Juristat

Youth correctional statistics in Canada, 2013/2014



by Correctional Services Program



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Youth correctional statistics in Canada, 2013/2014

by Correctional Services Program

In Canada, correctional services for youth aged 12 to 17 years at the time of an offence are guided by the *Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA)*. Among other things, this *Act* requires that the criminal justice system for youth be separate from that of adults; that the system be based on the principle of diminished moral blameworthiness or culpability; and that the system emphasize rehabilitation and reintegration, fair and proportionate accountability, enhanced procedural protection of young persons, and timely intervention (*Youth Criminal Justice Act. 2002*). The federal government is responsible for setting the legislative framework for youth justice. However, the provinces and territories are responsible for the administration of the legislation and thus for youth correctional services. ¹

Each fiscal year, provincial and territorial governments report to Statistics Canada on their correctional services programs, both custody and community. This *Juristat* Bulletin uses three complementary measures to describe the use of youth correctional services: average counts, initial entry and admissions. Average counts provide a snapshot of the correctional population and represent the number of youth in custody or under community supervision on any given day. Initial entry represents the number of youth entering the youth corrections system for a period of supervision. Admissions describe the movements of youth from the time they enter correctional services until they leave. An admission is counted each time an individual begins or moves to any type of custody or community program. The same person can be included several times in the admissions counts whenever the individual moves from one type of legal status to another (e.g., from pre-trial detention to probation).

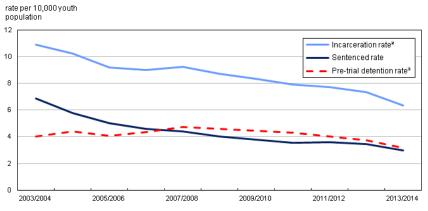
Data for this Bulletin come from three different surveys. The Youth Corrections Key Indicator Report provides information on average daily counts. The Youth Custody and Community Services (YCCS) survey and the Integrated Correctional Services Survey (ICSS) are the source of initial entry and admissions data. With the exception of Alberta and Quebec, all provinces and territories provided average counts data in 2013/2014. Average count data for Nova Scotia and New Brunswick are limited to custody counts, meaning community and overall average counts are available for 9 rather than 11 jurisdictions. All provinces except Nova Scotia, Quebec, Saskatchewan and Alberta provided data to either the YCCS or ICSS surveys in 2013/2014. Manitoba data is limited to admissions counts, meaning admissions data are available for 9 jurisdictions while initial entry is available for 8.

The rate of youth involved in the correctional system continues to fall

The majority of youth who are involved with the youth correctional system are being supervised in community corrections rather than in custody. ⁵ In 2013/2014, for the nine reporting jurisdictions, there were 9,458 youth being supervised on an average day (<u>Table 1</u>). ⁶ Of this total, 90% were being supervised in the community, primarily while serving a sentence of probation. These findings are consistent with the YCJA sentencing principles which state that all sanctions other than custody should be considered for youth whenever appropriate. The average daily rate of youth involved in correctional services was 63 per 10,000 youth population. This was down 9% from the year before and 25% from five years earlier. The youth crime rate has also been decreasing over the last decade (<u>Boyce et al. 2014</u>).

There were declines in both the youth custody and community populations in 2013/2014. On average 8,514 youth were being supervised in the community on a typical day. This equated to a rate of 57 young persons per 10,000 youth, a figure that was down 9% from the previous year and 26% lower than five years earlier. There were 1,019 young persons in custody on any given day, resulting in a youth incarceration rate of 6 per 10,000 youth population. The youth incarceration rate declined from 7 per 10,000 youth in 2012/2013 and dropped for the sixth consecutive year, continuing the downward trend since the rate peaked in the mid-1990s (Chart 1).

Chart 1 Youth in custody, eleven jurisdictions, 2003/2004 to 2013/2014¹



- Excludes Quebec and Alberta
- Incarceration rate includes sentenced custody, pre-trial detention and Provincial Director Remand. Rates are calculated per 10,000 youth population (12 to 17 years) using revised July 1stpopulation estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography
- Pre-trial detention is to hold a young person temporarily in custody, while awaiting trial or sentencing. It is equivalent to remand for adults.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Youth Corrections Key Indicator Report.

