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A ONE-DAY SNAPSHOT OF INMATES IN CANADA'S ADULT CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

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HIGHLIGHTS

The data presented in this *Juristat* are based on a "One-Day Snapshot" survey of all inmates who were on-register in adult correctional facilities on Saturday, October 5th, 1996¹.

- On October 5th, 1996, there were over 37,000 inmates on-register in 151 provincial/territorial and 48 federal facilities in Canada. This represents a rate of 17 inmates per 10,000 adult population in Canada.
- The majority of federal inmates (63%) were in medium security facilities, while the majority of provincial/territorial inmates were either in multi-level (40%) or maximum security (39%) facilities. This difference may be due to the fact that remand inmates, who are being held temporarily, are usually housed in maximum or multi-level security facilities.
- Almost two-thirds (63%) of provincial/territorial inmates were sentenced inmates. A further one-quarter were on remand, and 10% were serving intermittent sentences.
- Those between 20 and 39 years of age were over-represented in adult custodial populations.
- While Aboriginal persons account for approximately 2% of the adult population in Canada, they accounted for 17% of the adult inmates. These differences were particularly evident in western Canada.
- Inmates had fewer years of education, were more likely to be unemployed at the time of admission, and less likely to be married, compared to the adult population of Canada.
- Most provincial/territorial sentenced inmates had prior criminal histories. The majority had at least one previous adult conviction (83%) and approximately three-quarters (72%) had a prior term of provincial/territorial incarceration.
- Almost three-quarters (73%) of federal inmates were currently incarcerated for a crime against the person, in particular homicide/attempted murder and robbery. Among provincial/territorial inmates, one-third (33%) were currently incarcerated for a crime against the person, in particular robbery and sexual assault.
- Almost one-half (45%) of sentenced provincial/territorial inmates were serving terms of less than six months, while one-half (50%) of federal inmates were serving terms of less than six years.
- For the 7 jurisdictions that reported data², nearly 5 in 10 of the provincial/territorial sentenced inmates were classified as high-risk to re-offend.

¹ "On-register" refers to the number of inmates who have been placed at that facility to serve their sentence. Inmates may not be physically located at the facility on Snapshot day because they were away from the facility (e.g., on temporary absence, serving an intermittent sentence in the community, away for medical reasons or court appearances, etc.).

² Data were available for Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Manitoba, Yukon, and the Northwest Territories.



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INTRODUCTION

The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, in collaboration with federal and provincial/territorial corrections authorities, conducted a census of inmates in all adult correctional facilities in Canada on October 5th, 1996. This is the first time that a Snapshot of all adult inmates in Canada has been taken.

The "One-Day Snapshot" occurred on Saturday, October 5th, 1996. The data describe all inmates who were "on-register" in federal and provincial/territorial facilities at midnight on Snapshot day. The "on-register" population refers to the number of inmates who have been placed in a facility to serve their sentence. The "actual-in" population is the total number of inmates who were physically located at the correctional facility on Snapshot day (excluding inmates who were away from the facility on temporary absence, serving an intermittent sentence in the community, or away for medical reasons, court appearances, etc.).

The data gathered covered: the number and types of facilities in each jurisdiction and the nature and amount of accommodation available; inmate demographic and background information (e.g., marital status, education, employment experience, language, and citizenship); case characteristics such as the inmate's legal status, security classification, offence and sentencing data; security concerns; use of segregation; and, comprehensive information on the level of risk and the nature of program needs of inmates for a number of jurisdictions.

The purpose of the project was to provide more detailed information on the make-up of federal and provincial/territorial inmate populations in Canada. In Canada, the responsibility for housing offenders sentenced to a term of incarceration is shared between the federal and the provincial/territorial governments. Correctional Service Canada (CSC) is responsible for offenders sentenced to two or more years. Provincial/territorial corrections are responsible for offenders who receive custodial sentences of less than two years and for housing persons charged with offences who have been "remanded" to custody while awaiting trial³. The dual responsibility for sentenced and remand inmates presents some particular difficulties for managing the inmate population for purposes of accommodation planning and programming.

Normally, a person who is sentenced to a term of incarceration of two years or more is housed in a federal facility and a person who receives a term of incarceration of less than two years serves their time in a provincial/territorial facility. In exceptional cases, inmates serving less than two years may be transferred to a federal facility. Inmates in provincial/territorial facilities may be federal inmates who are awaiting transfer to a federal facility, or inmates being held under an Exchange of Service Agreement.

This *Juristat* provides a brief description of adult correctional facilities in Canada. It then focuses on describing Canada's adult inmates on one day of the year, including the number of inmates in custody, inmate characteristics, offences, and sentence length. The final section provides information on risk and need profiles of inmates in a select number of jurisdictions in Canada. Although data are not available for all jurisdictions, it is the first time that comparisons of inmate risk and need levels are available for several jurisdictions.

ADULT CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES IN CANADA

In Canada, there are 199 adult correctional facilities in which over 37,000 inmates are accommodated

On October 5th, 1996, there were 199 adult correctional facilities in Canada, with 37,541 inmates on-register. This included 151 provincial/territorial facilities and 48 federal CSC facilities (see Table 1). Among the provinces/territories, Ontario had the largest number of facilities (47), followed by Quebec and British Columbia (19 each). Prince Edward Island and Yukon had the fewest number of facilities (2 each).

³ Remand refers to persons who have been charged with an offence and ordered by the court to custody while awaiting a further court appearance. They have not been sentenced to custody or community sanctions but can be held for a number of reasons (e.g., risk that they will fail to appear for their court date, risk to re-offend, etc.).

Table 1

Distribution of Correctional Facilities and Inmate Populations on October 5, 1996¹

Jurisdiction	# of Facilities	Total Capacity ²	On-Register Count	Capacity "On-Register" %	Actual-In Count ³	Capacity "Actual-in" %
Newfoundland	6	351	346	99	299	85
Prince Edward Island	2	107	66	62	66	62
Nova Scotia	9	512	490	96	432	84
New Brunswick	10	388	496	128	396	102
Quebec	19	3,483	5,766	166	3,424	98
Ontario	47	7,914	8,416	106
Manitoba	8	976	1,062	109	942	97
Saskatchewan ⁴	15	1,228	1,153	94	1,117	91
Alberta	10	2,412	2,889	120	2,176	90
British Columbia	19	2,259	2,603	115	2,324	103
Yukon	2	131	79	60	76	58
Northwest Territories	4	244	313	128	273	112
Provincial/Territorial Total	151	20,005	23,679	118
Provincial/Territorial Total (excl. Ont.)	...	12,091	11,525	95
CSC	48	12,721	13,862	109	13,610	107
TOTAL	199	32,726	37,541	115
TOTAL (excl. Ont.)	...	24,812	25,135	101

.. Figures not available.

