

Alternate Measures (AM) Survey

Program: Correctional Services

Project: Alternative Measures (AM) Survey - Youth

Project Description:

The Alternative Measures Survey (AM) collects data on the number of agreements reached and completed. Adult Alternative Measures are currently not in scope. Alternative Measures refers to formalized programs across Canada through which persons who would otherwise proceed to court are dealt with via non-judicial, community-based alternatives (e.g., personal service to a victim, apologies, community service, etc.). Alternative Measures include programs, which have been authorized by the Attorney General that may be offered at the pre-charge stage, the post-charge stage, or both. Pursuant to the Young Offenders Act (YOA) these programs are designed to balance society's right to protection against the needs of youth in contact with the law.

Outputs:

Alternative measures outputs have been produced irregularly on an ad hoc basis.

Alternative Measures in Canada – Juristat: 1990-91, 1991-92, 1997-98, 1998-99

Alternative Measures in Canada – Special Study: 1998

Youth Custody and Community Services in Canada – Juristat: Alternative Measures data on the number of agreements reached for youths are included in the annual YCCS Juristat commencing in 2000-2001. The survey data tables are otherwise available on request.

Background:

The Alternative Measures Survey was implemented in 1990. Two annual data collection cycles were conducted, on a pilot basis, in 1990-91 and 1991-92. Due to significant problems with data availability and comparability, the survey lost priority and data collection was discontinued in June 1993. A second set of national data requirements was prepared for Alternative Measures in April 1996. The CCJS then conducted a special study on Alternative Measures in 1998, releasing a report on administrative and operational policies with respect to alternative measures for both youth and adults in Canada as well as a Juristat. In 1998-1999 Justice Canada funded a second data cycle and Juristat. With no further funding available, data collection was again discontinued. In order, however, to continue reporting in the area of Alternative Measures, the following data collection and reporting strategy was approved by LOC in 2000-2001 so as to permit continuation of the survey at a marginal incremental cost. Content of the AM survey was reduced and limited to young offenders. Dedicated AM products were eliminated and the production cycle as well as reporting of data were integrated with the YCCS survey and products. The first production cycle using this new model occurred during the 2001-2002 data collection cycle. Data were collected for two years – 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 in order to provide a continuous time series from 1997-1998.

Decision History:

LOC approval of youth AM survey October 1988

Survey discontinued as a cost cutting measure June 1993

LOC approval of Alternative Measures Special Study – Phase I April 1997

LOC approval of Alternative Measures Special Study – Phase II May 1998

LOC approval of NDR for AM – adult and youth November 1998

LOC approval of strategy to reduce survey content, limit coverage to youth, and incorporate data collection and reporting within the YCCS October 2001

Future Plans:

The AM survey is to be revised to capture Extrajudicial Sanctions under the Youth Criminal Justice Act.