Youth incarceration rates were highest in Manitoba and Nunavut, reporting rates of 29 and 22 youth in custody per 10,000 youth population, respectively (<u>Table 2</u>). Rates were lowest in British Columbia (2 per 10,000 population) and Ontario (4 per 10,000 population). In 2013/2014, the incarceration rate fell in all but three jurisdictions.

Majority of youth begin a period of supervision on probation or in pre-trial detention

The number of youth entering the correctional system, that is the initial entry, declined in 2013/2014. In the eight reporting jurisdictions, there were 6,530 youth who began an involvement with correctional services. This represented a decline of 22% from the previous year (<u>Table 3</u>). The largest decrease was 27%, reported by both Ontario and Yukon. Nunavut was the only jurisdiction to report an increase (+6%).

Most youth begin their involvement with the youth correctional system in the community, rather than in custody. In 2013/2014, more than 7 in 10 youth involvements began in the community (<u>Table 3</u>). More specifically, most youth began their period of involvement serving a term of probation (51%). As well, over one-quarter of involvements (27%) began when a youth entered pre-trial detention.

Admissions decline in most jurisdictions

An admission is counted each time a youth begins or moves from one type of correctional supervision to another. Of the nine reporting jurisdictions in 2013/2014, a total of 20,975 admissions to correctional services were observed (<u>Table 4</u>). Overall, there was a 14% decline in youth admissions with almost all jurisdictions reporting decreases from the previous year. Only the Northwest Territories (4%) and Nunavut (30%) recorded increases.

Most admissions to youth correctional services involve males

The characteristics (sex, age and Aboriginal status) of youth involved in correctional services are available for the admissions data collected through the YCCS and ICSS. This means that the same person may be represented several times in the data as they move from one type of correctional supervision to another.

Males continue to represent the majority of youth admissions to correctional services. In 2013/2014, 77% of all admissions to correctional services in the nine reporting jurisdictions were male youth (<u>Table 5</u>). This proportion has remained constant for the past five years and is consistent across most types of correctional supervision. Admissions of males were most prevalent in sentenced custody, where 84% of admissions were attributable to male youth in 2013/2014.

Majority of admissions to the correctional system involve older youth

Youth correctional services supervise young people who were between the ages of 12 and 17 years at the time of the offence. Youth who have turned 18 or older may remain in the youth system because they were under 18 at the time of the offence.

Most admissions to correctional services in 2013/2014 involved older youth. ¹⁰ In particular, for the nine reporting jurisdictions, almost 7 in 10 admissions (69%) involved youth 16 years or older and nearly 9 in 10 admissions (87%) involved youth who were at least 15 years old (<u>Table 5</u>). Youth aged 12 years represented 1% of total admissions, a finding that has been consistent for the last five years.

Aboriginal youth are over-represented in the correctional system

As in previous years, a disproportionate share of admissions to youth correctional services in 2013/2014 involved Aboriginal youth. For the nine reporting jurisdictions, Aboriginal youth accounted for 41% of all admissions while representing 7% of the youth population in these same jurisdictions (Statistics Canada 2014) (Table 5).

The disparity between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth was more pronounced among girls. Aboriginal girls accounted for 53% of female youth admitted to the corrections system, whereas 38% of males admitted were Aboriginal youth.

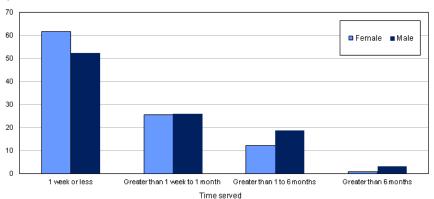
Time spent in custody shorter for female youth

The time spent by youth in custody in 2013/2014 was similar to the previous year. For the nine reporting jurisdictions, 54% of youth released from pre-trial detention were in custody for one week or less. In the case of youth released from sentenced custody, 42% were there for one month or less.

