar with the services offered in the Quebec health and social services network, or deeming that the network does not offer the services they are looking for.



34% have had special educational needs in the past, more than half of which were experienced in the last year.



46% have had contact with the Quebec justice system (courts, lawyers, prosecutors, etc.) and for **71%**, the last contact with the justice system was less than 5 years ago.



Only **13%** have used Crime Victims Assistance Centres (CAVAC). Of women who have used victim services, **60%** did so in the last 5 years.



Overall, **one quarter** of participants who used public education, health and social, and employability services were not satisfied with the help they received.



Only **25%** considered that the services offered in the Quebec network are “adapted” or “very adapted” to their values, culture and the Indigenous reality.



57% mentioned having been victim of racism in the Quebec network.

ASSESSMENT OF THE CULTURAL RELEVANCY OF PUBLIC SERVICES

Survey participants were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the services they received in the Quebec system in regards to their culture. For example, to the question *“In general, do you think that Quebec’s network of services are adapted to your values, culture and reality?”* participants were asked to choose one of the following five answers:

- > Very ill-adapted
- > Rather ill-adapted
- > Fairly adapted
- > Rather adapted
- > Very adapted

After analyzing these results, we created an index to reflect the level of overall satisfaction with the cultural relevancy of services in the Quebec network.

Methodologically speaking, a different value was attributed to each answer as follows:

+20	for <i>“very adapted”</i>	POSITIVE PERCEPTION
+10	for <i>“rather adapted”</i>	▲
0	for <i>“fairly adapted”</i>	
-10	for <i>“ill-adapted”</i>	▼
-20	for <i>“very ill-adapted”</i>	NEGATIVE PERCEPTION

This exercise made it possible to simplify the presentation of results in regards to the level of satisfaction with services and to make this presentation clearer for a broader audience.

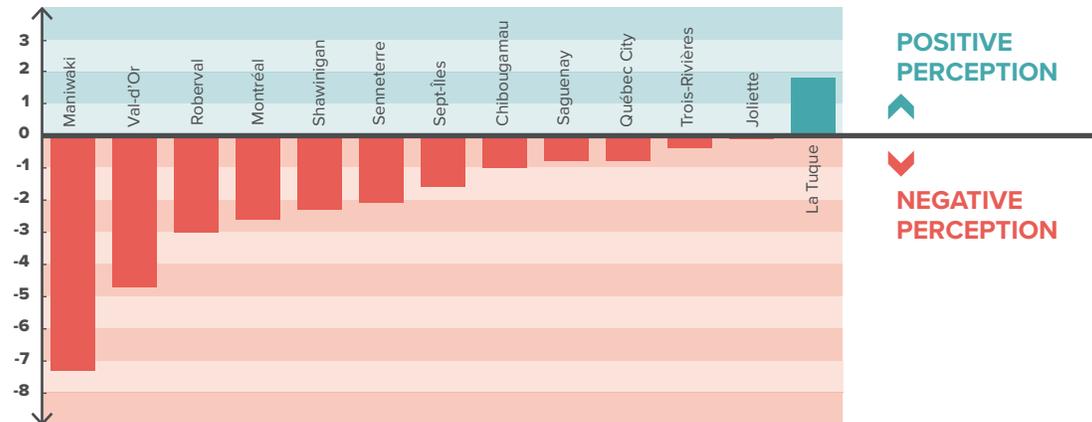
A result below 0 indicates that the participants’ assessment was more negative than positive overall.

The disparities between Indigenous people and Quebecers and Canadians are well documented when it comes to health and social services. Even when services are available in urban areas, they are often less utilized by Indigenous people. This twofold observation should lead us to imagine solutions that would go beyond simply adapting existing services, if we are to reach the goal of Indigenous people’s equitable access to public services. Cultural relevance and safety would, indeed, be key elements in the development of such solutions (RCAAQ, 2016).



The following graph presents a city-by-city picture of the results in terms of the adequacy of services to Indigenous values, culture and reality. It is the combined result of cultural relevancy assessment scores for all the public service sectors (health and social services, justice, correction, education and employability). This comparison was made using the index explained above.

Graph 1: Assessment of the cultural relevancy of all public services, by city¹³



The following graph illustrates all participants' assessment of the cultural relevancy of services by comparing different public service sectors. This comparison was made using the index explained above.

Graph 2: Assessment of the cultural relevancy of all public services, by service sector



There is wide variation in participants' rating of the different services. Thus, the next section focuses on the quantity and quality of interactions between Indigenous people and the various public service sectors. Presenting the results by service sector makes it possible to better understand the distinctions and specificities of each.