... Figures not appropriate or applicable.

¹ Includes all facilities that were operational on Snapshot Day.

² Defined as the number of permanent beds in the facility.

³ "Actual-in" counts were not available for Ontario.

⁴ Includes 2 facilities that were operational but that had no inmates.

Jurisdictions vary in the nature and types of correctional facilities they use

Correctional institutions across Canada represent a variety of types of facilities, security levels, and special accommodation arrangements. Most federal facilities (45) were classified as penitentiaries while the remainder were described as psychiatric centres (3). Just over one-half (52%) of the provincial/territorial facilities were described as "correctional centres". An additional 27% were described as jail/detention centres, and 16% as alternative minimum security facilities. Only a small number were categorized specifically as remand centres (5%).

The definition of facility type varies across jurisdictions. Generally, correctional centres or penitentiaries are used to accommodate the majority of sentenced inmates, jail/detention centres are used for shorter-term, and remand inmates, and remand centres are reserved for inmates awaiting trial. Alternative minimum security facilities, such as camps, farms, day detention centres, treatment centres, and community residences, tend to be used for inmates who are at lower risk of causing disturbances or security incidents.

More than one-half of federal facilities had protective custody units (56%) and the majority included punitive/administrative segregation units (63%). Similarly, a large proportion of provincial/territorial facilities had separate protective custody units (59%) and about three-quarters (72%) had punitive/administrative segregation units.

The majority of federal inmates are held in medium security facilities, while provincial/territorial inmates tend to be held in either multi-level or maximum security facilities

Security level is an essential feature of custodial operations. Most jurisdictions use four security designations: "maximum"; "medium"; "minimum", and "multi-level". Figure 1 shows the distribution of inmates by security level of the facility. On Snapshot day, almost two-thirds of federal inmates (63%) were housed in medium security facilities. A further 20% were accommodated at the maximum level of security, 14% in minimum security, and 3% in multi-level facilities.

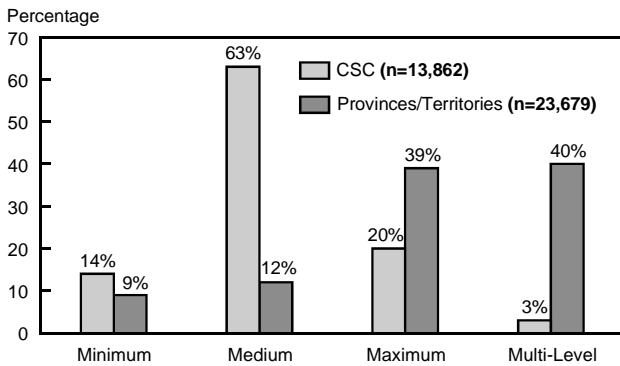
Each jurisdiction defines security levels differently. However, generally:

- "maximum" security facilities normally use high security fencing around the perimeter of the facility and inmate movement is often highly restricted within the facility.
- "medium" facilities also use fences around perimeters, however, security is lower, and inmate movement is somewhat less restricted.
- "minimum" facilities normally do not use fences to enclose buildings and inmate movement is generally unrestricted during most periods (except night).
- "multi-level" facilities combine features of two or more of the security levels defined above. Some facilities use the same buildings to accommodate inmates classified at different security levels, while others use separate structures for each security level. Multi-level security facilities may be enclosed by fences.

Maximum security facilities were used more commonly at the provincial/territorial than the federal level. More than one-third (39%) of provincial/territorial inmates were housed in maximum security facilities and 40% were housed in multi-level facilities. Only 12% of provincial/territorial inmates were housed in medium security, and 9% in minimum security facilities. The difference in security levels between federal and provincial/territorial facilities is likely due to the fact that provinces and territories are responsible for housing persons charged with offences who have been “remanded” to custody while awaiting trial. Remand inmates, who are being held temporarily, are typically housed in maximum or multi-level security facilities.

Figure 1

Distribution of inmates by security level of facility



NUMBER OF INMATES IN ADULT CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

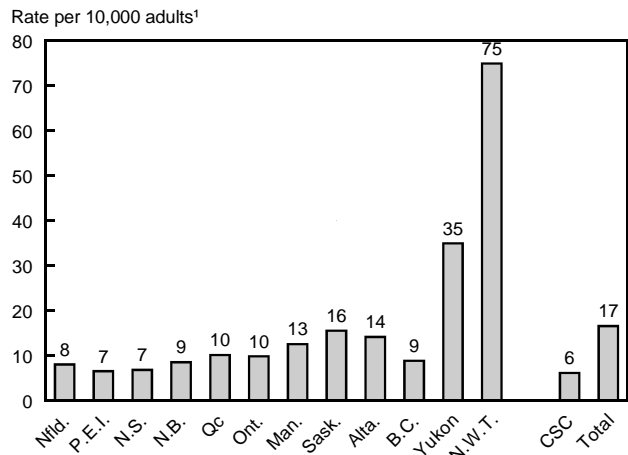
Approximately 17 persons per 10,000 of the adult population are incarcerated in Canada

As mentioned earlier, there were 37,541 inmates “on-register” in Canadian correctional facilities on Snapshot day. Over one-third of these (13,862 or 37%) were in federal CSC facilities (Table 1). Among the provinces/territories, the number of inmates ranged from 66 in Prince Edward Island to 8,416 in Ontario. Ontario and Quebec accounted for 14,182 or 60% of adult inmates on register in provincial/territorial facilities.

Based on the on-register inmate population, a rate of approximately 17 persons per 10,000 of Canada’s population were incarcerated on Snapshot day (Figure 2). Federal rates of incarceration were 6 persons per 10,000 adult population. Provincial/territorial rates of incarceration ranged from a low of 7 per 10,000 adult population in Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia, to a high of 75 per 10,000 in the Northwest Territories.

Figure 2

Adult incarceration rates by jurisdiction



¹ The rates are calculated using 1996 Canadian Census data

The number of inmates exceeds accommodation capacity in many correctional facilities

An important issue in examining population size and distribution of inmates in correctional facilities is that of overcrowding. As illustrated in Table 1, the use of available accommodation capacity varied widely across jurisdictions.

Based on the on-register populations, CSC and seven of the provinces/territories reported over-capacity populations, ranging from 6% over-capacity in Ontario to 66% over-capacity in Quebec. Yukon and Prince Edward Island reported on-register populations that were considerably lower than the capacity of their facilities (40% and 38%, respectively under-capacity).