The time spent in custody for female youth tends to be shorter. Overall, 62% of female youth released from pre-trial detention in 2013/2014, spent less than one week, compared to 52% of males (Chart 2). Similarly, half of all females (51%) sentenced to custody served one month or less, compared to 41% of males (Chart 3). Furthermore, the proportion of females who spent more than six months in sentenced custody was about half that of males (6% and 11%, respectively).

Chart 2 Youth released from pre-trial detention¹, nine jurisdictions, 2013/2014²,³

percent of releases

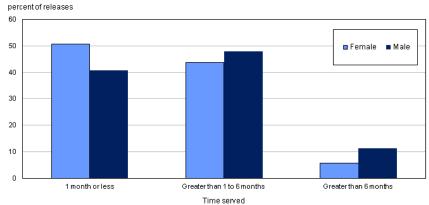


- 1. Pre-trial detention is to hold a young person temporarily in custody, while awaiting trial or sentencing. It is equivalent to remand for adults.
- 2. Excludes Nova Scotia, Quebec, Saskatchewan and Alberta.
- 3. Releases represent the end of a legal status in correctional services and do not necessarily represent the end of supervision by correctional services. The same person can be included several times in the release counts where the individual moves from one type of legal status to another (e.g., from pre-trial detention to sentenced custody and then to community services). As such, releases represent the number of movements within a fiscal year out of pre-trial detention, sentenced custody and the community statuses readraless of the individual's preceding or following legal status.

statuses regardless of the individual's preceding or following legal status.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Youth Custody and Community Services survey and Integrated Correctional Services Survey.

Chart 3 Youth released from sentenced custody, nine jurisdictions, 2013/2014¹,²



- 1. Excludes Nova Scotia, Quebec, Saskatchewan and Alberta
- 2. Releases represent the end of a legal status in correctional services and do not necessarily represent the end of supervision by correctional services. The same person can be included several times in the release counts where the individual moves from one type of legal status to another (e.g., from pre-trial detention to sentenced custody and then to community services). As such, releases represent the number of movements within a fiscal year out of pre-trial detention, sentenced custody and the community statuses regardless of the individual's preceding or following legal status.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Youth Custody and Community Services survey and Integrated Correctional Services Survey.

Survey descriptions

The **Youth Custody and Community Services (YCCS)** survey collects aggregate data on the number and characteristics (e.g., age, sex, Aboriginal identity) of youth admissions to and releases from correctional services. The following jurisdictions reported survey data in 2013/2014: Prince Edward Island, Manitoba, Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

The Integrated Correctional Services Survey (ICSS) collects microdata on adults and youth under the responsibility of the federal and provincial/territorial correctional systems. Data include socio-demographic characteristics (e.g., age, sex, Aboriginal identity) as well as information pertaining to correctional supervision including legal hold status (e.g., pre-trial detention, sentenced custody, probation). The following jurisdictions provided youth data to the ICSS in 2013/2014: Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, Ontario, and British Columbia.

The **Youth Corrections Key Indicator Report (CKIR-Youth)** provides data that are used to calculate average counts of youth under correctional supervision. Usually, correctional officials perform daily counts of inmates in their facilities and monthly counts of offenders under community supervision. The following exclusions are noted for historical data: Prince Edward Island (2005/2006 for data on community supervision); Nova Scotia (2006/2007 to 2013/2014 for data on community supervision); New Brunswick (2003/2004 to 2013/2014 for data on community supervision); Quebec (2011/2012 to 2013/2014); Alberta (2013/2014); Northwest Territories (2003/2004 to 2007/2008 for data on community supervision).

References

Boyce, J., A. Cotter and S. Perrault. 2014. "Police-reported crime statistics in Canada, 2013." *Juristat*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X. Statistics Canada. 2014. National Household Survey (NHS), 2011, special tabulation.

Youth Criminal Justice Act, S.C. 2002, c. 1, section 3 and preamble. http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/y-1.5/ (site accessed January 2nd, 2014).

