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# **WHY SOME COUNTRIES COPE WITH LESSER USE OF IMPRISONMENT? EXPLAINING DIFFERENCES AND PONDERING THE REMEDIES**

# I Trends and Differences in National Incarceration Rates

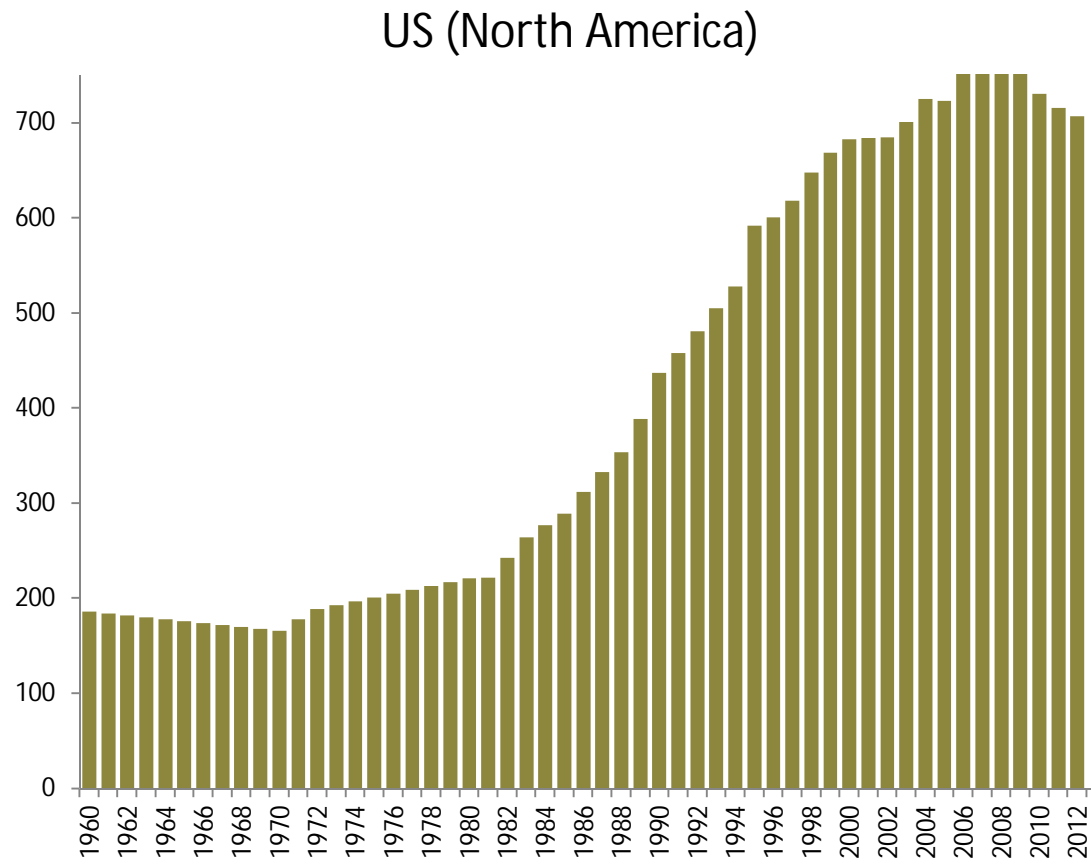
How imprisonment rates have evolved over time?

"European prison chart" – what are the differences?

Comparing crime trends and prison trends

# Prisoners in the United States (including jails) 1960-2013

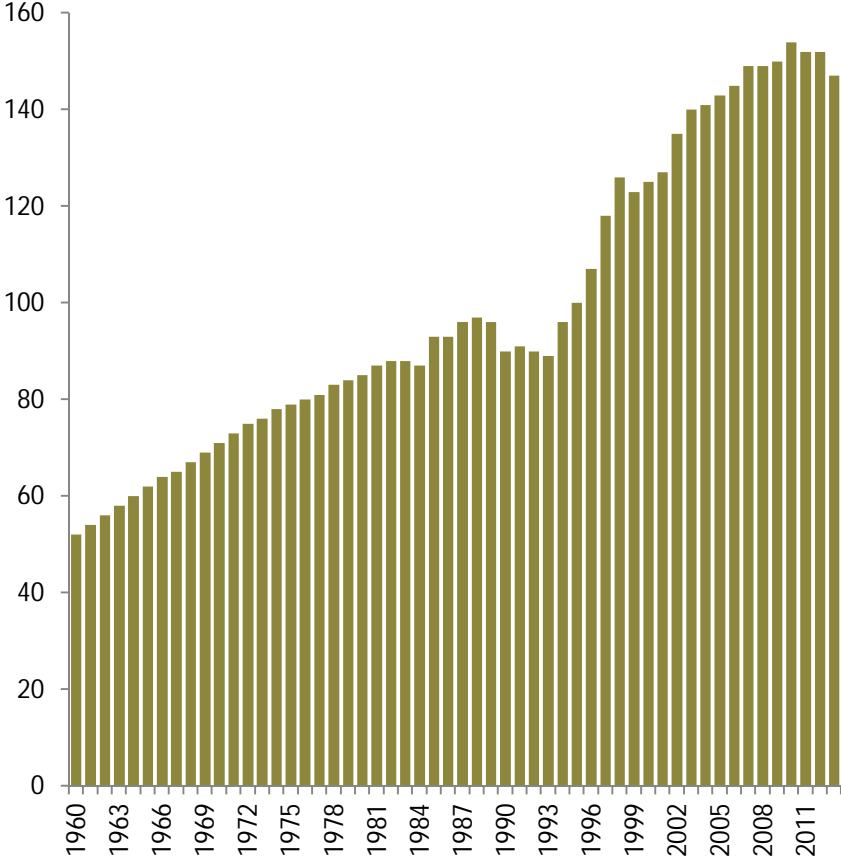
## The number of prisoners relative to 100 000 pop