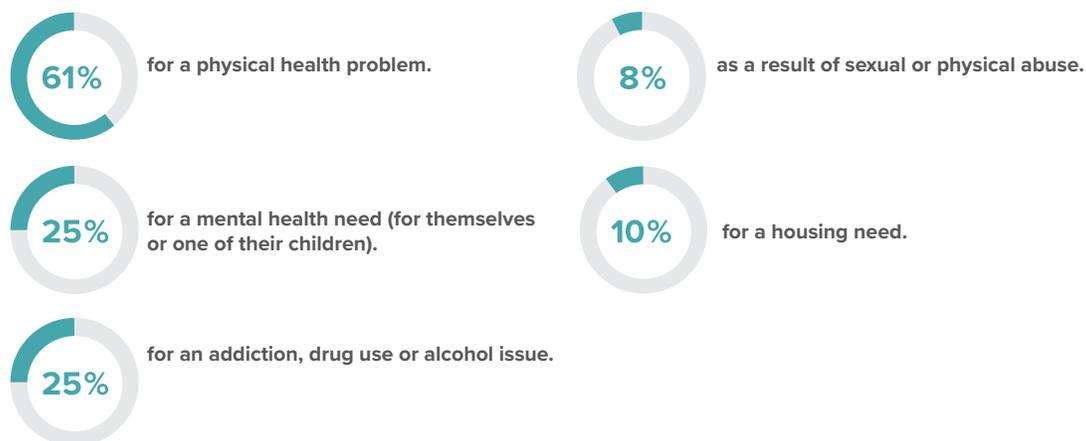
¹³ Please note that the presentation of local results allows us to identify certain trends that may be the subject of further research. However, given the non-random sampling technique and the lack of general information available about the Indigenous population in each city, these data should be interpreted with caution and comparison between cities should be avoided.

INTERACTIONS WITH HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES



Participants made more requests for health and social services than any other public service sector included in the present study.

70% made one or more requests for health or social services.
Among these:



However, the needs of 18% of participants who attempted to obtain help from the Quebec network went unmet. This result is worrisome when we consider the reasons for which participants requested services.

“Sometimes I don’t understand anything when doctors talk to me. I’d like someone to accompany me and explain things to me in my language so I can understand.”*

Excerpt translated from the French

“[There should] be more Indigenous people in hospital settings.”*

Excerpt translated from the French

* Excerpts from participants’ longer survey answers.



“Case workers must obtain cross cultural knowledge about characterization of communities and community members.”*

Moreover, the survey answers lead **certain conclusions:**

15%

of participants are not familiar with the services offered in the Quebec health and social services network.

8%

believe that this network does not offer the services they need.

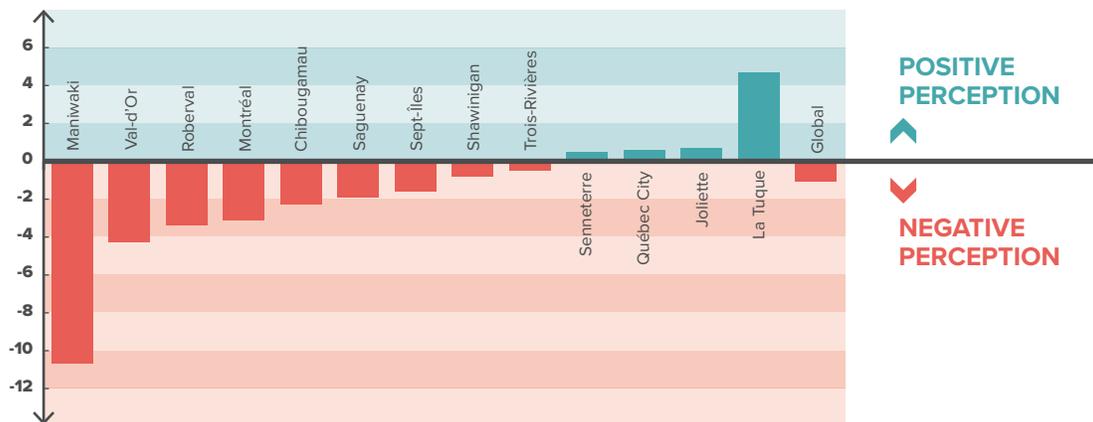
12%

mentioned a cultural barrier to accessing health and social services (namely language, fear of racism or the mismatch between service delivery and Indigenous values).

The survey data reveal, first and foremost, a lack of knowledge about the services offered in the Quebec health and social services network. Cultural issues also appear to influence the quality and accessibility of services available to Indigenous people in Quebec’s cities. Many participants indeed stated that cultural or linguistic reasons kept them from attempting to obtain services; others used the services, but felt that their needs were not adequately met due to clashes with their Indigenous reality.

The next graph compares participants’ ratings of the cultural relevancy of health and social services by city. Again, the index explained above was used.