When capacity was calculated based on the “actual-in” inmate populations (i.e., the actual number of inmates physically located in the correctional facility on Snapshot day), the number of jurisdictions with over-capacity situations decreased⁴. Based on the actual-in populations, CSC was still operating over-capacity (7%). In addition, the Northwest Territories, British Columbia and New Brunswick still reported over-capacity populations (12%, 3% and 2%, respectively). Since actual-in population data were not available for Ontario, it is unknown whether they remained over-capacity. Many of the other jurisdictions remained close to capacity when counting only those inmates physically located in the facility on Snapshot day. Overall, the provincial/territorial jurisdictions (excluding Ontario) were operating at 95% capacity based on the actual-in inmate counts.

⁴ “Actual-in” counts were not available for Ontario, therefore the percentage over-capacity for the combined provinces/territories and the overall total exclude Ontario. It should also be noted that the Snapshot was taken on a Saturday in order to include inmates serving an intermittent sentence. Typically, intermittent sentences are served on weekends. Therefore, over-capacity based on actual-in counts may differ on weekdays.

Some jurisdictions make more extensive use of their temporary absence programs. Temporary absences allow the inmate to leave the facility for a limited period (from a few hours to a few days). They are granted for a variety of reasons including medical, administrative (e.g., court appearances), and compassionate reasons. The absence may be either escorted or unescorted. In Quebec, for example, the use of temporary absence programs may help to explain the difference between their on-register count (66% over-capacity) and their actual-in count (2% under-capacity).

A PROFILE OF CANADA'S ADULT INMATES

Characteristics of the Inmate Population

Individuals awaiting trial account for about one in four of the provincial/territorial inmates

Whereas all inmates in federal facilities have been sentenced, inmates in provincial/territorial facilities may be there for several reasons. Inmates' legal status include: regular provincial/territorial sentence, serving an intermittent sentence⁵, on remand, or an "other" category which includes those on temporary detention, immigration holds, etc. In examining the composition of provincial/territorial on-register inmate populations according to the inmates' legal status, almost two-thirds (63%) of provincial/territorial inmates were regular sentenced inmates. A further one-quarter (25%) were remand inmates, one in ten were intermittent sentenced inmates, and 2% had other legal status.

Males, younger adults, and Aboriginal persons are more likely to be incarcerated

Although there are approximately equal proportions of adult males and females in the population in Canada (49% male and 51% female), 95% of inmates on-register in adult correctional facilities on Snapshot day were male (Table 2).

In federal institutions, 98% of inmates were male and in the provincial/territorial facilities, males represented 93% of the inmate population.

The median⁶ age for inmates, particularly those within provincial/territorial facilities, was less than that for adults in Canada. On Snapshot day, the median age was 31 for provincial/territorial inmates and 34 for federal inmates. The median age for adults in Canada is 41 years (Table 2).

Figures 3 and 4 illustrate how the male and female adult population in Canada is distributed by age compared with the on-register inmate population. Generally, younger age groups are over-represented in custodial populations, particularly adults between the ages of 20 and 39. Around age 40, this pattern is reversed. On Snapshot day, in provincial/territorial facilities, males aged 20-24 were the most over-represented. Almost one-quarter (22%) of the male provincial/territorial inmate population falls within this age group, compared to 9% of the adult male population in Canada. In federal facilities, males in the age groups 25-29 and 30-34 were the most over-represented. Eighteen percent of male federal inmates were between 25-29 (compared to 10% of the adult male population in Canada) and 21% were between 30-34 (compared to 12% of the adult male population in Canada).

For female inmates, provincial/territorial inmates tended to be older than those in federal facilities. Those aged 30-34 were the most over-represented in provincial/territorial facilities. One-quarter (25%) of the female provincial/territorial inmates were in this age group, compared to 11% of the adult female population in Canada. In federal facilities, females in the age group 25-29 were the most over-represented. Almost

⁵ Intermittent sentences are for 90 days or less and inmates serve their sentences on a periodic basis of 2-3 days at one time, usually on weekends. These inmates return to the community to resume employment and family responsibilities when they are not in custody.

⁶ The median represents the mid-point when all values are arranged in order of magnitude. One-half of the observations have a value less than or equal to the median; one-half have a value greater than or equal to the median.

Table 2

	Adult Population in Canada ¹		Provincial/Territorial Inmates		CSC Inmates		Total Inmates	
	Percent	Total Sample	Percent of Sample	Total Sample	Percent of Sample	Total Sample	Percent of Sample	
Median Age	41		31		34		32	
Male ²	49	23,678	93	13,862	98	37,540	95	
Aboriginal ³	2	23,494	18	13,862	14	37,356	17	
Grade 9 or Less ⁴	19	19,903	34	5,002	46	24,905	36	
Unemployed ⁵	7	9,239	54	2,620	43	11,859	52	
Married ⁶	63	18,682	24	13,693	41	32,375	31	

¹ Based on 1996 Canadian Census.

² Missing data for 1 provincial/territorial inmate.

³ Missing data for 185 provincial/territorial inmates (<1%).

⁴ Missing data for 3,776 provincial/territorial inmates (16%) and 8,860 CSC inmates (64%).

⁵ Missing data for 14,440 provincial/territorial inmates (61%) and 11,242 CSC inmates (81%).

⁶ Refers to those married at time of admission. Missing data for 4,997 provincial/territorial inmates (21%) and 169 CSC inmates (1%).

one-quarter (22%) of female federal inmates were in this age group, compared to 10% of the adult female population in Canada.

Figure 3

Males – Age distribution of adult population and inmates

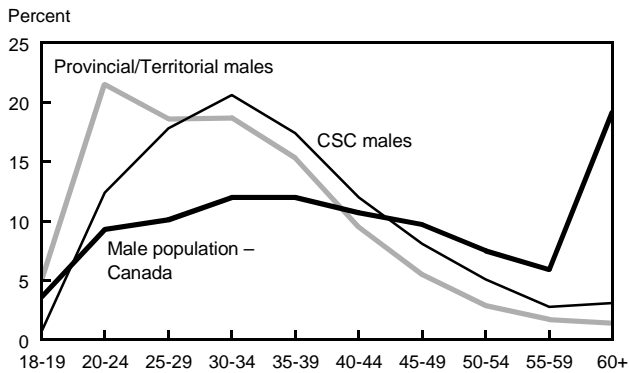
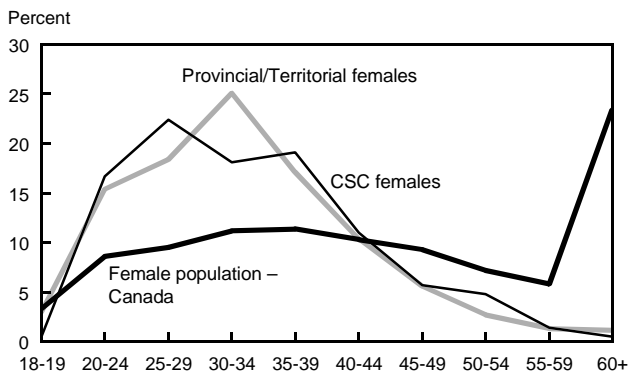