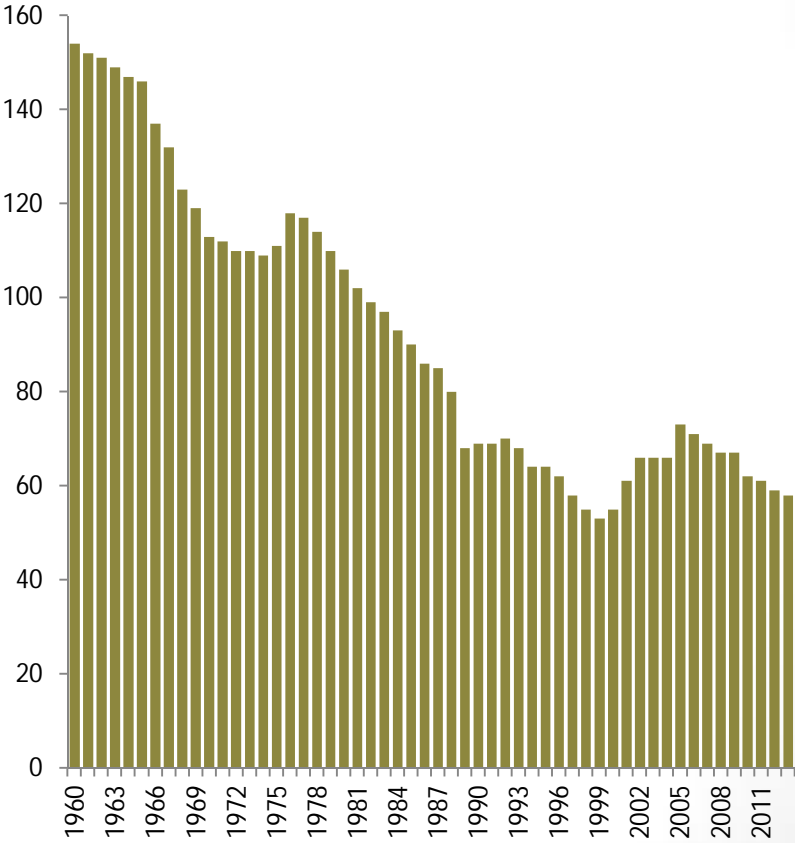
# Prisoners in England and Wales and Finland 1960-2013