Graph 3: Assessment of the cultural relevancy of the health and social services



INTERACTIONS WITH JUDICIAL SERVICES



THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

"Many people are afraid of a judicial system that is not adapted to their reality."*

Excerpt translated from the French

Nearly half of the participants (46%) have had contact with the Quebec justice system (courts, lawyers, prosecutors, etc.)

19%
AS ACCUSED

11%
AS VICTIMS

7%
AS WITNESSES

9%
FOR OTHER REASONS

Of the **participants** who have had contact with the justice system, **29%** reported that these dealings were more than 5 years ago, while **41%** stated that the experiences had been in the past year.

The following graph presents participants' rating of the cultural relevancy of the Quebec justice system, by city. Again, the index explained above was used.

Graph 4: Assessment of the cultural relevancy of the judicial system



* Exerpts from participants' survey answers.





POLICE SERVICES

55% of participants have had contact with police services.

- ✓ **Arrest** is the main reason stated (18%).

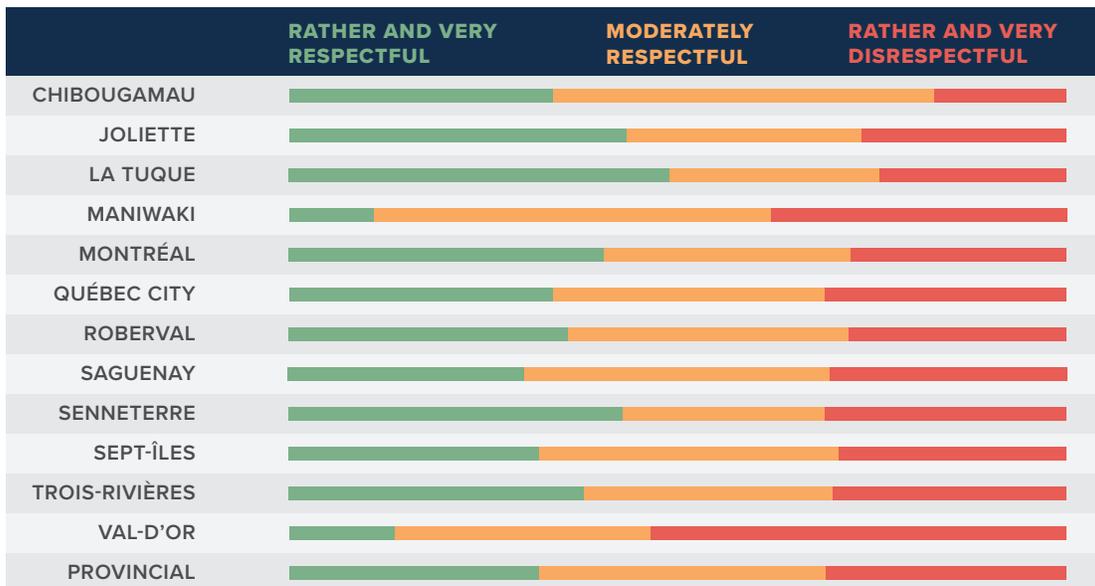
- ✓ A slightly lower proportion of participants (14%) used police services to lodge a **complaint**.

- ✓ Also, 10% mentioned that they had been **victims** of an incident.

- ✓ The remaining participants mentioned having been in contact with the police to determine an **identity** (7%) or as **witnesses** (7%).

To rate the cultural relevancy of police interventions, participants were asked “In general, do you have the impression that police intervention is adapted to your values, culture and reality?” Their answers are presented below.

Table 2: Assessment of the cultural relevancy of police interventions



“[It] would be nice to see a White and Indian cop in the same police car.”*

“We are afraid of the police.”*
Excerpt translated from the French



VICTIM SERVICES

Almost one in three participants (30%) answered that they are not aware of victim services.

Despite a very high victimization rate (31%), only 13% of all participants had used Crime Victims Assistance Center (CAVAC) services.

Only 6.5% of participants made claims under the Quebec Criminal Victims Compensation (IVAC) program, while 73% said they did not know about this program.

Analysis of the data reveals that the victim services offered in the Quebec network are largely unknown to Indigenous people across Quebec.



THE CORRECTIONAL SYSTEM

“[They should] advertise it more, raise more awareness of such services.”*

17% of participants, or 264 respondents, have had contact with the provincial or federal correctional system.

Of these, many have served jail time, and some have been detained on a pre-trial basis (11.4%). Several were sentenced to community service (37.5%), while others have visited friends or relatives in prison (18.6%).