Figure 4

Females – Age distribution of adult population and inmates



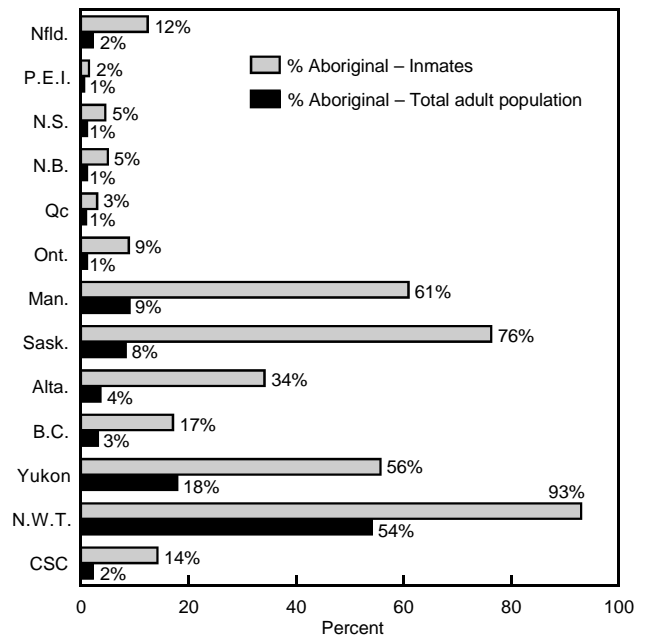
The Snapshot data support other findings that typically show higher incarceration rates for Aboriginal peoples. While Aboriginal persons account for approximately 2% of the adult population in Canada, they accounted for 17% of the inmates on Snapshot day (Table 2). In provincial/territorial facilities, Aboriginal persons accounted for 18% of the inmates, while in federal facilities they accounted for 14% of the inmates.

As illustrated in Figure 5, the proportion of Aboriginal inmates varied considerably across jurisdictions; however, in all jurisdictions the proportion of Aboriginal inmates was substantially larger than the proportion of Aboriginal persons in the population. These differences are particularly evident in western Canada. In Saskatchewan, for example, the proportion of Aboriginal persons incarcerated was almost 10 times their proportion in the provincial population (76% of the inmate population compared to 8% of the provincial

population). In Manitoba, 61% of the inmates were Aboriginal persons (compared to 9% in the provincial population) and in Alberta, over one-third (34%) of the inmates were Aboriginal persons (compared to 4% in the provincial population). In the other jurisdictions, the proportion of Aboriginal persons incarcerated ranged from twice to almost nine times their proportion in the provincial/territorial population.

Figure 5

Aboriginal persons – Proportion of adult population and inmates by jurisdiction



Inmates had fewer years of education, were more likely to be unemployed, and less likely to be married in comparison to the adult population of Canada

As illustrated in Table 2, 36% of those incarcerated on Snapshot day, for whom information was available⁷, had a grade 9 education or less, compared to 19% of adults in Canada. An even larger proportion of those in federal institutions (46%) had a grade 9 education or less. Further, one-half of all inmates (52%) were unemployed at the time of admission to the facility, compared to only 7% of adults in Canada. Finally, only one-third (31%) of inmates were married at time of admission, compared to two-thirds (63%) of adults in Canada. Provincial/territorial inmates were less likely than federal inmates to be married (24% versus 41%).

Most provincial/territorial inmates have previous adult convictions and the majority have already served prison time at least once before their current incarceration

Nine provinces/territories were able to provide criminal history information for inmates who were on-register on Snapshot

⁷ Education data were not available for British Columbia and Yukon, and for 64% of CSC inmates.

day⁸. Within these jurisdictions, the majority of inmates (83%) had at least one previous adult conviction. Further, almost three-quarters (72%) had a prior term of provincial/territorial incarceration. About one-half of the inmates (49%) had a previous probation term.

Current Offences

Inmate populations differ most importantly in the nature of their criminal offences and the length of their sentences. These two factors are primary considerations in correctional decision-making on how inmates should be managed and what programming they may require. The Snapshot survey produced detailed information for up to five of the “most serious offences” for which provincial/territorial and CSC inmates were currently incarcerated⁹.

Almost three-quarters of federal inmates and one-third of provincial/territorial inmates were currently incarcerated for a crime against the person

The most serious current offence (not necessarily the only offence for which an inmate is incarcerated) for approximately one-half (49%) of inmates on Snapshot day was a crime against the person (Table 3). Another one-quarter (28%) were

incarcerated for property offences, and 23% for “other” *Criminal Code* or federal statute offences. Almost three-quarters of federal inmates (73%) had crimes against the person as their most serious offence, primarily offences such as homicide/attempt murder or robbery (24% each).

One-third (33%) of the provincial/territorial inmates had crimes against the person as their most serious offence, primarily robbery and sexual assault (9% and 7%, respectively). A larger proportion of provincial/territorial inmates were incarcerated for property offences (37%), primarily break and enter (18%) and theft (8%). Thirty percent of provincial/

⁸ Full criminal history data were available for Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Manitoba, Yukon, and the Northwest Territories. Ontario was able to provide all criminal history data except number of previous convictions. Criminal history data were not available for Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, and CSC.

⁹ The most serious offence is based on the Seriousness Index of the Revised Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey Violation Coding Structure that defines seriousness in terms of length of maximum sentence and the degree of injury or threat of injury to the victim. Offences are grouped into the following major offence categories: Crimes Against the Person (e.g., homicide/attempt murder, sexual assault, serious assault, minor assault, robbery, and other violent); Property Offences (e.g., break and enter, theft, fraud, and other property); and Other Criminal Code and Federal Statute Offences (e.g., weapons offences, administration of justice offences, impaired offences, drug offences, and other Criminal Code/ Federal Statute offences).

