

CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA

CHANGING LIVES. PROTECTING CANADIANS.

Pandemic Era Impacts on Provisional Federal Security Level Forecasts

Pandemic era impacts in 10-year population forecasts were shown for men across maximum, medium and minimum security.

Why we are doing this study

Annually, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) updates its provisional federal population forecasts using a robust methodology developed decades ago. However, over the course of two recent fiscal years (2020-21 and 2021-22), marked by the COVID-19 pandemic, CSC experienced an unprecedented trend break in the historical time series with a major decline in the federal custody (-1,392 or 10.1%) populations. Consequently, a pause occurred in the forecasting exercise during the pandemic era. Then, in 2022 new 10-year in-custody population projections were estimated to fiscal year-end 2031-32.¹

What we did

A database of weekly snapshots of institutional counts from 1990-91 to year-end 2021-22 was derived from CSC's Offender Management System. Security level projections for maximum-, medium, and minimum-security were estimated only for men as the women security level distributions were deemed too low for forecasting models. SAS/ETS software was used for analyzing univariate time series data and to select the best-fitting model.

What we found

As tabled below, for men in-custody on 29 March 2022, the actual count in maximum security was **1,590**, a decline of -327 or 17.1% over the pandemic period from **1,917**. For 2031-32, the 10-year forecast for men in maximum-security is estimated to be **1,642**, an increase of 52 or 3.3% but projected to be 275 or 14.3% below the pre-pandemic population. With the exception of the Quebec and Pacific regions, all others are projected to grow.

In relation to medium-security, at fiscal year-end 2021-22 the actual count was **6,602**, a decline of -445 or 6.3% over the pandemic period from **7,047**. By year-end 2031-32, the medium is estimated to be **6,585**, a slight decrease of 17 or 0.3%. With the exception of the Ontario region, all others are projected to decline.

With respect to minimum-security, at fiscal year-end 2021-22 the actual count was **1,803**, a decline of -390 or 17.8% over the pandemic period from **2,193**. By year-end 2031-

32, the minimum population is estimated to be **2,059**, a substantial increase of 256 or 13.3%. All regions are projected to increase but is projected to be 135 or 6.2% below the pre-pandemic population.

Federal Security Level Forecasts for Men to 2031-32

| | Atl. | Que. | Ont. | Pra. | Pac. | Total |
|----------------|-------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| Maximum | | | | | | |
| 19-20 | 163 | 484 | 310 | 480 | 480 | 1,917 |
| 21-22 | 139 | 416 | 269 | 433 | 333 | 1,590 |
| 31-32 | 156 | 411 | 295 | 467 | 313 | 1,642 |
| Net ▲ | +17 | -5 | +26 | +34 | -20 | +52 |
| Change | 12.2% | 1.2% | 9.7% | 7.9% | 6.0% | 3.3% |

| | Atl. | Que. | Ont. | Pra. | Pac. | Total |
|---------------|------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|
| Medium | | | | | | |
| 19-20 | 698 | 1,437 | 1,970 | 2,032 | 910 | 7,047 |
| 21-22 | 584 | 1,411 | 1,793 | 2,004 | 810 | 6,602 |
| 31-32 | 562 | 1,389 | 1,889 | 1,948 | 797 | 6,585 |
| Net ▲ | -22 | -22 | +96 | -56 | -13 | -17 |
| Change | 3.8% | 1.6% | 5.4% | 2.8% | 1.6% | 0.3% |

| | Atl. | Que. | Ont. | Pra. | Pac. | Total |
|----------------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|-------|
| Minimum | | | | | | |
| 19-20 | 184 | 339 | 667 | 693 | 310 | 2,193 |
| 21-22 | 148 | 313 | 474 | 665 | 203 | 1,803 |
| 31-32 | 171 | 354 | 602 | 721 | 211 | 2,059 |
| Net ▲ | +23 | +41 | +128 | +56 | +8 | +256 |
| Change | 15.5% | 13.1% | 27.0% | 8.4% | 3.9% | 13.3% |

¹ RIB-22-19 - Pandemic Era Impacts on Provisional Federal Population Forecasts

What it means

During the COVID-19 pandemic period there was a significant decline in the federal men in-custody population. While the men in-custody is projected to increase over a 10-year horizon, it appears that by 2031-32 the maximum- and minimum-security men populations will have grown whereas the medium-security will have plateaued.

For more information

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

Prepared by: Larry Motiuk and Ben Vuong