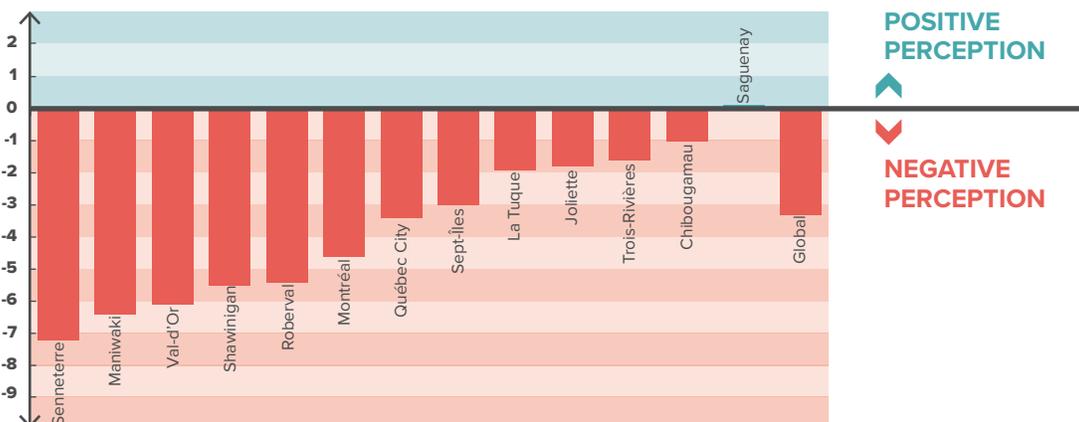
It should be noted that only 3.41% of the participants who had been in the correctional system were sentenced to more than 2 years in prison.

The proportion of individuals who have had contact with the correctional system is significantly higher among men than among women (28.2% vs. 10.8%, respectively).

In general, participants were asked if they felt that both the provincial and federal correctional systems are adapted to their Indigenous values, culture and reality. Participants’ rating of the cultural relevancy of the correction system is presented below by city. Again, the index was used.

“Many courts are in French but many Natives speak only English.”*

Graph 5: Assessment of the cultural relevancy of the correctional system



* Excerpts from participants’ longer survey answers.



INTERACTIONS WITH EDUCATION-RELATED SERVICES



Participants' level of education

49%

NO DIPLOMA

29%

HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

- > DES: **13%**
- > DEP: **9%**
- > College started: **7%**

14%

COLLEGE DIPLOMA

- > DEC: **7%**
- > University started: **7%**

8%

UNIVERSITY DIPLOMA

- > Undergraduate degree completed: **6%**
- > Graduate studies started or completed: **2%**

It is important to note that 40% of all participants consider themselves to be “drop-ins” (i.e. their schooling has not been continuous, that they dropped-out and went back to school later). It can be inferred that Indigenous people very often have educational backgrounds that differ from the non-Indigenous norm.

Among all participants, 518 have used services to meet specific educational needs. They have requested education services for themselves (30%), a child (45%) or another family member (19%). In 50% of cases, the demand for educational service was made in the last year. Requests were primarily for the following services:

Remedial instruction

Psycho-education

Speech therapy

Special education

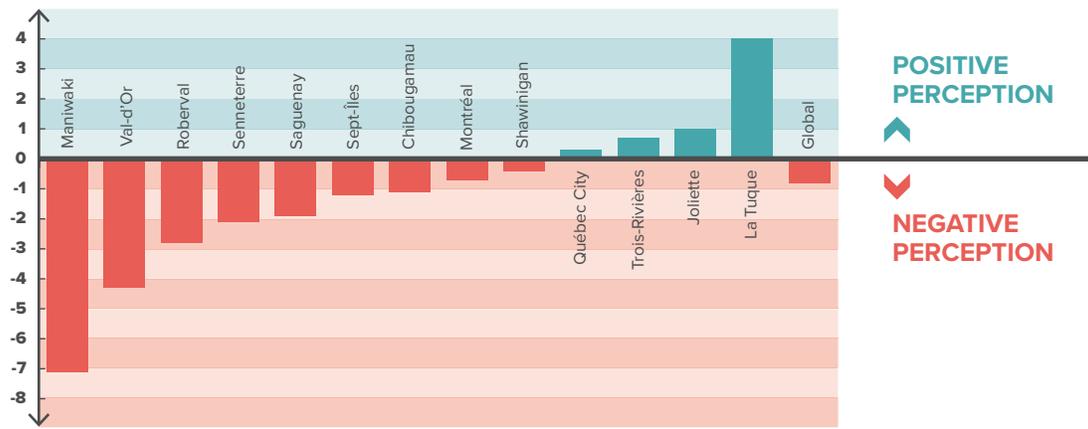
School psychology

Social work

In 31% of cases, participants felt that their need had not been adequately or satisfactorily met. In more than half of the cases (57.5%), participants stated that they had not received the requested help because of fear of racism, the language barrier, a clash in values, or due to their Indian status. We can therefore see that cultural barriers limit access to specialized educational services for a great number of Indigenous people in Quebec.

