

CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA

CHANGING LIVES. PROTECTING CANADIANS.

Comparing Federal Women Admissions and Custody Profiles: 2020-21

Profiles of women admissions and in-custody differ substantially due to the accumulation of individual's with longer sentences.

Why we are doing this study

Population profiles of federally sentenced women will yield different pictures depending on whether they are based on admissions drawn over a period time or an in-custody snapshot taken at a particular point in time. Demographic and sentence information is recorded for every offender and thereby the entire population. These profile variables can serve to inform a strategic correctional management framework that includes needs, capacity, process and performance assessments.

What we did

From the Correctional Service of Canada's Corporate Reporting System-Modernized (CRS-M) reporting platform, data were gathered on the 2020-21 federal women admissions and year-end in-custody population (419 and 618, respectively) in relation to five major characteristics, namely age, diversity, sentence length, major offence and offender security level. Given the recent declines in federal admissions of 21.4% (533 in 2018-19 to 419 in 2020-21) and year-end in-custody counts of 11.8% (701 in 2018-19 to 618 in 2020-21) over the last three years, one may expect to see the impact of muted growth and reduced populations.

What we found

Statistics show that women admissions and year-end in-custody are roughly equivalent proportionally in age distributions and diversity representation. These profiles reflect populations where the majority are under 35 and almost equivalent in White and Indigenous representation.

However, the profile of women admissions differs from the year-end custody population in that substantially more are serving shorter and fewer having an indeterminate sentence; more are convicted of drug offences and fewer for murder; and less are classified as maximum security and more undetermined due to the security classification process still in progress at the time of data extraction. These observed differences between admissions and in-custody snapshots are explained by the accumulation of longer sentenced individuals in the in-custody snapshots, particularly those convicted of murder with later eligibility dates for conditional release.

Population Profiles of Federal Women

Characteristic	Admissions ¹ % (n)	Year-end Custody ² % (n)
Age		
< 35	55.8 (234)	51.5 (318)
35 to 64	43.4 (182)	46.6 (288)
65+	0.7 (3)	1.9 (12)
Diversity		
White	48.7 (204)	42.9 (265)
Indigenous	42.2 (177)	43.2 (267)
Black	2.1 (9)	3.9 (24)
Asian	2.4 (10)	3.6 (22)
Other	4.6 (19)	6.5 (40)
Sentence Length		
< 4 years	74.2 (311)	46.9 (290)
4 years+	24.3 (102)	32.7 (202)
Indeterminate	1.4 (6)	20.4 (126)
Major Offence		
Murder (I or II)	1.4 (6)	19.6 (121)
Violent (Schedule I)	46.5 (195)	44.3 (274)
Drug (Schedule II)	33.9 (142)	23.5 (145)
Non-Violent (Others)	18.1 (76)	12.6 (78)
Security Level		
Maximum	5.3 (22)	9.5 (59)
Medium	49.9 (209)	54.7 (338)
Minimum	23.6 (99)	25.1 (155)
Undetermined	21.2 (89)	10.7 (66)

Notes: ¹ Warrant of Commitments 63.7%, revocations 34.6%, other 1.7%; ² 48% of the 2020-21 women admissions are reflected in the 2020-21 year-end custody snapshot.

What it means

The general finding is that the federal women admission population differs from a year-end in-custody snapshot in being comparatively younger, serving shorter sentences, and less often for murder or classified maximum security. The relatively high percentage of Indigenous women admissions and in-custody populations requires strategic planning to ensure the delivery of appropriate and effective programming for safe reintegration.

For more information

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