

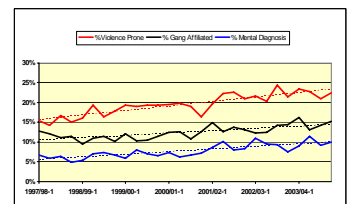
The Changing Federal Offender Population

Profiles and Forecasts, 2006

by Research Branch

Highlights

Profile Changes of Federal Admissions



- Steadily falling and/or stable violent crime rates, declining new admissions and successful reintegration efforts have resulted in a general decline of the Canadian federal offender population.
- Since 1997, the federal population of men in-custody decreased 12% (from 13,825 to 12,158), however, historical times series analysis projects this group to increase by 245 offenders (or 2%) over the next 5-years (a net annual average increase of less than one-half of one percent).
- The federal population of women in-custody increased 22% since 1997 (from 331 to 403). Although population forecasting models are still under development for this group, women in-custody is expected to increase.
- The number of Aboriginal men in federal custody decreased 4% (from 2,342 to 2,239).
- Profiles were developed both for admission flows and for in-custody snapshot populations using a standard template. The full report compares two sets of profiles: two federal admission cohorts, representing all Warrant of Committal admissions during Fiscal Year (FY) 1996/97 and 2005/06, and; two snapshots representing the in-custody federal population counts on March 31st 1997 and 2006. Separate analyses are provided of the trends for federal men and women, Aboriginal men and Non-Aboriginal men, and regions. Data for the comparisons were obtained from the new Climate Indicator and Profile System (CIPS) currently being developed by the Research Branch for the Correctional Service of Canada.

Changing Length of Sentence:

- More than 50% of new men offender admissions are serving sentences of less than three years and there has been an increasing trend since 1996/97 (from 34% to 55%, or +62%).
- 56% of new women offender admissions are serving sentences of less than three years and this trend has also been steadily increasing since 1996/97 (41% to 58%, or +41%).
- One-out-of-four men offenders in federal custody are serving sentences of less than three years while an equal proportion are serving life/indeterminate sentences. The growth in both sentence groups has been slow and steady and the gap between has widened considerably.
- More than one-third (36%) women offenders in federal custody are serving less than three years whereas about one-out-of-six (17%) are serving life/indeterminate sentences.

Changing Offence Categories:

- More than one-out-of-four (25%) men offenders in federal custody are serving sentences for homicide, one-third for robbery, one-sixth for sex offences and nearly one-quarter for drug offences. The proportion of men homicide offenders has increased from 22% in 1997 to 25% in 2006 whereas the proportion of men sex offenders has decreased from 22% in 1997 to 17% in 2006.
- More than one-quarter (29%) of women offenders are serving sentences for homicide, one-quarter for robbery, 2% for sex offences and one-quarter for drug offences. The proportion of women homicide offenders has decreased from 37% in 1997 to 29% in 2006 whereas the proportion of women robbery offenders has significantly increased from 21% in 1997 to 27% in 2006.

Changing Initial Custody Level:

- More than one-out-of-ten of new men offender admissions are initially rated as requiring maximum-security (13%) while more than one-out-of-four are rated minimum-security (30%). There is an increasing trend for maximum designations since 1996/97 (6% to 13%, or +117%).
- 11% of new women offender admissions are initially rated as requiring maximum-security while one-half (53%) are initially rated as minimum-security and there is an increasing trend for maximum designations since 1996/97 (4% to 11%, or +64%).

Changing Criminal Associations:

- More than one-sixth of men offenders in federal custody have gang affiliations and this phenomenon has been dramatically increasing since 1997 (12% to 16%, or +33%).
- One-tenth of women offenders in federal custody have gang affiliations and this has been increasing since 1997 (7% to 13%, or +85%).

Changing Mental Health:

- More than one-out-of-ten men offenders in federal custody have been identified at admission as presenting mental health problems and this proportion has risen since 1997 (7% to 12%, +71%).
- One-out-of-five women offenders in federal custody were identified at admission as presenting mental health problems and this proportion has also risen since 1997 (13% to 21%, +61%).