Participants' rating of the cultural relevancy of education services is presented below by city. Once again, the index was used to illustrate respondents' answers to the question: "In general, do you think that Quebec's network services are adapted to your values, culture and reality?"

Graph 6: Assessment of the cultural relevancy of education-related services



“Studying is difficult for people who don’t speak French. To succeed, you have to double your efforts.”*
Excerpt translated from the French

“I’m afraid my children will experience discrimination, like we do.”*
Excerpt translated from the French

* Excerpts from participants' longer survey answers.



INTERACTIONS WITH EMPLOYABILITY SERVICES



34% of participants (512 people) have used employability services in the Quebec network.

The main needs driving employability-assistance requests were:

- Job search assistance
- Career guidance
- Job interview preparation

“We are often told we don’t have what we need: we don’t have the right papers, we don’t have right training.”*
Excerpt translated from the French

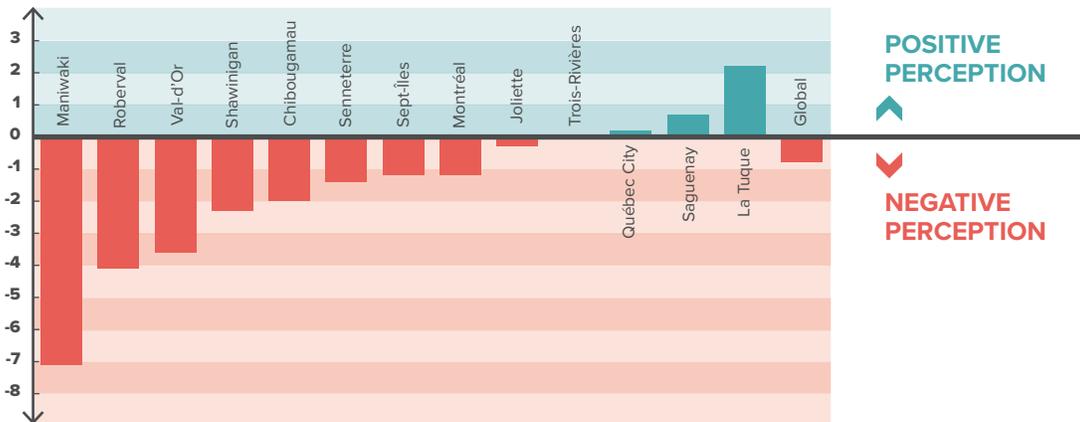
“Language barriers make it difficult to pass interviews. Sometimes you want to say one thing, but something else comes out.”*
Excerpt translated from the French

In 74% of cases, requests had been made in the last five years.

32% of participants who requested employability services felt that they had been unable to access these services because of cultural obstacles (racism, language barriers or cultural clash).

A portrait of the cultural relevancy of employability services to Indigenous culture, values and realities is presented in the graph below, by city. Once again, the index explained above was used.

Graph 7: Assessment of the cultural relevancy of employability services



RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION



57% of participants reported having been the victim of racism in public service delivery inside the Quebec network.

Indeed, 912 people responded affirmatively to the following question “Do you feel like you have been victim of racism and discrimination in Quebec’s services network due to your Indigenous identity?”

Here is the profile of these 912 participants:



58% of victims have dependent children.



77% had requested health and social services.

20% of these requests were not met.



38% requested specialized services in education.

31% of these requests were not met.



37% were also victims of crime.

“[...] we don’t tell anyone we’re Indigenous for fear of being misperceived by people in positions of authority.”*

