



Just Facts

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Research and Statistics Division

Indigenous overrepresentation in provincial/territorial corrections

This fact sheet is based on data from the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics (CCJS) on Indigenous adults and youth in the correctional system.¹

Indigenous adults overrepresented in correctional services²

More than one in four (28%) adults (18 years and older) admitted to provincial/territorial correctional services in 2016/2017 were Indigenous. As a percentage of people admitted to corrections, Indigenous adults represented 25% of those serving community sentences, 30% of those in sentenced custody, 29% of those in remand, and 33% of those in other custody³.

The proportion of Indigenous adults admitted to provincial/territorial custody in 2016/2017 (27%) was about 7 times higher than their representation in the Canadian population (4.1%).

The proportion of Indigenous adults admitted to correctional services has increased for every type of correctional supervision since 2007/2008 (Table 1).

¹ Data describe admissions to correctional services. The same person may be included several times in the admission counts. Information is based on the most recent data available from Statistics Canada (2016/2017 for correctional data; 2016 Census for population data), with custom tabulations prepared by the Department of Justice Canada. Analysis excludes cases where sex and Indigenous identity were unknown. Data do not represent all provinces/territories as there are variations in the availability of data.

² Correctional services includes total community sentence and total sentenced custody.

³ Other custody includes admissions to provincial/territorial correctional institutions for lock-ups, parole violations or suspensions, immigration holds, and temporary detention without warrants of any type.





Table 1. Percentage of admissions of Indigenous adults to provincial/territorial correctional services, 2007/2008-2016/2017

	2007/ 2008	2008/ 2009	2009/ 2010	2010/ 2011	2011/ 2012	2012 / 2013	2013/ 2014	2014 / 2015	2015 / 2016	2016 / 2017
Total correctional services	20	21	23	24	25	24	25	25	26	28
Community sentence	19	19	20	21	22	23	23	24	24	25
Custody (total)	21	23	24	26	27	25	26	26	27	30
Sentenced custody	23	25	26	28	28	26	26	26	27	30
Remand	20	21	23	24	25	24	24	25	25	29
Other custody	26	27	29	30	30	33	34	34	33	33

Note: Analysis excludes cases where Indigenous identity was unknown.

Note: Data do not represent all provinces/territories as there are variations in the availability of data. The Adult Correctional Services Survey is an aggregate survey. The following jurisdictions Prince Edward Island, Québec, Manitoba, Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Alberta participate in the survey custody component only. The Integrated Correctional Services Survey is a microdata survey that is being implemented and will replace the ACS. Reporting jurisdictions currently include: Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Correctional Service Canada and Alberta community component only. Data for Alberta are not available for 2012/2013 and 2015/2016. For all Integrated Correctional Services Survey data respondents, comparisons to data prior to their implementation to the microdata survey should be made with caution. Data are based on a fiscal year (April 1 through March 31).

Note: Total correctional services includes community sentence and custody (total).

Note: Custody (total) includes intermittent sentences, remand and other custodial status admissions.

Sources: Statistics Canada. Table 251-0022 - Adult correctional services, custodial admissions to provincial and territorial programs by Aboriginal identity, annual (number), CANSIM (database); Table 251-0026 - Adult correctional services, community admissions to provincial and territorial programs by Aboriginal identity, annual (number), CANSIM (database). Custom tabulation prepared by the Department of Justice Canada.

Indigenous youth overrepresented in correctional services

The proportion of Indigenous youth admitted to provincial/territorial sentenced custody in 2016/2017 (50%) was more than six times higher than their representation in the population (8% of Canadians aged 12-17).

Almost half (46%) of youth (aged 12-17) admitted to provincial/territorial correctional services in 2016/2017 were Indigenous. As a percentage of youth in correctional services, 42% of those serving



community sentences were Indigenous, as were 60% in open custody⁴, 55% in secure custody⁵, 48% in pre-trial detention⁶, and 71% in provincial director remand⁷.

The proportion of Indigenous youth admitted to correctional services has increased for every type of correctional supervision since 2007/2008. Noticeably, provincial director remand increased in 2015/2016 after decreasing between 2012 and 2014 and leveling off in 2016/2017 (Table 2).

Table 2. Percentage of admissions of Indigenous youth to provincial/territorial correctional services, 2007/2008 to 2016/2017

	2007/ 2008	2008/ 2009	2009/ 2010	2010/ 2011	2011/ 2012	2012/ 2013	2013/ 2014	2014/ 2015	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017
Total correctional services	27	28	28	29	32	32	33	33	35	46
Community sentence	26	27	26	27	29	28	29	29	30	42
Custody (total)	28	29	31	32	35	37	39	37	39	50
Secure custody	32	34	32	34	39	34	35	40	41	55
Open custody	35	36	31	32	33	39	42	39	41	60
Pre-trial detention	26	27	30	30	34	35	37	35	37	48
Provincial director remand	54	50	56	63	60	71	66	63	72	71

Note: Analysis excludes cases where Indigenous identity was unknown.

Note: Data do not represent all provinces/territories as there are variations in the availability of data. In Ontario data began to be provided through the Integrated Correctional Services Survey (ICSS in 2004/2005). Prior to 2004/2005 Ontario data were submitted separately by two provincial ministries: the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) and the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services (MCSCS). Ontario did not report pre-trial detention for 12 to 15-year-olds prior to 2004/2005 and data for 12 to 15-year-olds were not provided for 2002/2003. As a result, caution is recommended when making trend comparisons for Ontario and Canada.

Note: Custody (total) includes pre-trial detention, provincial director remand, secure custody and open custody.

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 251-0012 - Youth custody and community services (YCCS), admissions to correctional services, by Aboriginal identity and sex, annual (number), CANSIM (database). Custom tabulation prepared by the Department of Justice Canada.

⁴ A facility is considered "open" when there is minimal use of security devices or perimeter security such as custody in a community residential centre, group home, childcare institution, forest or wilderness camp or any similar place or facility.

⁵ 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.

⁶ Refers to youth who are held in custody temporarily while awaiting a trial or sentence.

⁷ Provincial director remand is to hold a young person in custody following the breach of community supervision conditions of a custody and community supervision order pursuant to a warrant issued by the provincial director.



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Overrepresentation in custody more pronounced for Indigenous women

The degree of overrepresentation in the correctional system is greater for Indigenous women than Indigenous men.

In 2016/2017, Indigenous women accounted for 43% of adult female custody admissions (44% sentenced custody, 41% remand, 50% other custody) and Indigenous men accounted for 28% of adult male custody admissions (28% sentenced custody, 27% remand, 30% other custody).

In 2016/2017, female Indigenous youth accounted for 60% of female youth custody admissions (68% open custody, 57% secure custody, 58% pre-trial detention, 87% provincial director remand). Male Indigenous youth accounted for 47% of male youth custody admissions (59% open custody, 54% secure custody, 44% pre-trial detention, 67% provincial director remand).

