

## CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA

CHANGING LIVES. PROTECTING CANADIANS.

## Shifting Age Structure in Federal Custody: 2009-10 and 2019-20

*There is an increasing representation of younger Indigenous offenders in federal custody relative to their non-Indigenous counterparts.*

## Why are we doing this study

The age structure of an incarcerated population establishes potential for future growth of specific age groups, as well as the total in-custody population. Younger inmates require a sufficient number of correctional, educational and vocational programs. Upon conditional release, they require meaningful employment to promote community reintegration, and quality supervision and support to promote safe community management. Older inmates require different accommodation and treatment facilities.

## What we did

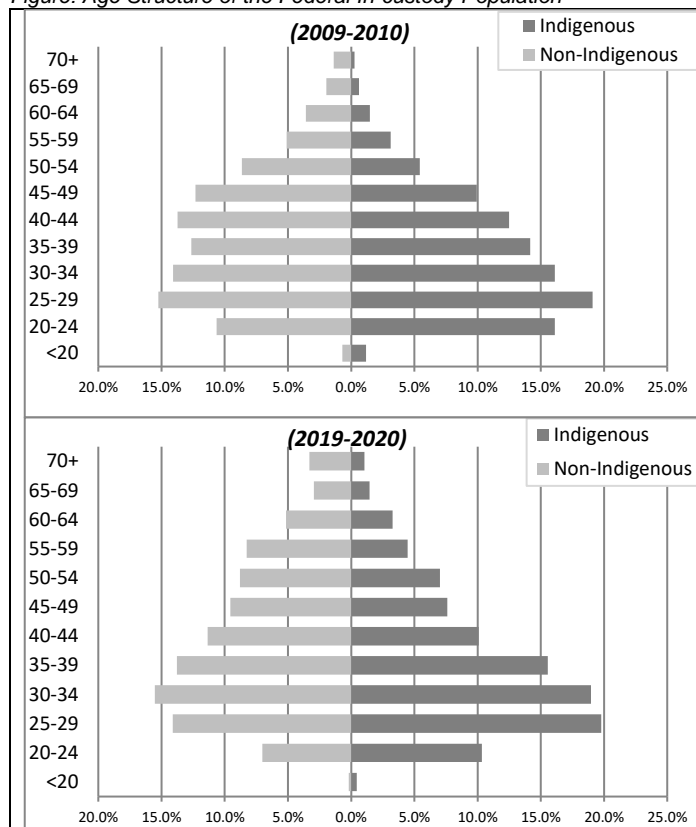
Ten years of age data reflected in Correctional Service of Canada's Corporate Reporting System-Modernized (CRS-M) were extracted at year-end for both Indigenous (2,916 in 2009-10 and 4,135 in 2019-20) and non-Indigenous (11,281 in 2009-10 and 9,585 in 2019-20) inmates.

## What we found

2009-10 results show that Indigenous inmates presented a higher representation across the younger age bands. In 2019-20, results again reveal that they present a higher representation across the younger age bands of under 20 years of age (0.4%), 20-24 (10.4%), 25-29 (19.8%), and 30-34 (19.0%) than non-Indigenous for the same age groupings (0.2%, 7.0%, 14.1%, and 15.5% respectively). Within the older age bands (55+), Indigenous inmates show a lower representation than non-Indigenous.

Stated differently, the triangular shape and broad base of both age pyramids reflects the relatively younger (under 35) proportion of Indigenous inmates (1,531 or 52.5% in 2009-10 and 2,048 or 49.5% in 2019-20) relative to non-Indigenous (4,489 or 40.7% in 2009-10 and 3,535 or 36.9% in 2019-20). Moreover, the narrower top for the Indigenous side of the age pyramid shows a smaller number of elderly inmates. The increased steepness of the age pyramid for the Indigenous inmates suggests rapid growth whereas for non-Indigenous this is not present. Indeed, while the Indigenous population remains young the non-Indigenous in federal custody is increasingly older.

Figure: Age Structure of the Federal In-custody Population



## What it means

The disproportionate representation of Indigenous people in federal custody may partly be attributed to age disparity, and therefore sustained intervention efforts and effective partnerships that consider this are required for the safe return of these offenders to the community.

## For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#) or contact us by phone at (613) 995-3975.

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

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