Table 3

Distribution of Offence Types ¹								
	# of Inmates ²	Crimes Against the Person						TOTAL
		Homicide/ Attempt Murder	Sexual Assault	Serious Assault	Minor Assault	Robbery	Other Violent	
Provinces/Territories		percent						
Sentenced ³	16,121	2	7	6	5	8	2	30
Remand	5,372	9	6	6	6	11	5	44
Subtotal	21,493	3	7	6	5	9	3	33
CSC	13,829	24	14	4	-	24	7	73
TOTAL	35,322	11	9	6	3	15	4	49
	# of Inmates ²	Property Crimes					TOTAL	
		B&E	Theft	Fraud	Other Property			
Provinces/Territories		percent						
Sentenced ³	16,121	20	9	4	6		39	
Remand	5,372	14	6	4	6		29	
Subtotal	21,493	18	8	4	6		37	
CSC	13,829	12	1	-	2		15	
TOTAL	35,322	16	5	3	4		28	
	# of Inmates ²	Other Criminal Code (CC)/Federal Statutes					TOTAL	
		Weapons Offences	Admin. of Justice	Impaired Offences	Drug Offences	Other CC/Fed.		
Provinces/Territories		percent						
Sentenced ³	16,121	2	3	8	7	11	31	
Remand	5,372	4	4	2	4	12	28	
Subtotal	21,493	3	4	6	6	11	30	
CSC	13,829	-	-	1	8	2	11	
TOTAL	35,322	2	2	4	7	8	23	

- nil or zero.

¹ Based on the current most serious offence.

² Missing data for 2,186 provincial/territorial inmates (9%) and 33 CSC inmates (<1%).

³ "Sentenced" includes regular, intermittent and inmates on "other" legal status.

territorial inmates were incarcerated for “other” *Criminal Code* or federal statute offences. Finding a larger proportion of federal offenders incarcerated for crimes against the person is not surprising since offenders in federal institutions are typically those involved in more violent or serious offences who have received significantly longer sentences than those in provincial/territorial facilities.

Among the provincial/territorial inmates, a higher proportion of remand inmates had committed crimes against the person, as compared to sentenced inmates (44% versus 30%). Again, this would be expected since offenders on remand are often those involved in more serious offences. However, it should be noted that remand inmates have not yet been convicted, and they may be convicted of a less serious offence than that for which they are currently incarcerated.

Jurisdictions vary in the proportions of inmates in custody for crimes against the person

As illustrated in Figure 6, the proportion of provincial/territorial inmates with crimes against the person as their most serious offence ranged from 25% in Prince Edward Island to 55% in the Northwest Territories. Among the federal inmates, almost three-quarters (73%) had a crime against the person as their most serious offence.

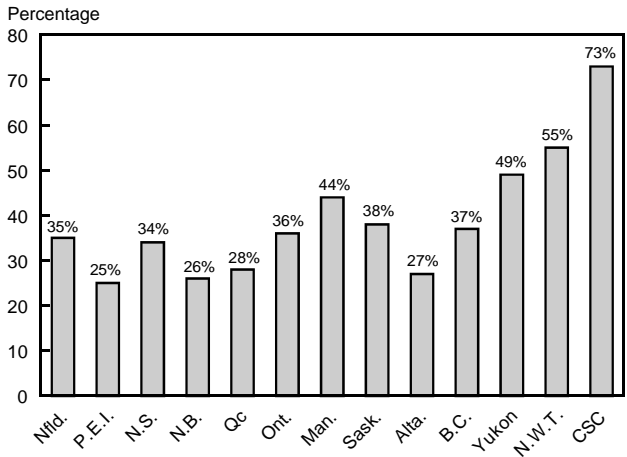
Offence patterns of provincial/territorial inmates are less serious and varied than those of federal inmates

An analysis of up to five of the most serious offences for which each inmate was currently incarcerated was conducted to provide a picture of the number of different “types” of offences for which inmates were incarcerated. This essentially provides an indication of the variety of offending.

There was a tendency for offences to be more violent in character among federal inmates. Almost one-third of federal inmates (31%) had only crimes against the person and another 46% had both crimes against the person and other types of offences among their five most serious current offences (Table 4). Only 22% of federal inmates were currently incarcerated for non-violent types of offences only. Offence

Figure 6

Proportion of inmates incarcerated for crimes against the person¹



¹ Offence data were missing for 33 (0.2%) of the CSC offenders and 2,186 (9%) of the provincial/territorial offenders.

patterns for provincial/territorial inmates were generally more non-violent in nature. Almost two-thirds (63%) were currently incarcerated for non-violent offences only. Although the largest proportion of provincial/territorial inmates, both sentenced and remand, were currently incarcerated for non-violent offences (66% and 53%, respectively), a larger proportion of remand inmates had crimes against the person (31% had crimes against the person only and 16% had crimes against the person and other types of offences).

Federal inmates had a larger number of current offences in comparison to provincial/territorial inmates (Table 5). Almost one-third of federal inmates (31%) were currently incarcerated with five or more offences compared to 22% of provincial/territorial inmates¹⁰. In contrast, one-third of provincial/territorial inmates (33%) had only one offence for which they were currently incarcerated (compared to 26% of federal).

¹⁰ Ontario provided data on the most serious offence only and is excluded from this calculation.

Table 4

Nature of Current Offences¹ by Legal Status

Jurisdiction	Total # of Inmates ²	Only Against Person	Against Person & “Other” ³	Only “Other” Offence ³
	#	#	percent	#
Provinces/ Territories				
Sentenced ⁴	16,121	3,207	20	2,261
Remand	5,372	1,691	31	860
Subtotal	21,493	4,898	23	3,121
CSC	13,829	4,346	31	6,415
TOTAL	35,322	9,244	26	9,536

¹ Analysis of up to five of the most serious offences for which an inmate was incarcerated.

² Missing data for 2,186 provincial/territorial inmates (9%) and 33 CSC inmates (<1%).

³ “Other” Offence = crimes against property, other Criminal Code violations, and other offences not against the person.

⁴ “Sentenced” includes regular, intermittent and inmates on “other” legal status.

Table 5

	Total # of Inmates ¹	Number of Offences									
		One		Two		Three		Four		Five+	
		#	percent	#	percent	#	percent	#	percent	#	percent
Provinces/Territories ²	14,262	4,712	33	2,804	20	1,975	14	1,644	12	3,127	22
CSC	13,829	3,650	26	2,595	19	1,916	14	1,453	11	4,215	31
TOTAL	28,091	8,362	30	5,399	19	3,891	14	3,097	11	7,342	26

¹ Missing data for 9,417 provincial/territorial inmates (49% - 8,416 inmates from Ontario are excluded as only the most serious offence was reported; and 1,001 other inmates with unknown offence information). Also missing data for 33 CSC inmates (<1%).

² Includes all inmates (sentenced, intermittent, remand and other).

Females are less likely than males to be incarcerated for crimes against the person

As mentioned earlier, the majority of inmates in both federal and provincial/territorial facilities are male. Males and females differ in the offences for which they are currently incarcerated (Table 6). In federal facilities, while the majority of males (74%) were currently incarcerated for a crime committed against the person, this was the case for 64% of female inmates. Among provincial/territorial inmates, 34% of males and 28% of females were currently incarcerated for crimes against the person.