The number of prisoners relative to 100 000 pop

### England & Wales



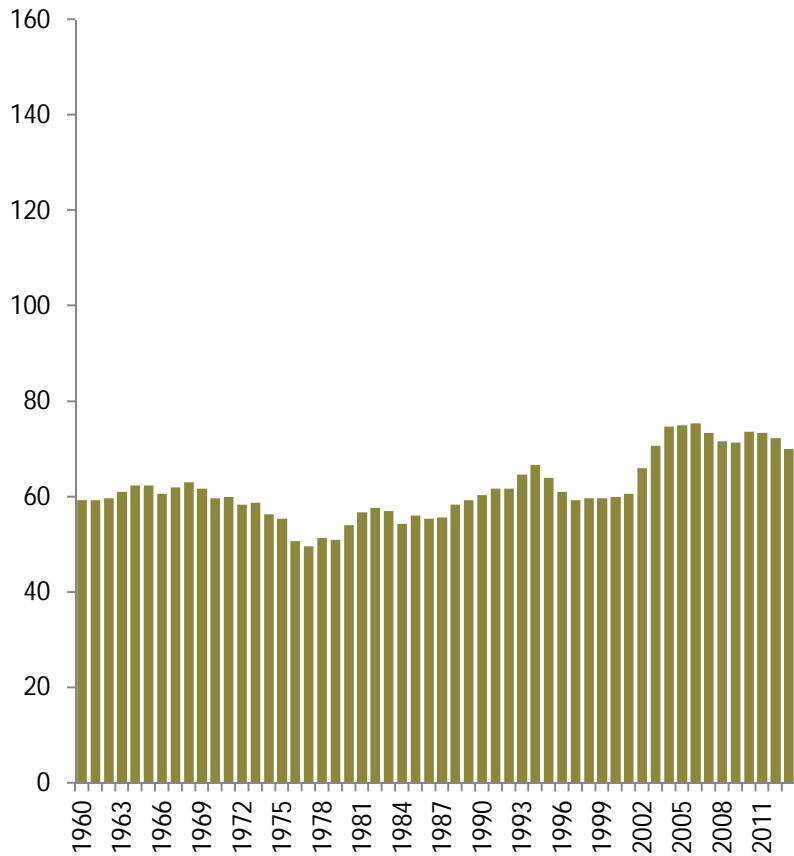
### Finland



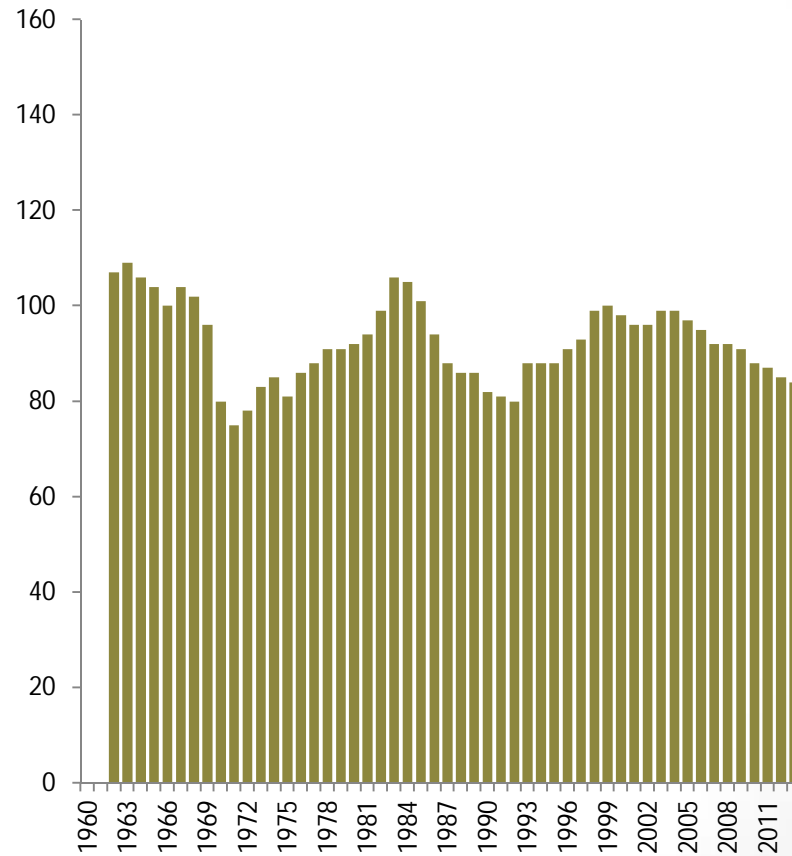
# Prisoners in three Nordic countries and Germany 1960-2013