Notes

- 1 The way in which the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* is administered, including the types of programs and how services are delivered, can vary from one jurisdiction to another. For this reason, caution should always be exercised when comparing provinces and territories.
- Usually, correctional officials perform daily counts of inmates in their facilities and monthly counts of offenders under community supervision.
 These are used to calculate the annual average daily custody counts and average monthly community counts used in this report.
- Initial entry represents the first point at which a youth commences an uninterrupted period of supervision within the youth corrections system.
 Each person is counted only once during their period of involvement with correctional services, regardless of subsequent changes in legal status.
- 4 Admissions for Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics surveys are counted each time a person begins any period of supervision in a correctional institution or in the community. These data describe and measure the flow of persons through correctional services over time. The same person may be included several times in the admission counts where he/she moves from one correctional program to another (e.g., from pre-trial

detention to sentenced custody) or re-enters the system later in the same year. Admissions therefore represent the number of entries of persons, during a fiscal year, to pre-trial detention, sentenced custody or a community supervision program, regardless of the previous legal status. These data are administrative data. Even though surveys try to standardize the way the data are reported, limitations due to differences in jurisdictional operations can restrict uniform application of the definitions in some situations. Therefore, caution is required when making comparisons between jurisdictions.

- Community supervision includes probation, the community portion of a custody and supervision order, deferred custody and supervision, and intensive support and supervision programs. The types of programs available will vary from one jurisdiction to the next.
- 6 Average counts of youth were not available from the provinces of Quebec as of 2011/2012, or Alberta as of 2013/2014. Excludes counts for Nova Scotia and New Brunswick due to missing community data.
- The incarceration rate represents the average daily number of youth in custody for every 10,000 individuals in the youth population (12 to 17 years). It includes people in sentenced custody, in pre-trial detention and provincial director remand.
- 8 For youth, pre-trial detention is to hold a young person temporarily in custody, while awaiting trial or sentencing. It is equivalent to remand for adults.
- 9 The calculation of percentages excludes unknowns.
- 10 Represents age at the time of admission. The calculation of percentages excludes unknowns.
- 11 For all jurisdictions in 2013/2014, Aboriginal identity was not known for 21% of admissions. The unknown proportion was highest (40% or more) in the following jurisdictions: Prince Edward Island and Ontario. The calculation of percentages excludes unknowns.

Table 1 Average counts of youth in correctional services, nine jurisdictions, 2013/2014

	2013/2014			Percent change in rate from 2012/2013	Percent change in rate from 2009/2010	
	number	percent	rate 1	to 2013/2014	to 2013/2014	
Total correctional services ²	9,458	100	63	-9	-25	
Total custody ²	944	10	6	-14	-24	
Pre-trial detention ³	487	5	3	-15	-29	
Sentenced custody	430	5	3	-14	-22	
Provincial director remand ⁴	27	0	0	20	119	
Total community supervision ²	8,514	90	57	-9	-26	
Probation	7,678	81	51	-9	-26	
Intensive support and supervision $\underline{5}$	311	3	2	-5	-15	
Deferred custody and supervision 6	208	2	1	-11	-40	
Community portion of custody sentence ^Z	317	3	2	-2	-3	

- 1 Rates are calculated per 10,000 youth population (12 to 17 years) using revised July 1st population estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Rates may not match those previously published in other reports.
- Excludes Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec and Alberta.
- 3 Pre-trial detention is to hold a young person temporarily in custody, while awaiting trial or sentencing. It is equivalent to remand for adults.
- 4 Provincial Director Remand is to hold a young person in custody following the breach of community supervision conditions or a custody and community supervision pursuant to a warrant issued by the provincial director.
- A sentencing option as an alternative to custody. Similar to probation, an intensive support and supervision order is served in the community under conditions, but provides closer monitoring and support than a probation order to assist the young person in changing his or her behaviour. This is an "opt-in" sanction under the Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA), meaning that provinces and territories may choose not to implement this option, taking into consideration available resources.
- 6 A deferred custody and supervision order allows a young person who would otherwise be sentenced to custody to serve the sentence in the community under a number of conditions. Similar to the conditional sentence of imprisonment for adults, violation of conditions may result in the young person being sent to custody.
- 7 The Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA) stipulates that the final one-third of most custody sentences shall be served under community supervision.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Youth Corrections Key Indicator Report.

