

# Adult and youth correctional statistics in Canada, 2016/2017

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## Adult and youth corrections populations are declining

The number of adults and youth being supervised by correctional services in Canada has fallen by almost one-fifth since 2012/2013.

There were, on average, 117,645 adults (18 years and older) supervised in either custody or a community program on a given day in the 11 reporting provinces and territories in 2016/2017. This represented a rate of 422 offenders per 100,000 adult population, down 3% from the previous year and 17% lower compared with 2012/2013. The provincial/territorial correctional system supervises adults serving custodial sentences of less than two years, as well as those being held in pre-trial custody (remand) or serving community sentences such as probation.

There were, on average, 23,006 adult offenders under federal supervision per day in 2016/2017. This was equivalent to 79 offenders per 100,000 adult population, down 1% from 2015/2016 and 6% lower compared with 2012/2013. The federal correctional system supervises adult offenders serving custodial sentences of two years or more, and those on conditional release in the community, including parole.

These findings are included in the *Juristat* article "[Adult and youth correctional statistics in Canada, 2016/2017](#)."

The declines in the adult provincial/territorial and federal correctional population over the most recent five-year period are consistent with the trend in police-reported data, which show that the rate of adults charged by police fell by 7% from 2012 to 2016. In the shorter term, the results are more difficult to compare because of the time lag between the various stages of the justice process. In particular, the rate of adults charged by police increased in both 2015 and 2016, while the rate of adults in correctional services decreased every year from 2012/2013 to 2016/2017.

There were, on an average day, 7,616 youth aged 12 to 17 supervised in custody or a community program in the 10 reporting provinces and territories in 2016/2017. This represented a rate of 44 youth per 10,000 youth population, down 10% from the previous year and 37% lower compared with 2012/2013. The declines follow a trend similar to police-reported data, where the rate of youth charged by police fell by 27% from 2012 to 2016.

## Adult incarceration rate on downward trend

There were 39,873 adults in custody on an average day in 2016/2017, including 25,448 in provincial/territorial custody and 14,425 in federal custody. This translates into an incarceration rate of 136 adults per 100,000 adult population, down 2% from 2015/2016 and 4% lower compared with 2012/2013.

## More adults in remand than in sentenced custody

The total number of adults being held in remand, while awaiting trial or sentencing, has been greater than the number of adults being held in provincial and territorial sentenced custody, following a finding of guilt, since 2004/2005.

On a typical day in 2016/2017, there were 15,417 adults in remand and 9,710 in sentenced custody. For the 12 jurisdictions that have reported regularly over time, the ratio of adults in remand versus those in sentenced custody has increased steadily, from 1.2 to 1 in 2013/2014 to 1.5 to 1 in 2016/2017. The widening of this gap reflects both an increase in the remand population and a decrease in the sentenced population.

## **Aboriginal adults are overrepresented in the correctional system**

An admission is counted each time an individual begins any type of custody or community supervision program. Aboriginal adults represented 4.1% of the Canadian adult population in 2016/2017, while accounting for 28% of admissions to provincial/territorial correctional services and 27% of admissions for federal correctional services. In comparison, in 2006/2007, Aboriginal adults accounted for 21% of admissions to provincial and territorial correctional services (excluding Prince Edward Island and the Northwest Territories) and 19% to federal correctional services.

Among the provinces in 2016/2017, Aboriginal adults accounted for the largest proportion of admissions to custody in Saskatchewan (76%) and Manitoba (74%). Manitoba (15%) and Saskatchewan (14%) also have the highest proportion of Aboriginal adults among their provincial populations.

Aboriginal males accounted for 28% of male admissions to custody in the provinces and territories in 2016/2017, while Aboriginal females accounted for 43% of total female admissions to custody.

## **Little change in operating expenditures for adult corrections**

Operating expenditures for adult correctional services in Canada were little changed in 2016/2017, up 1% from the previous year to \$4.7 billion after adjusting for inflation.

On average in 2016/2017, the cost to have an adult in custody was \$288 per day for federal offenders or \$105,286 per year, compared with \$213 per day for provincial and territorial offenders or \$77,639 per year.

## **More youth in community supervision than in custody**

On an average day in 2016/2017, there were almost eight times as many youth in community supervision (6,719) than in custody (858) in the 10 jurisdictions that reported both custody and community supervision data.

Both the custody and community populations are declining. For custody, the rate per 10,000 youth decreased 12% from the previous year and was down 33% from 2012/2013. For community supervision, the rate was down 11% from the previous year and 38% lower compared with five years earlier.

## **Aboriginal youth**

Aboriginal youth accounted for 46% of admissions to correctional services in the 10 reporting jurisdictions in 2016/2017, while representing 8% of the general youth population in those same jurisdictions.

Aboriginal youth are overrepresented in both custody and community supervision, accounting for 50% of custody admissions and 42% of community supervision admissions.

Aboriginal females accounted for a greater proportion of custody admissions among youth relative to their male counterparts. Aboriginal female youth accounted for 60% of female admissions, while Aboriginal male youth made up 47% of male youth admissions.

### Note to readers

Data from the Corrections Key Indicator Report for Adults and Youth provide average counts of the adult and youth correctional populations and represent the number of adults or youth in custody or under community supervision on an average day. Corrections officials typically perform daily counts of persons in their facilities and monthly counts of persons under community supervision. These data are used to calculate the annual average daily custody and community counts as well as incarceration rates.

The Adult Correctional Services Survey and Youth Correctional Services Survey collect information on admissions to and releases from federal and provincial/territorial correctional services programs (both adult and youth). Admissions 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 number of times a person moves from one type of correctional supervision to another. The same person may be included several times in the admission counts where he/she moves from one correctional program to another (for example, from remand 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 remand (pre-trial detention), sentenced custody or a community supervision program, regardless of the previous legal hold status.

Not all provinces and territories reported complete data for 2016/2017. Jurisdictions excluded from particular analyses due to non-reporting are noted throughout the article.

For adults, average counts data exclude Nova Scotia and New Brunswick (community supervision and total correctional services).

For youths, data exclude Quebec as well as average counts for Nova Scotia and New Brunswick (community supervision and total correctional services) and admissions data for Nova Scotia and Alberta.

**Available tables:** [35-10-0003-01](#), [35-10-0009-01](#), [35-10-0012-01](#), [35-10-0024-01](#), [35-10-0118-01](#), [35-10-0154-01](#) and [35-10-0155-01](#).

**Definitions, data sources and methods:** survey numbers [3306](#), [3313](#) and [3323](#).

The article "[Adult and youth correctional statistics in Canada, 2016/2017](#)" is now available as part of the publication *Juristat* ([85-002-X](#)).

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; [STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca)) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; [STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca)).