Excerpt translated from the French

“We need the services, but we’re afraid to use them.”*

Excerpt translated from the French

“We’re all labeled.”*

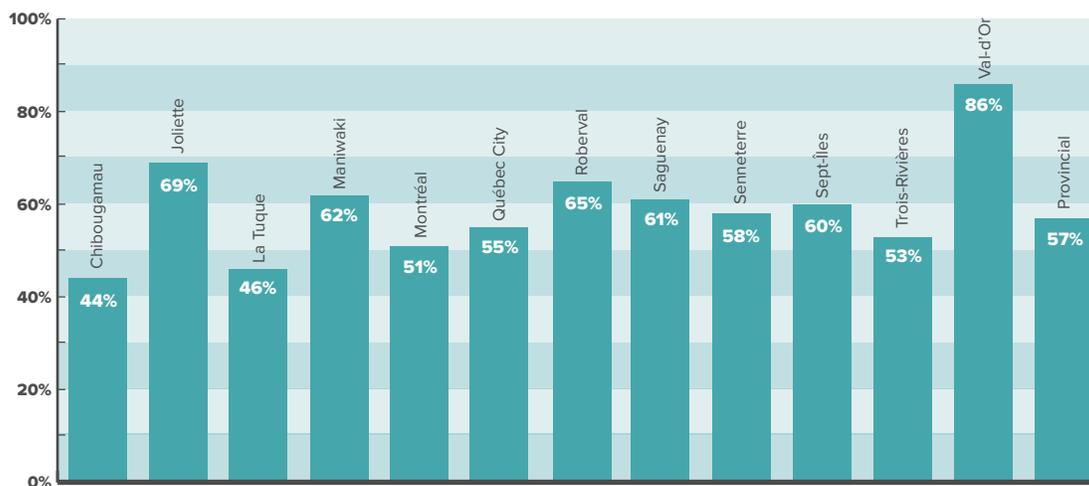
Excerpt translated from the French

* Excerpts from participants’ longer survey answers.



The following graph shows the proportion of participants who were victims of racism, by city.

Graph 8: Perception of having been a victim of racism and discrimination in Quebec’s services network



It should be noted that in all respondent groups and subgroups, just over half reported having experienced racism when using services in the Quebec network. The cross-analysis of the data does not profile the Indigenous people who fall victim to racism or significantly correlate between victimization and a personal attribute, other than Indigenousness.

“They don’t understand the impact residential schools have had on following generations.”*

Excerpt translated from the French

“The people who receive us in public services should be trained. Whites should practice welcoming Indigenous people properly and they should understand who we are, our history and what we have been through”*

Excerpt translated from the French

“We are afraid of being judged and of not being understood.”*

Excerpt translated from the French

CONCLUSION

The main findings stemming from this portrait of urban Indigenous People and the public service accessibility in Quebec are as follows:

- »→ Despite the fact that services are available, Indigenous people underutilize health and social services when we consider their characteristics and needs.

- »→ The public service offering is poorly known to many Indigenous people.

- »→ For a significant portion of Indigenous people, cultural barriers continue to limit the use of and access to public services.

- »→ Given the high proportion of parents of young children, Indigenous adults' limited or difficult access to public services can have a negative immediate and long-term impact on the lives of many Indigenous children.

- »→ The high rates of victimization and criminalization among Indigenous people are disturbing and are significantly different from the non-Indigenous population.

- »→ The experience of racism and discrimination by Indigenous people within the public service system is undeniable and extremely worrisome.

In short, this provincial overview shows the extent of the challenges and concerns that characterize the reality of Indigenous residents of Quebec's urban areas. In this regard, this survey data confirm the great diversity in the urban Indigenous population and the complexity of its needs.

Although the portrait of Indigenous people in urban areas is indeed diverse, a cross-section analysis of the data suggests that there is no significant correlation between Indigenous people's rating of public services or access to services and their personal attributes (level of education, time spent in urban areas, income, gender or sexual orientation). Similarly, a significant correlation was not found between participants' personal characteristics and their experience of racism when using public services. It can therefore be inferred that all Indigenous people in Quebec are likely to receive services that clash with their cultural reality or to experience racism, hence the conclusion of the existence of systemic racism towards Indigenous people.

These study results point to the need for more research to fully understand the challenges of urban Indigenous people in Quebec. It would be appropriate to delve deeper into some of the elements this portrait raises, with a view to better understanding the expectations and aspirations of urban Indigenous people, so that public services may better meet these needs. Such necessary steps would promote equity, inclusion and social justice in Quebec.



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APPENDIX



TOPIC SHEET:

POST-SECONDARY STUDENTS



**400 POST-SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS
ANSWERED THIS SURVEY**

Here is the profile of these respondents:



57% have dependent children



79% have annual household incomes of less than \$20,000



93% have lived on reserve, as compared to **86%** of all respondents

67% have lived in urban areas for fewer than 5 years



64% have requested health and social services

19% of these service requests have gone unmet



44% requested special education services

33% of these requests have gone unmet

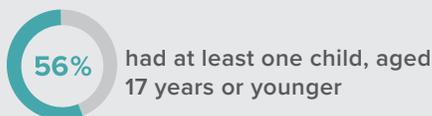
67% of post-secondary students consider themselves to be “drop-ins”

At the post-secondary-school level, Indigenous students clearly have personal and family characteristics that are distinct from the majority of non-Indigenous students.

TOPIC SHEET: **FAMILIES**



Among the 1,723 respondents:



86 people (5.6% of all respondents) stated that they has at least one child who was in foster care and, in more than half of these cases, the foster family was not Indigenous.

61 people (3.8% of all respondents) were foster families.

In all, there were 619 children aged 0–5 in respondents’ families. Here is the profile of these parents of young children:

39% were not in a relationship

39% were unemployed, **31%** were studying and **30%** were on the labour market

63% reported having annual household incomes of less than \$20,000

50% did not have a degree

61% reported having experienced racism in the Quebec service network



Parents with a child aged 5 years or under were, on average, 30 years old

Many factors of vulnerability can be observed among Indigenous families with young children.