## The number of prisoners relative to 100 000 pop

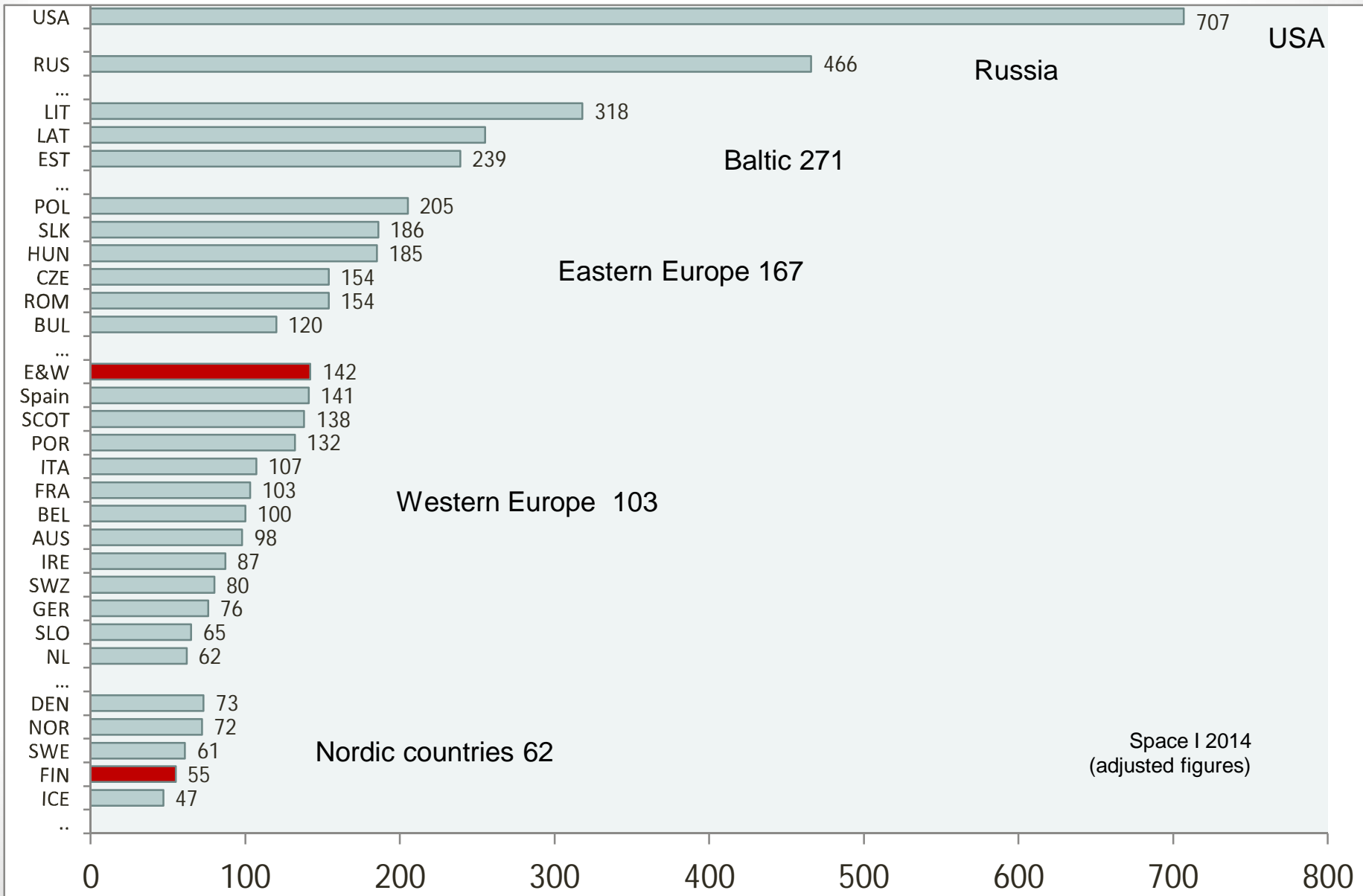
### Denmark, Norway & Sweden



