



Research in Brief

Canadian Federal Custody Population: Actual and Projected 2000 to 2022

Refreshed projections of the federal custody population forecasts dampened growth over the coming years.

Why we did this study

Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) refreshed its custody forecasts in 2017 with a view to bring its former projections in line with historical population trends and recent declines. A previously developed model was applied to produce new population projections from the end of March 2017 to the year 2022. The following provides a status report on the population projection exercise that was undertaken by CSC in May 2017.

What we did

A forecasting database of weekly snapshots of inmate counts from 1990/91 to 2016/17 was derived from the CSC Offender Management System. The historical database was used to develop alternative and provisional scenarios for men and women up to 2022.

Projections for men and women were estimated separately, as historical trends for these two groups differ significantly. SAS/ETS software was used for exploring and analyzing univariate time series data and to select the best-fitting model.

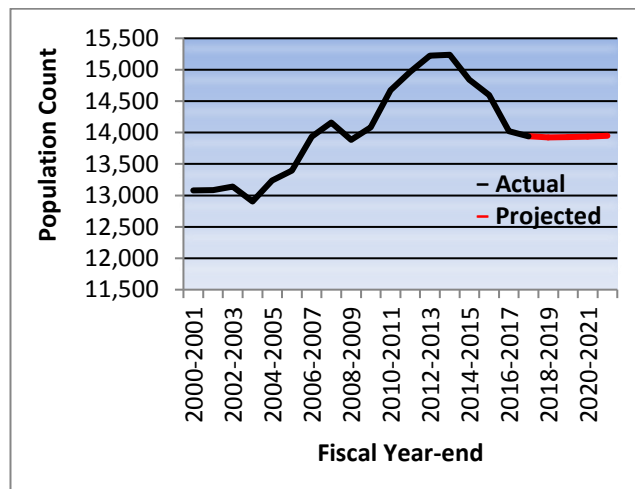
What we found

As in previous population projection exercises, estimates are taken to the last Tuesday midnight institutional count of the fiscal year. At fiscal year-end 2000-2001, the national actual in-custody population was 13,081 (12,722 men and 359 women). By 2016/17 the actual population count had increased to 14,023 (13,343 men and 680 women). This represents a 16 year growth of 942 (621 men and 321 women) on this side of millennium.

A review of the actual and projected population figure below reveals some important information about the federal in-custody population. Most notable is the rise of the custody population until a peak in 2013/14 of 15,238 that is followed by three years of declines

resulting in a net reduction of 1,215 inmates by year-end 2016/2017. While men in federal custody have declined substantially over the last three years (from 14,621 to 13,343), women have continued to climb (from 617 to 680). Finally, at this time and assuming things remain constant, it is estimated that the federal custody population will continue to decline and future growth will be dampened.

Figure: Federal Custody Actual and Projected



What it means

At this time, it appears that reduced new federal admissions, increased day parole releases and improved reintegration outcomes (fewer revocations) are having a significant impact on the size of the federal custody population.

For more information

Please e-mail the Research Branch research@csc-scc.gc.ca or contact us by phone at (613) 995-3975.

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