TOPIC SHEET: VICTIMS



31% (482 respondents) reported that they had been the victim of a crime.

Among this group of respondents:



59% had dependent children

“I find the system is very difficult for sexual assault victims. It really doesn’t encourage people to report crimes.”*



67% knew the CAVAC victim assistance centres

36% had used CAVAC services



67% reported having been victim of racism in the Quebec network. This proportion is significantly higher than that of the whole (57%)



33% of respondents who reported having been victims of a crime felt that police interventions were rather or very disrespectful of their culture

Among the 1,723 people who took part in this survey, 138 respondents (or 8%) reported having used Quebec public services in the past to resolve a violence issue. More specifically:

- ▶ **46 people** made a request following sexual violence
- ▶ **50 people** made a request following family violence
- ▶ **86 people** asked for help following domestic violence

In most cases, the help was requested more than once and for more than one form of violence.

In sum, the survey results show that violence is widespread, but that services are greatly underutilized. It is clear that both an apprehension about the public system and a lack of familiarity with its services hinder urban Indigenous people’s access to prevention and intervention services for sexual and domestic violence issues.

“My ex was beating me and the police didn’t believe me.”*

Excerpt translated from the French

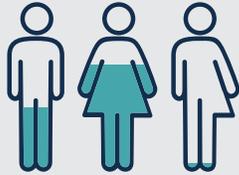
* Excerpts from respondents’ longer survey answers.



TOPIC SHEET:

IDENTITY AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Among the 1,723 Indigenous adults who answered the survey:



- > 36% were men
- > 62.7% were women
- > 1.3% (21 respondents) declared another gender identity

“There isn’t anything for us Indigenous gay people. But I know I’m not the only one out there.”*

Excerpt translated from the French

8% (132 people) declared their sexual orientation as non-heterosexual.

Among this group of respondents:



24% had dependent children



64% declared an annual household income of less than \$20,000



71% had requested health and social services in the past



41% had required special education services in the past



13% requested services following sexual assault or sexual or domestic violence

Here is the distribution of these respondents:

57

DECLARED THAT THEY WERE GAY OR LESBIAN

14

DECLARED THAT THEY WERE BISEXUAL

42

DECLARED THAT THEY WERE TWO-SPIRITED¹⁴

19

PREFERRED NOT TO DEFINE THEIR SEXUAL ORIENTATION BY TO ONE OF THE PRECEDING

* Excerpts from respondents’ longer survey answers.

¹⁴ “Two Spirit” is a term that covers a wide range of sexual and gender identities among Indigenous people in North America (Hunt, 2016: 6)

**TOPIC SHEET:
URBAN INDIGENOUS AND PUBLIC
SERVICE ACCESSIBILITY IN QUEBEC
WOMEN**



The data conveyed in this topic sheet are those gathered from 1,021 Indigenous women who answered the survey.

The following table presents the geographical distribution of the Indigenous women who took part in this study, and their proportion within the total sample, by city.

Table: Distribution of female respondents in cities

City	Number of respondents	% of women in the local sample
Chibougamau	30	65%
Joliette	32	64%
La Tuque	72	64%
Maniwaki	36	62%
Montréal	99	61%
Québec City	301	65%
Roberval	40	38%
Saguenay	117	64%
Senneterre	25	50%
Sept-Îles	60	63%
Shawinigan	36	72%
Trois-Rivières	92	65%
Val-d'Or	41	48%
Other cities	39	33%

IN-DEPTH PROFILE OF FEMALE RESPONDENTS



LANGUAGE USED TO ANSWER THE SURVEY

88%
FRENCH

12%
ENGLISH

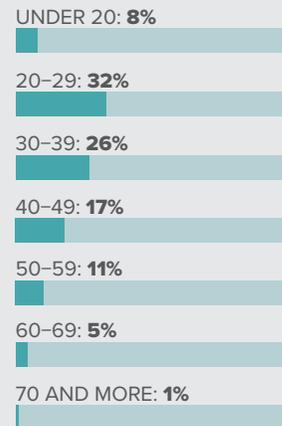


MARITAL STATUS

- 50% — SINGLE
- 30% — IN COMMON LAW MARRIAGE
- 11% — MARRIED
- 6% — DIVORCED OR SEPARATED
- 2% — WIDOWED



AVERAGE AGE: **35 YEARS**



PERSONAL SITUATION



LEVEL OF EDUCATION

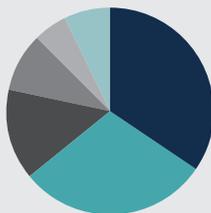
- > 45% — NO DIPLOMA
- > 28% — HIGH SCHOOL
- > 16% — COLLEGE
- > 11% — UNIVERSITY