In federal facilities, the largest proportions of both males and females were incarcerated for homicide/attempt murder (24% and 37%, respectively). The next most common offence was drug offences for female inmates (27%) and robbery for males (24%). Among provincial/territorial inmates, the largest percentage of males were incarcerated for break and enter (19%), and the largest percentage of females were incarcerated for theft and "other" *Criminal Code* and federal statute offences (13% each).

While the differences are not large, Aboriginal inmates are somewhat more likely than non-Aboriginal inmates to be incarcerated for crimes against the person

Only minor differences were evident in the offence characteristics reported for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal inmates (Table 7). Among both federal and provincial/territorial inmates, slightly more Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal inmates were incarcerated for a crime against the person (79% versus 72% within federal, 40% versus 32% within provincial/territorial). For federal inmates, the difference is primarily due to a larger proportion of Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal inmates with sexual assault (20% versus 12%) and serious assault (10% versus 3%) offences. For provincial/territorial inmates, this difference is primarily due to a larger proportion of Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal inmates with serious assault offences (12% versus 5%).

¹¹ Inmates in provincial/territorial custody serving terms of two years or more may be federal inmates who are awaiting transfer to a federal facility or inmates being held under an Exchange of Service Agreement.

Sentence Length

Two-thirds of sentenced provincial/territorial inmates were serving terms of 1 year or less, while one-half of federal inmates were serving terms of less than six years

Figure 7 presents a breakdown of the total aggregate sentence lengths for sentenced inmates in the provinces/territories. On Snapshot day, 45% of sentenced provincial/territorial inmates were serving terms of less than six months. An additional 22% were serving terms of between 6 months and less than one year, 29% were serving terms of 1 year and less than 2 years, and 5% were serving terms of two years or more¹¹.

An offender can be convicted of multiple charges in a single court disposition, or in several court dispositions. In such cases, the judge may order that the various prison sentences be served either consecutively to (following) or concurrently with (at the same time as) one another. The "aggregate sentence" is the sum of all sentences that the offender must serve.

Figure 7

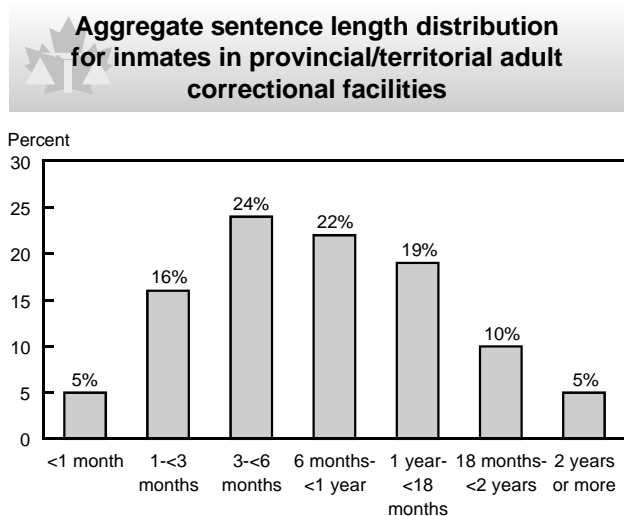


Table 6



Distribution of Offence Types by Gender¹

	# of Inmates ²	Crimes Against the Person						TOTAL
		Homicide/ Attempt Murder	Sexual Assault	Serious Assault	Minor Assault	Robbery	Other Violent	
percent								
Provinces/Territories								
Male	20,043	3	7	6	5	9	34	
Female	1,453	5	2	6	3	9	28	
CSC								
Male	13,619	24	14	4	-	24	74	
Female	210	37	1	10	-	13	64	
Total Male	33,662	12	10	5	3	15	50	
Total Female	1,663	9	2	7	3	10	33	
	# of Inmates ²	Property Crimes				TOTAL		
		B&E	Theft	Fraud	Other Property			
percent								
Provinces/Territories								
Male	20,043	19	8	4	6	37		
Female	1,453	8	13	11	6	37		
CSC								
Male	13,619	12	1	-	2	15		
Female	210	-	4	1	2	7		
Total Male	33,662	16	5	2	4	28		
Total Female	1,663	7	12	10	5	34		
	# of Inmates ²	Other Criminal Code (CC)/Federal Statutes					TOTAL	
		Weapons Offences	Admin. of Justice	Impaired Offences	Drug Offences	Other CC/Fed.		
percent								
Provinces/Territories								
Male	20,043	3	4	6	6	11	30	
Female	1,453	2	4	5	9	13	34	
CSC								
Male	13,619	-	-	1	8	2	11	
Female	210	-	-	-	27	1	29	
Total Male	33,662	2	2	4	6	8	22	
Total Female	1,663	2	4	4	12	12	34	

- nil or zero.

¹ Only the most serious offence (MSO) is recorded.

² Missing data for 2,183 provincial/territorial inmates (9%) and 33 CSC inmates (<1%).

Table 7


Distribution of Offence Types by Aboriginal Status¹

	# of Inmates ²	Crimes Against the Person						TOTAL
		Homicide/ Attempt Murder	Sexual Assault	Serious Assault	Minor Assault	Robbery	Other Violent	
percent								
Provinces/Territories								
Aboriginal	3,941	3	8	12	7	8	2	40
Non-Aboriginal	17,406	4	6	5	5	9	3	32
CSC								
Aboriginal	1,964	23	20	10	-	21	4	79
Non-Aboriginal	11,865	24	12	3	-	25	8	72
Total Aboriginal	5,905	10	12	11	5	12	3	53
Total Non-Aboriginal	29,271	12	9	4	3	16	5	48
	# of Inmates ²	Property Crimes				TOTAL		
		B&E	Theft	Fraud	Other Property			
percent								
Provinces/Territories								
Aboriginal	3,941	18	8	2	7	35		
Non-Aboriginal	17,406	18	8	5	6	37		
CSC								
Aboriginal	1,964	13	1	-	2	16		
Non-Aboriginal	11,865	12	1	-	2	15		
Total Aboriginal	5,905	16	6	2	5	28		
Total Non-Aboriginal	29,271	16	5	3	4	28		
	# of Inmates ²	Other Criminal Code (CC)/Federal Statutes					TOTAL	
		Weapons Offences	Admin. of Justice	Impaired Offences	Drug Offences	Other CC/Fed.		
percent								
Provinces/Territories								
Aboriginal	3,941	2	4	6	6	7	26	
Non-Aboriginal	17,406	3	4	6	6	12	31	
CSC								
Aboriginal	1,964	-	-	1	2	1	5	
Non-Aboriginal	11,865	-	-	1	9	3	13	
Total Aboriginal	5,905	2	3	5	5	5	19	
Total Non-Aboriginal	29,271	2	2	4	7	8	24	

- nil or zero.