### Germany



# Prisoner rates by regions 2013

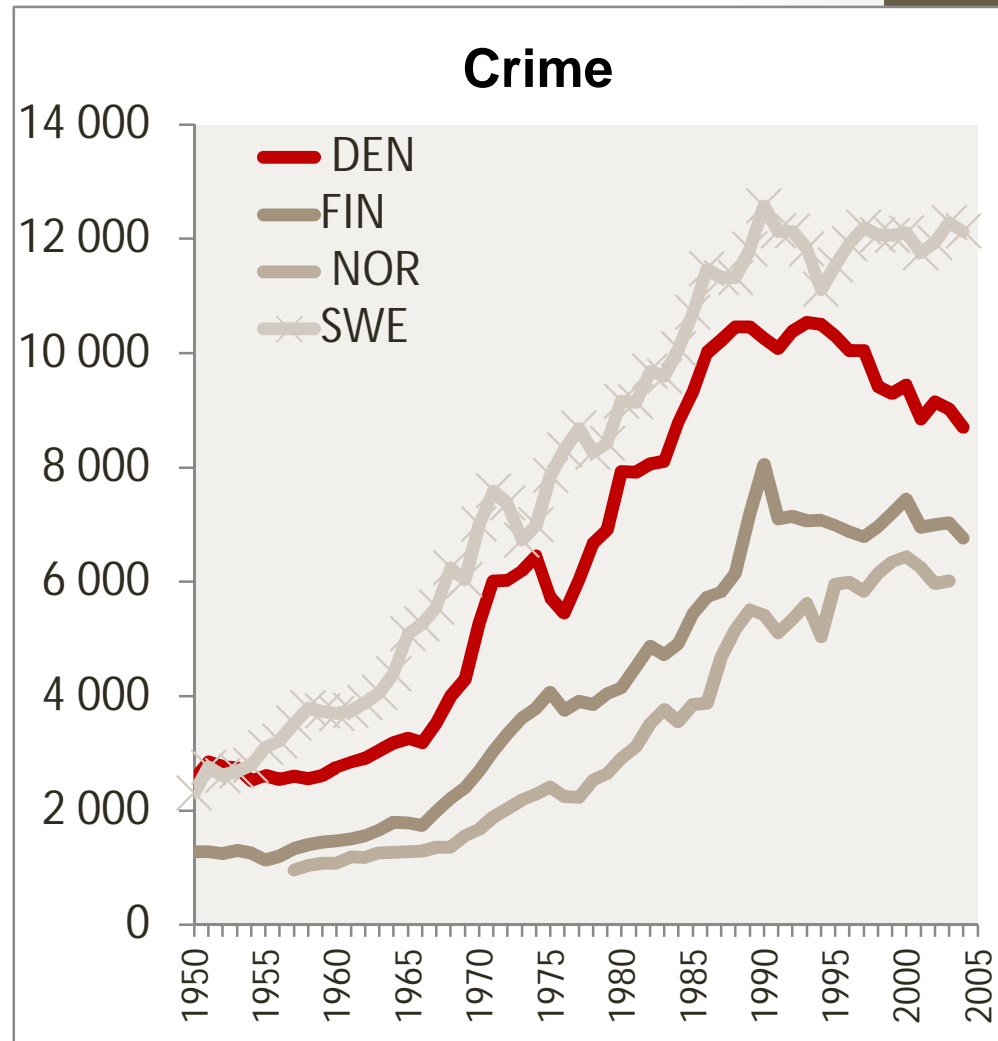
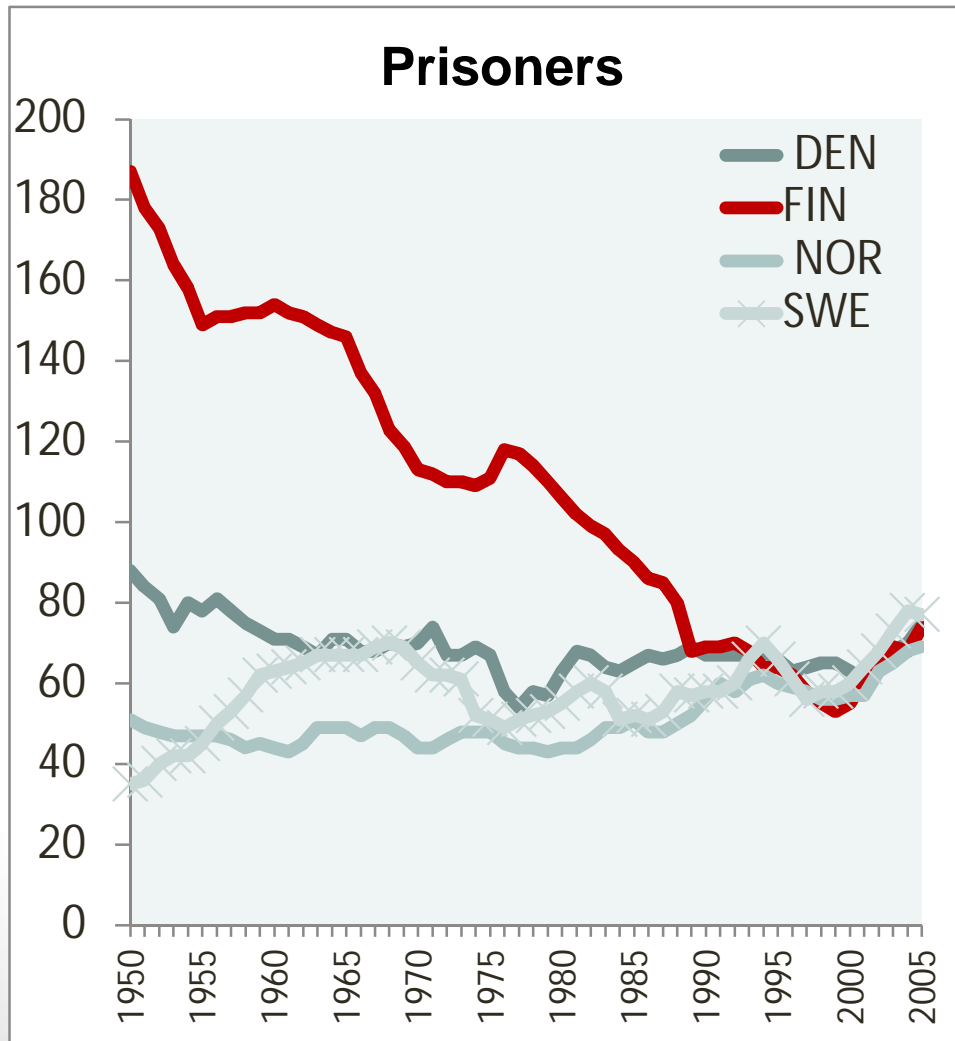