Table 2 Average counts of youth in correctional services, province and territory, 2013/2014

		Т	otal custody ^{1, 2}		Total	community ¹ , ³ , ⁴	Total correctional services ^{1, 3}		
	number	rate ⁵	percent change in rate from 2012/2013 to 2013/2014	number	rate ⁵	percent change in rate from 2012/2013 to 2013/2014	number	rate ⁵	percent change in rate from 2012/2013 to 2013/2014
Newfoundland and Labrador	18	5	18	258	78	-9	276	84	-7
Prince Edward Island	5	5	-53	122	119	-6	128	124	-10
Nova Scotia	43	7	-10						
New Brunswick	32	7	-15						
Ontario	404	4	-20	4,510	47	-12	4,914	51	-13
Manitoba	288	29	-4	1,658	167	-2	1,945	196	-2
Saskatchewan	138	17	-18	1,123	136	-3	1,261	152	-5
British Columbia	75	2	-10	737	24	-8	812	27	-9
Yukon	3	12	-26	22	87	-15	25	99	-17
Northwest Territories	5	16	11	39	113	-21	44	129	-18
Nunavut	8	22	35	45	119	4	54	141	7
Total of 11 jurisdictions ¹ , ³	1,019	6	-13	8,514	57	-9	9,458	63	-9

^{..} not available for a specific reference period

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Youth Corrections Key Indicator Report.

^{...} not applicable

Excludes Quebec and Alberta.

² Includes pre-trial detention, sentenced custody and Provincial Director Remand.

³ The total numbers, rates and percent changes of youth exclude Nova Scotia and New Brunswick for 'total community' and 'total correctional services'.

⁴ Includes probation, deferred custody and supervision, intensive support and supervision and community portions of custody sentences.

⁵ Rates are calculated per 10,000 youth population (12 to 17 years) using revised July 1st population estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Rates may not match those previously published in other reports.

Table 3 Initial entry of youth into correctional services by legal hold status, eight jurisdictions, 2013/2014

	number	percent change from 2012/2013 to 2013/2014	percent change from 2009/2010 to 2013/2014
Total correctional services ¹	6,530	-22	-49
Pre-trial detention ²	1,738	-28	-54
Total sentenced custody	104	-17	-19
Secure custody & supervision ³	44	-4	-24
Open custody & supervision ⁴	60	-25	-15
Total community supervision	4,688	-20	-47
Supervised probation	3,334	-22	-50
Deferred custody & supervision ⁵	75	-27	-53
Intensive support and supervision $\frac{6}{}$	17	31	-35
Other community	1,262	-16	-40

- 1 Excludes Nova Scotia, Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta due to missing data.
- 2 Pre-trial detention is to hold a young person temporarily in custody, while awaiting trial or sentencing. It is equivalent to remand for adults.
- 3 A facility is considered secure when youth are detained by security devices, including those which operate with full perimeter security features and/or where youths are under constant observation. The extent to which facilities are "secure" varies across jurisdictions.
- 4 A facility is considered "open" when there is minimal use of security devices or perimeter security (i.e. community residential centre, group home, childcare institution, forest or wilderness camp, or any like place or facility). The extent to which facilities are "open" varies across jurisdictions.
- 5 A deferred custody and supervision order allows a young person who would otherwise be sentenced to custody to serve the sentence in the community under a number of conditions. Similar to the conditional sentence of imprisonment for adults, violation of conditions may result in the young person being sent to custody.
- A sentencing option as an alternative to custody. Similar to probation, an intensive support and supervision order is served in the community under conditions, but provides closer monitoring and support than a probation order to assist the young person in changing his or her behaviour. This is an "opt-in" sanction under the Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA), meaning that provinces and territories may choose not to implement this option, taking into consideration available resources.

Note: Initial entry represents the first point at which a youth commences uninterrupted supervision within the youth corrections system. Each person is counted only once during their period of involvement with correctional services, regardless of subsequent changes in legal status.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Youth Custody and Community Services survey and Integrated Correctional Services Survey.