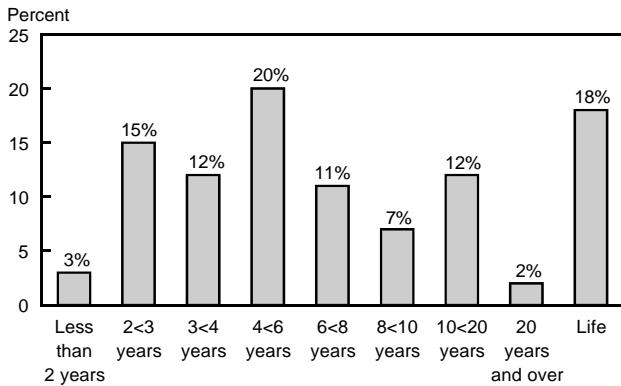
¹ Only the most serious offence (MSO) is recorded.

² Data were missing for 2,332 provincial/territorial inmates (10%) and 33 CSC inmates (<1%).

One-half of federal inmates on-register on Snapshot day (50%) were serving sentences of less than six years (Figure 8). Almost one-third (30%) were serving sentences of between six and 20 years, and 2% were serving sentences of a fixed length of 20 years or more. An additional 18% of federal inmates were serving life sentences.

Figure 8

Aggregate sentence length distribution for inmates in CSC correctional facilities



RISK AND NEED PROFILES

A unique aspect of the Snapshot survey was the opportunity to collect a fairly comprehensive set of criminal history and need indicators for the inmate populations for the following seven jurisdictions: Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Manitoba, Yukon, and the Northwest Territories¹². As risk/needs assessments are only completed on regularly sentenced inmates (i.e., intermittent and remand inmates are excluded) who are serving a period of incarceration of more than thirty days, the total population on which risk/need indicators could be derived for comparative purposes is relatively small. This small sample, nevertheless, provides some insight as to the potential for the examination of inmate risk profiles based on an individual’s criminal history and identified need areas. In addition, although not included in the risk profile, needs data were collected for CSC that allowed a comparison of needs between some provincial/territorial inmates and federal inmates.

In the corrections community, “risk” typically refers to the probability that an offender will engage in criminal behaviour in the future. Discussions of risk are concerned with recidivism – assessing the probability that criminal activity will occur following release from custody or during or after a period of supervision. The most well established methods for assessing level of risk for offenders rely on a combination of criminal history indicators (e.g., previous convictions, prior failure on supervision) and “need” factors (e.g., substance abuse problems, employment instability). Criminal history indicators are described as “static” or “fixed” since criminal history does not change. Need factors are described as “dynamic” because the level and nature of needs can change and problems can improve or worsen. Often, need factors are referred to as criminogenic, implying that if not addressed, these needs can contribute to, or propel, further criminal activity. When static criminal history factors are combined with assessment of key areas of need, it is possible to arrive at a relatively accurate and balanced determination of overall “risk”.

What is being assessed by this notion of risk is only the probability that offending will reoccur. In this sense, “risk”, as a correctional construct cannot be confused with risk as a broader criminal justice policy concept, in which risk has to address both the risk of recidivism and the severity or seriousness of offending. In correctional assessments of risk, the question is simplified to “who will be most likely to re-offend if no intervention occurs?”

Risk analysis is one guidepost for informing correctional administrators as to how they can best focus their efforts. It points to which offenders may need the greatest level of support, intervention, or supervision in order to reduce the chances of re-offending. Alternatively, risk data provide important information for selecting candidates who may require less attention from the system. Risk analyses, when properly conducted, may be a way to control the size of inmate populations by using early release programs for low risk candidates. Clearly, risk analysis has to be integrated with other information about offence history and the personal circumstances of the offender. However, risk analysis provides a useful and well-validated starting point for making important decisions about the management of offender populations.

¹² Data were collected for Ontario; however, they were not included in the analyses because data comparable with other jurisdictions were not collected in all categories.

The methodology for determining level of risk in the Snapshot survey was based on methods employed by Ontario Correctional Services and CSC. Risk/needs assessments are only completed on regularly sentenced inmates (excludes intermittent and remand inmates) who are serving a period of incarceration of more than 30 days. An overall index of risk combined information regarding the extent of criminal history with ratings on seven need dimensions. The criminal history factors examined included number of previous convictions, previous incarcerations, number of current offences, negative outcome on community supervision, and history of escape from custody. To form risk groupings, the index assigned cases to levels using the distribution for the province of Ontario, which has been widely validated and used for a number of years (Level of Service Inventory – Ontario Revision for assessment of risk; LSI-OR).

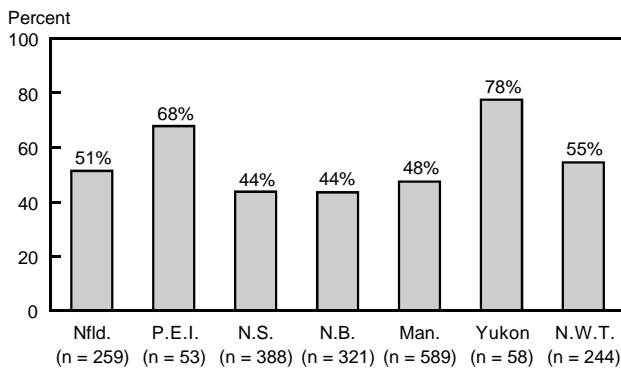
In this study, provincial/territorial inmates for whom information was available were classified according to five levels of risk: very low; low; medium; high; and very high. Overall, only a small proportion of inmates (3%) were classified as very low risk while a larger proportion were classified as very high risk (14%). The medium (34%) and high-risk (35%) groups represented the largest proportions of the provincial/territorial inmate population classified. For comparative purposes, the two lowest risk categories and the two highest risk categories were combined in order to provide a simpler three-level risk classification.

With a few exceptions, there are only minor variations in the risk levels of inmates across the provinces/territories

Figure 9 shows the distribution of high-risk offenders for the seven jurisdictions for which comparable data were available. Overall, nearly 5 in 10 (49%) of the provincial/territorial sentenced inmates were classified as high-risk to re-offend. Yukon and Prince Edward Island reported the highest proportions of inmates classified as “high” risk (78% and 68%, respectively). In the other jurisdictions, lower percentages of inmates were classified as high risk (between 44% and 55%). In all jurisdictions, the smallest proportions of inmates were classified in the low risk groupings.

Figure 9

% of inmates classified high risk in selected provincial/territorial jurisdictions



n = total number of inmates (of all risk categories) classified by jurisdiction.