NATION

- 40.1% — INNU
- 32.4% — ATIKAMEKW
- 8.3% — ALGONQUIN
- 7.8% — CREE
- 2.8% — HURON-WENDAT
- 2.1% — INUIT
- 1.2% — MI'KMAQ
- 0.8% — ABENAKI
- 0.7% — NASKAPI
- 0.7% — MOHAWK
- 3.4% — OTHER



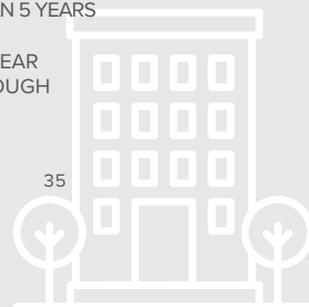
ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME



- 33.5% — LESS THAN \$10,000
- 27.6% — \$10,000-19,999
- 13.1% — \$20,000-29,999
- 10.7% — \$30,000-39,000
- 5.3% — \$40,000-49,999
- 9.7% — \$50,000 AND MORE

PRÉSENCE EN MILIEU URBAIN

- 16.8% — FOREVER
- 36.7% — FOR MORE THAN 5 YEARS
- 21.8% — 1-5 YEAR(S)
- 14.2% — LESS THAN 1 YEAR
- 10.5% — PASSING THROUGH



The data set for the urban indigenous people and the accessibility of public services survey was compared by gender to further explore some of the results from the provincial overview. The following primary findings provide a better understanding of the situation of Indigenous women.

HIGHLIGHTS COMPARISONS BY GENDER



NATION

40.1% of the Indigenous women surveyed are members of the Innu Nation, while only **33.8%** of male respondents are Innu.



STATUS

Among all First Nations respondents, **5%** of women did not have official status (i.e. registered Indian status), as compared to only **2%** of men.



FAMILY

72% of women said they have children, compared to **55%** of men.

63% of women reported having at least one child under the age of 17 vs. only **42.3%** of men.

In all, **418 children** aged 5 and under live with the female respondents.



SEXUAL ORIENTATION

The proportion of people with a sexual orientation other than heterosexual was lower among women than men (**6.1%** of women reported having a sexual orientation other than heterosexual, as compared to **8.9%** of men.)



PRESENCE IN AN URBAN AREA

Indigenous women are more likely to have lived in a city “forever” (**16.8%** women; **13.6%** men) and fewer were “passing through” town at the time of the survey (**10.5%** women; **16.8%** men).

15% of Indigenous women have never lived on an Indian reserve, as compared to **12%** of men.



EDUCATION

The proportion of Indigenous women with a university degree is higher than the proportion of Indigenous male graduates (**11%** women; **4%** men).

Indigenous women are therefore less likely to hold no degree than Indigenous men (**45%** of women do not have a degree, as compared to **57%** of men).

A higher proportion of women are in school (**30.8%** of women are students vs. **27.5%** of men).



EMPLOYMENT

Indigenous women are less likely to be employed in seasonal employment (**2.1%** of women vs. **6.9%** of men) and less likely to benefit from Employment Insurance (**4.3%** of women vs. **6%** of men).

There are more Indigenous women than men who are employed in the following activity sectors: **sales and services, business and finance, health, social sciences, education and public administration.**

On the contrary, there are fewer Indigenous women than Indigenous men employed in the following areas: **factory and factory work, transportation and machinery, applied natural sciences, and natural resources.**



JUSTICE

33.3% of Indigenous women have been victims of crime compared to **26.7%** of men.

Of the Indigenous women who have been in contact with the correctional system, the majority have been sentenced to fewer than 2 years in prison or to community service. No female respondent reported having been sentenced to more than 2 years.



INTERACTIONS WITH PUBLIC SERVICES

Among all respondents who have previously used health and social services, Indigenous women were more likely than Indigenous men to mention the following reasons: **housing search, food assistance, home support, violence, trauma and mental health.**

78%

of respondents who have needed food assistance in the past are women.

15%

of women used services in the Quebec network following an incident of domestic or sexual violence. The percentage among male Indigenous respondents is **5%**.

Of all the women surveyed, about **24%** said they had already used the health and social services network to get help for one of their children for a behavioural, physical or mental health issue. In comparison, among the men, this proportion is **7%**.

Indigenous women were also more represented than men among respondents who used public education services for one of their children.

These data present a portrait of the 1,021 women who participated in the RCAAQ survey. It should be noted that this sample was large enough to represent the diversity of the realities and needs of Indigenous women in urban areas in Quebec, with a precision of about 5%.

It should also be noted that women are more represented than men among the total number of survey respondents, calling for a qualification of the comparisons between women's data and the provincial data set as a whole.





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