Table 4 Admissions of youth to correctional services, by province and territory, 2013/2014

		Total custody ¹	Tota	al community supervision ²	Total correctional services		
	number percent change from 2012/2		number	percent change from 2012/2013	number	percent change from	
		to 2013/2014		to 2013/2014		2012/2013 to 2013/2014	
Newfoundland and	106	1	228	-14	334	-9	
Labrador							
Prince Edward Island	63	5	245	-5	308	-3	
New Brunswick	357	-20	582	-5	939	-11	
Ontario	4,359	-20	5,000	-18	9,359	-19	
Manitoba	2,774	-9	2,239	-8	5,013	-8	
British Columbia	1,146	-2	3,573	-14	4,719	-12	
Yukon	56	-28	47	-4	103	-19	
Northwest Territories	44	-4	77	10	121	4	
Nunavut	41	78	38	0	79	30	
Total of nine jurisdictions ³	8,946	-14	12,029	-14	20,975	-14	

- 1 Includes pre-trial detention, Provincial Director Remand and sentenced custody.
- 2 Includes community portions of custody sentences, intensive support and supervision, non-residential programs, probation, deferred custody, and other community.
- 3 Excludes Nova Scotia, Quebec, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

Note: Admissions for Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics surveys are counted each time a person begins any period of supervision in a correctional institution or in the community. These data describe and measure the flow of persons through correctional services over time. The same person may be included several times in the admission counts where he/she moves from one correctional program to another (e.g., from pre-trial detention to sentenced custody) or re-enters the system later in the same year. Admissions therefore represent the number of entries of persons, during a fiscal year, to pre-trial detention, sentenced custody or a community supervision program, regardless of the previous legal status. These data are administrative data. Even though surveys try to standardize the way the data are reported, limitations due to differences in jurisdictional operations can restrict uniform application of the definitions in some situations. Therefore, caution is required when making comparisons between jurisdictions.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Youth Custody and Community Services survey and Integrated Correctional Services Survey.

Table 5 Admissions of youth to correctional services, by characteristics of the person admitted and supervision program, nine jurisdictions, 2013/2014

	Total Custody ¹	Total community supervision ²	Total correctional services
Sex			
Male	6,900	9,263	16,163
Female	2,045	2,761	4,806
Aboriginal identity		'	
Aboriginal	3,468	3,385	6,853
Non-Aboriginal	3,685	6,051	9,736
Aboriginal identity unknown	1,793	2,593	4,386
Age			
12 years	78	79	157
13 years	292	362	654
14 years	923	1,026	1,949
15 years	1,769	1,944	3,713
16 years	2,514	2,799	5,313
17 years	2,838	3,422	6,260
18 years and older	532	2,396	2,928
Total of nine jurisdictions ³	8,946	12,029	20,975
		percent ⁴	
Sex			
Male	77	77	77
Female	23	23	23
Aboriginal identity ⁵		·	
Aboriginal	48	36	41
Non-Aboriginal	52	64	59
Age		·	
12 years	1	1	1
13 years	3	3	3
14 years	10	9	g
15 years	20	16	18
16 years	28	23	25
17 years	32	28	30
18 years and older	6	20	14

- 1 Includes pre-trial detention, Provincial Director Remand, secure and open custody.
- 2 Includes community portions of custody sentences, intensive support and supervision, non-residential programs, probation, deferred custody, and other community.
- 3 Includes unknowns.
- 4 Percentages exclude unknowns
- 5 For all jurisdictions in 2013/2014, Aboriginal identity was not known for 21% of admissions. The unknown proportion was highest (40% or more) in the following jurisdictions: Prince Edward Island and Ontario.

Note: Excludes Nova Scotia, Quebec, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Admissions for Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics surveys are counted each time a person begins any period of supervision in a correctional institution or in the community. These data describe and measure the flow of persons through correctional services over time. The same person may be included several times in the admission counts where he/she moves from one correctional program to another (e.g., from pre-trial detention to sentenced custody) or re-enters the system later in the same year. Admissions therefore represent the number of entries of persons, during a fiscal year, to pre-trial detention, sentenced custody or a community supervision program, regardless of the previous legal status. These data are administrative data. Even though surveys try to standardize the way the data are reported, limitations due to differences in jurisdictional operations can restrict uniform application of the definitions in some situations. Therefore, caution is required when making comparisons between jurisdictions.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Youth Custody and Community Services survey and Integrated Correctional Services Survey.