Prisoners in Queensland: 2013

Source: ABS 4517.0, released 5 December 2013, 10:30 am AEST

Key data

Imprisonment rate (annual change):
Queensland .................................................... 6.4%
Australia ..................................................... 1.5%

Proportion of unsentenced prisoners (annual change):
Queensland ................................................. 0.1 percentage point
Australia ................................................... 0.6 percentage point

Proportion of female prisoners (annual change):
Queensland ............................................... 0.3 percentage point
Australia ................................................... 0.1 percentage point

Main findings

Note: data contained in this brief should be read with reference to the explanatory notes provided in ABS 4517.0

- On the night of the Prison Census, 30 June 2013, Queensland prisons held 6,076 prisoners. This was 19.7% of the 30,775 prisoners in Australian prisons.

- The crude imprisonment rate in Queensland for 2013 was 169.0 prisoners per 100,000 adult persons. This rate was an increase of 6.4% from 158.9 prisoners per 100,000 adult population in 2012. The imprisonment rate in Australia was 170.0 prisoners per 100,000 adult population, a 1.5% increase from 167.5 in 2012 (Figure 1).

- Approximately 1 in 11 prisoners in Queensland in 2013 were female (8.8% of the total, compared with 8.5% in 2012). The proportion of female prisoners in Australia as a whole increased from 7.5% in 2012 to 7.6% in 2013.

- The age-standardised rate of imprisonment for Queensland Indigenous prisoners was 1,522.3 per 100,000 adult Indigenous population, compared with 125.2 per 100,000 for non-Indigenous, making Indigenous persons 12.2 times more likely than non-Indigenous persons to be in prison at 30 June 2013 (Figure 2). The age-standardised Queensland Indigenous imprisonment rate was lower than for Australia as a whole (1,976.6 per 100,000).

- In Queensland, 22.2% of prisoners were unsentenced (on remand, awaiting sentence or awaiting deportation), compared with 24.0% for Australia in 2013.

- Of the prisoners with a sentence (those sentenced to a specified term), the median aggregate sentence length for prisoners in Queensland in 2013 was 3.0 years, the same as in 2012. The median aggregate sentence in Australia as a whole was also 3.0 years, decreased slightly from 3.2 years in 2012. (Note: if indeterminate sentences were included calculating the median, it would be higher, particularly in Queensland where the proportion of indeterminate sentences was higher.)

- In 2013, 64.5% of prisoners in Queensland had an episode of prior known adult imprisonment. This proportion has increased from 60.2% in 2012. The proportion for Australia increased from 54.7% in 2012 to 57.8% in 2013.

Figure 1: Imprisonment rate

Figure 2: Indigenous and non-Indigenous age standardised imprisonment rates, Queensland

1 Age standardisation is a statistical method that adjusts crude rates to account for age differences between study populations.