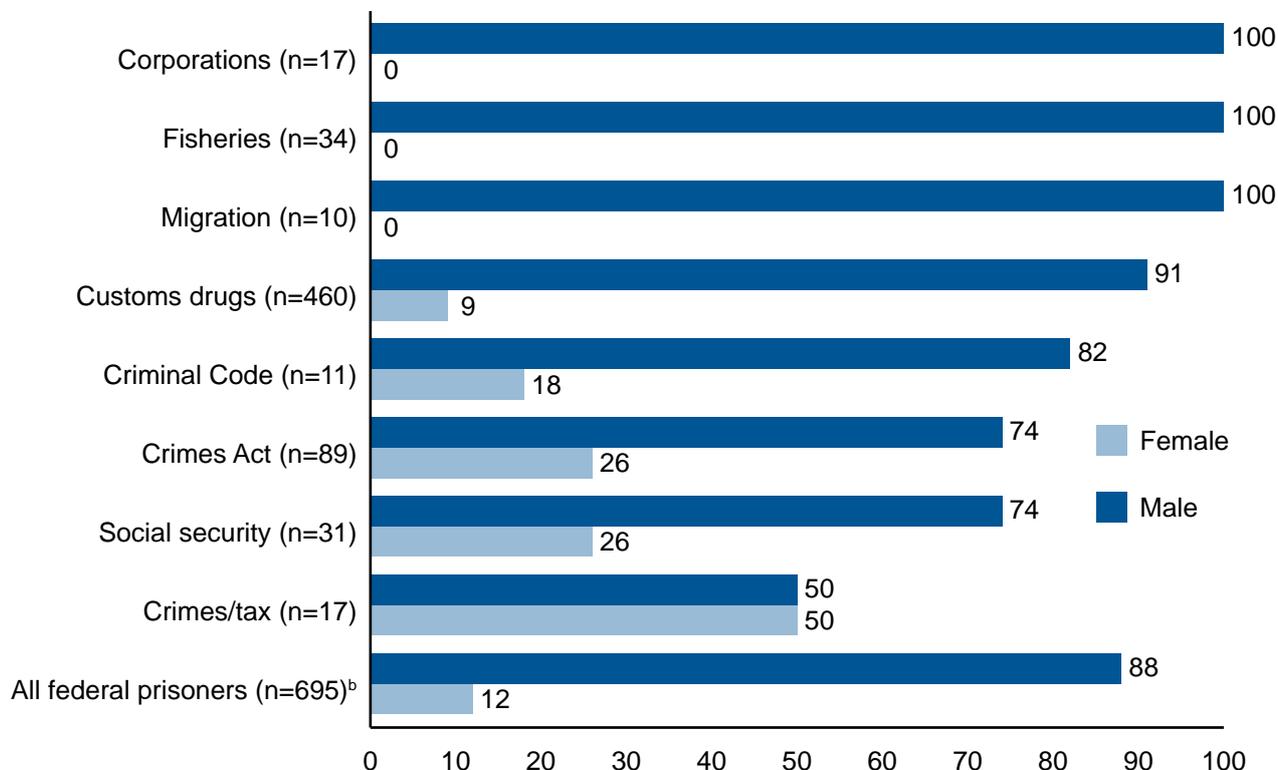


Federal prisoners by major offence and sex

The Australian Institute of Criminology prepared a statistical overview for the Australian Law Reform Commission inquiry into federal offenders (Australian Law Reform Commission 2005). According to data held by the Attorney-General's Department there were 695 federal prisoners on 13 December 2004. The federal sentencing data record only the most serious federal offence for an offender; in reality they may also have been sentenced on state/territory offences. While the majority of prosecutions under the *Crimes Act 1914* in 2003–04 were for fraud and other deception offences (usually in an attempt to gain financial advantage), customs drugs offences accounted for the largest number of federal offenders sentenced to prison. The figure below compares male and female prisoners by major federal offence categories. In total there were 88 percent male and 12 percent female federal offenders. Although males accounted for half or more prisoners in each major category, there was a higher representation of females whose most serious offence was fraud-related under the Crimes Act or social security legislation. Males and females were represented equally in tax offences. Females were not represented in the major federal offence categories related to corporations, fisheries or migration matters.

Percentage of male and female prisoners by major federal offence category, 13/12/2004^a



^a A major offence category has 10 or more sentenced prisoners.

^b Includes federal prisoners with offences other than those in major categories.

SOURCE: Australian Institute of Criminology, Federal prisoners 2004 (AIC computer file)

REFERENCE: Australian Law Reform Commission 2005. *Sentencing of federal offenders*. Discussion paper 70. Sydney: ALRC. Also available online through www.alrc.gov.au