# Imprisonment and crime

# PRISON RATES AND CRIME RATES

Four Nordic Countries 1950-2005:

Common crime trends but one deviating prison trend

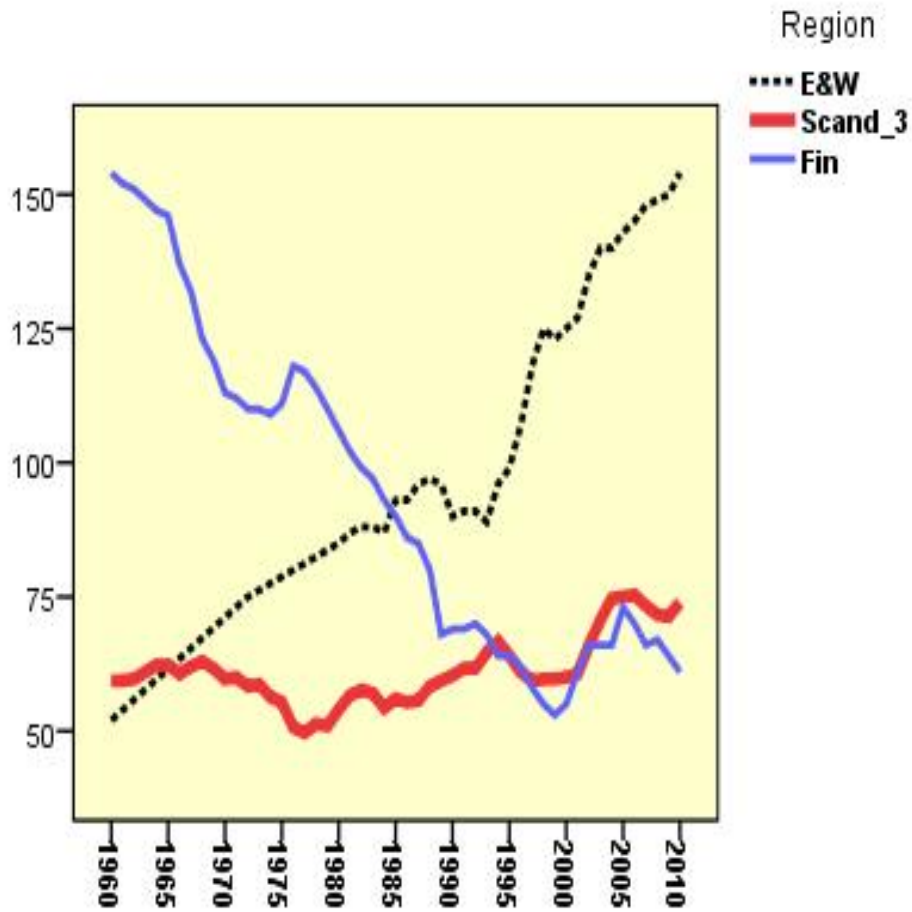




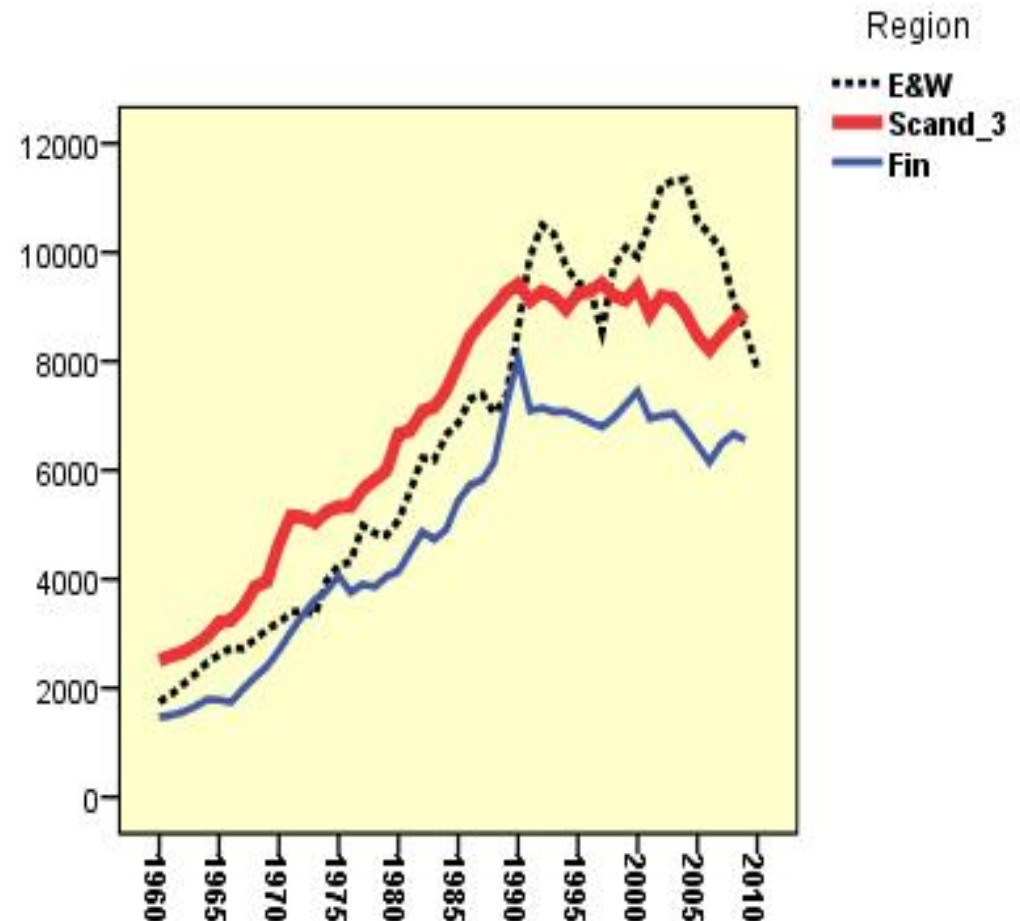
# Nordic countries and England & Wales 1960-2010