Higher-risk offenders showed a greater number of indicators for future criminal activity

Table 8 provides a profile of how low-, medium-, and high-risk inmates vary when criminal history, current offence, and

demographic factors are examined. This profile is based on the criminal history and need indicators for the inmate populations of the seven jurisdictions for which comparable data were available. Although this does not provide a comprehensive profile of risk and need levels for all inmates in Canada, it does, nevertheless, provide a good base from which the criminogenic needs of the offender and the risk for re-offending can be examined. This information can also be used to help assess the meaningfulness or validity of the risk/needs classification methods used.

Generally, high-risk inmates had more extensive criminal histories, less education, less employment stability, were equally likely to be single as the medium-risk offenders but more likely than those offenders classified as low risk, and were younger than inmates in the medium- and low-risk groups. In short, higher-risk offenders showed a greater number of markers or precursors of potential future criminal activity. Of particular interest in examining the profile of the high-risk group was the fact that almost all (96%) had prior convictions, and a prior term of provincial/territorial incarceration (89%). While the data for the high-risk group suggest that they are a priority for programming, the risk profile of the medium group also deserves attention. Their characteristics suggest that they require considerable targeted intervention in order to reduce their risk of future criminal behaviour. The vast majority of this group of inmates (80%) had at least one prior conviction and nearly two-thirds (64%) had some prior provincial/territorial incarceration. It is interesting to note that the proportion of crimes against the person did not vary significantly across risk levels (low - 31%, medium - 29%, high - 29%). This is not surprising since the concept of risk, as measured by the assessment tool, refers to those at risk of re-offending, not necessarily the seriousness of re-offending. Although Ontario was not included in the table because comparable data were not available for all categories of analysis, the data did show similar results in those categories for which data were available.

Table 8

Differences among Inmates by Risk Level - Selected Jurisdictions^{1,2}

Inmate Characteristics	Risk Level		
	Low	Medium	High
Prior Conviction	52%	80%	96%
Prior Provincial/Territorial Incarceration	28%	64%	89%
Prior Federal Incarceration	3%	7%	19%
Prior Failure on Community Supervision	4%	23%	47%
Median Current Sentence Length (in days)	184	215	304
MSO = Crime Against the Person	31%	29%	29%
Mean Age (in years)	33.1	30.3	30.1
Grade 9 or Less	36%	38%	48%
Single	47%	58%	58%
Unemployed	47%	62%	81%

¹ Based on data for Nfld, PEI, NS, NB, Manitoba, Yukon, NWT (n= 1,912).

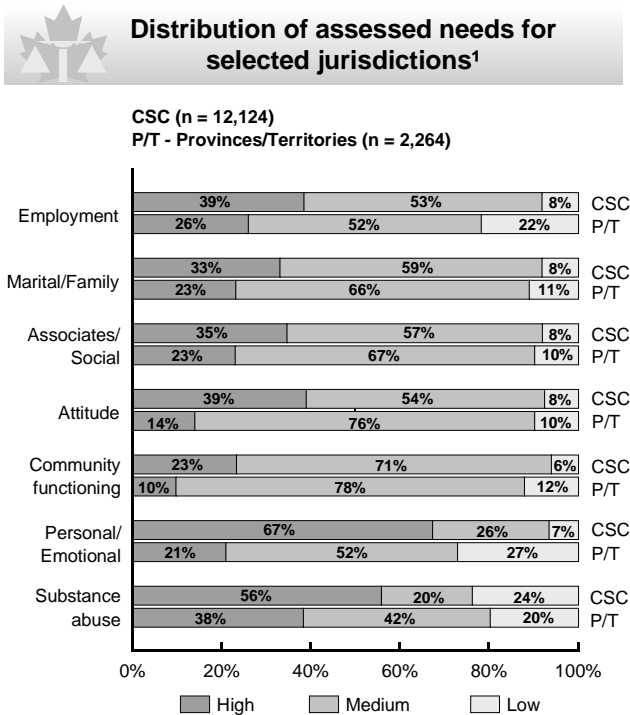
² Risk assessments are only completed on sentenced inmates serving terms of more than 30 days (excludes intermittent sentences and remands).

Federal inmates have a greater number and level of needs than provincial/territorial inmates

While discussions of risk of criminal recidivism provide important information about the types of inmates who may need greater programming attention, examination of criminogenic needs provides information about the types of interventions that may be required to reduce risk. The Snapshot data also provided an opportunity to compare the need distributions for federal and selected provincial/territorial inmate populations¹³. Figure 10 shows the proportion of inmates scoring in the high, medium or low ranges on the seven criminogenic need dimensions included in the Snapshot.

There was considerable variation in the need profiles for federal and provincial/territorial inmates. As expected, federal inmates showed substantially higher levels of needs than the average for provincial/territorial inmates for all of the need dimensions. The difference was particularly evident for the personal/emotional (67% for federal versus 21% for provinces/territories) and attitude (39% versus 14%) dimensions. Although substance abuse was the highest need area identified within the provincial/territorial inmate group, it was higher for federal inmates (38% for provincial/territorial and 56% for federal).

Figure 10



¹ Includes data for CSC, Nfld., P.E.I., N.S., N.B., Manitoba, Yukon and N.W.T.

METHODOLOGY

The One-Day Snapshot was conducted on Saturday, October 5th, 1996. A Saturday was chosen in order to include inmates serving intermittent sentences. Information for the Snapshot survey was collected manually in Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Manitoba, Yukon, and the Northwest Territories. Extracts from automated information systems were used for Quebec, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, and Correctional Service Canada. A mixture of manual data collection and extractions were used for Nova Scotia. In light of resource limitations at local levels, data for the risk and needs assessment components of the survey could not be produced for Quebec, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia. Further, although data were collected for Ontario, they were not included in the analyses because data comparable with other jurisdictions were not collected in all categories. Need data were available for CSC inmates. However, there was an insufficient number of cases for which criminal history data were available to permit scoring of a combined risk/needs score.

For the section on current offences, detailed information was collected for up to five of the “most serious offences” for which the inmate was currently incarcerated. Most analyses are on the “most serious offence”, which is based on the Seriousness Index of the Revised Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey Violation Coding Structure. The UCR coding structure defines seriousness in terms of length of maximum sentence and the degree of injury or threat to the victim represented by the offence. In addition, some analyses examine all five offences. Offences were also grouped into the following major offence categories, based on UCR categories: Crimes Against the Person (including homicide/attempt murder, sexual assault, serious assault, minor assault, robbery, and other violent); Property Offences (including break and enter, theft, fraud, and other property); and, Other *Criminal Code* and federal statute offences (including weapons offences, administration of justice offences, impaired offences, drug offences, and other *Criminal Code* / federal statute offences).

¹³ Data were available for Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Manitoba, Yukon, the Northwest Territories and the CSC. Ontario is not included because the rating method used to derive need levels was not compatible with the rating method employed by CSC and the other jurisdictions.

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