Three different prison profiles, with similar crime profile

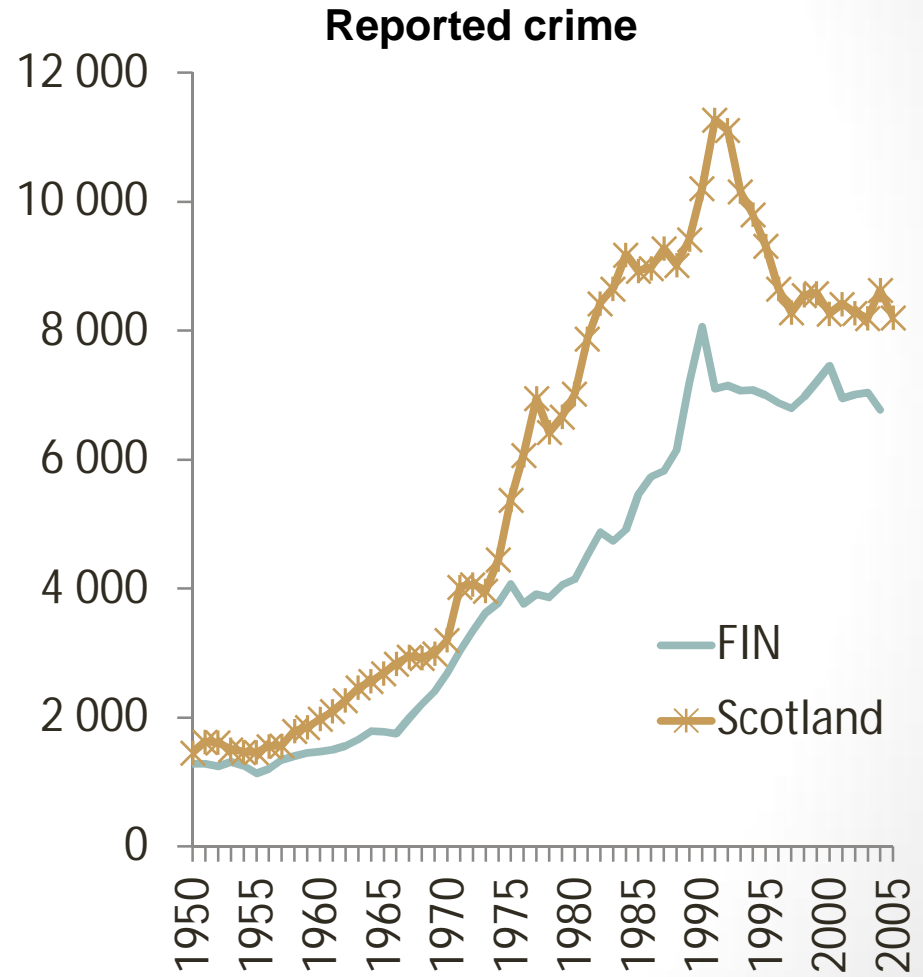
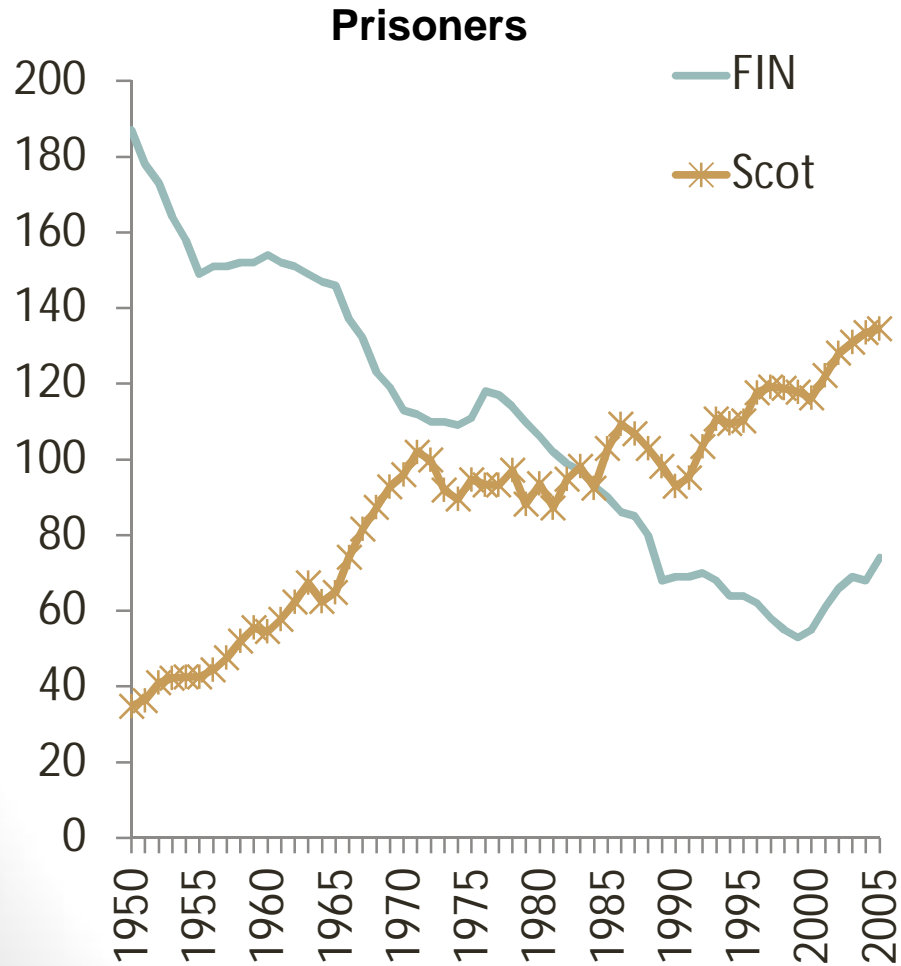
### Prisoners /100 000 pop



### Recorded crime / 100 000 pop



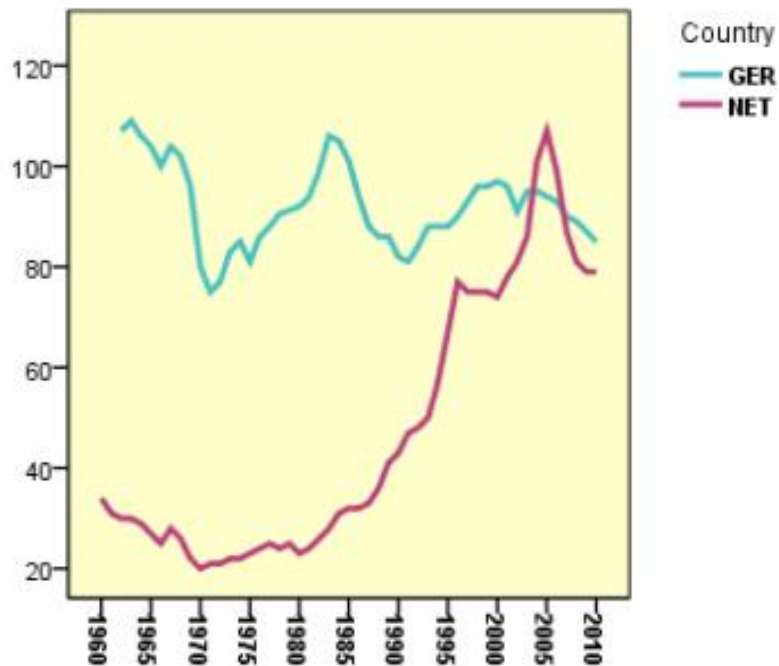
# Prison rates and crime rates: Finland and Scotland 1950 - 2005



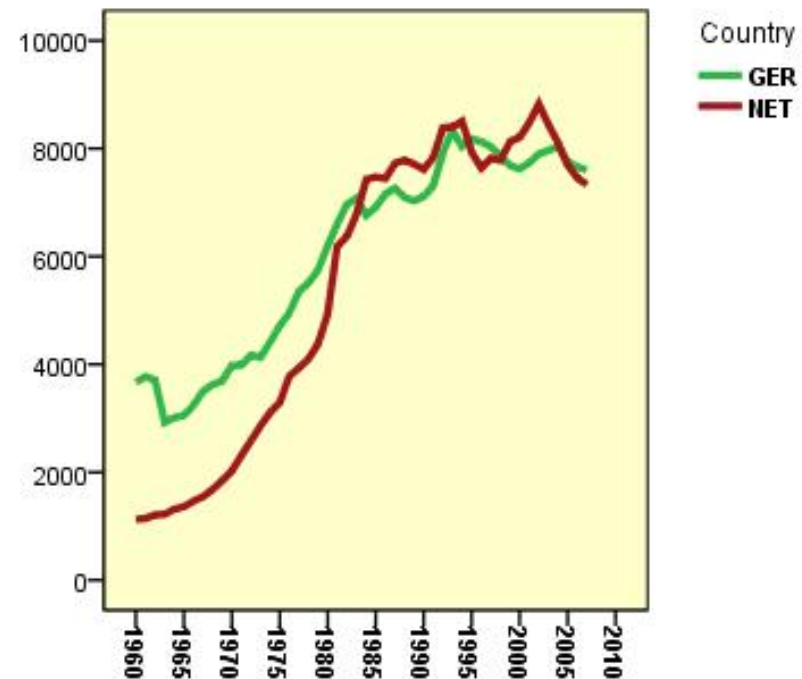
# Germany and the Netherlands 1960-2010

Different prison profile, similar crime profile

Prisoners / pop



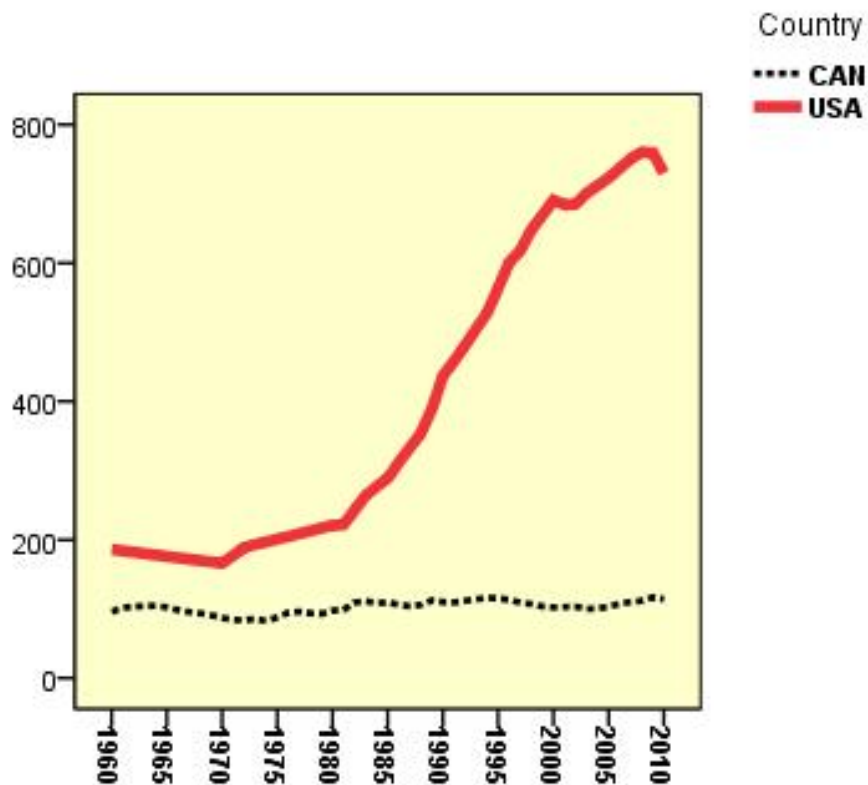
Crime / pop



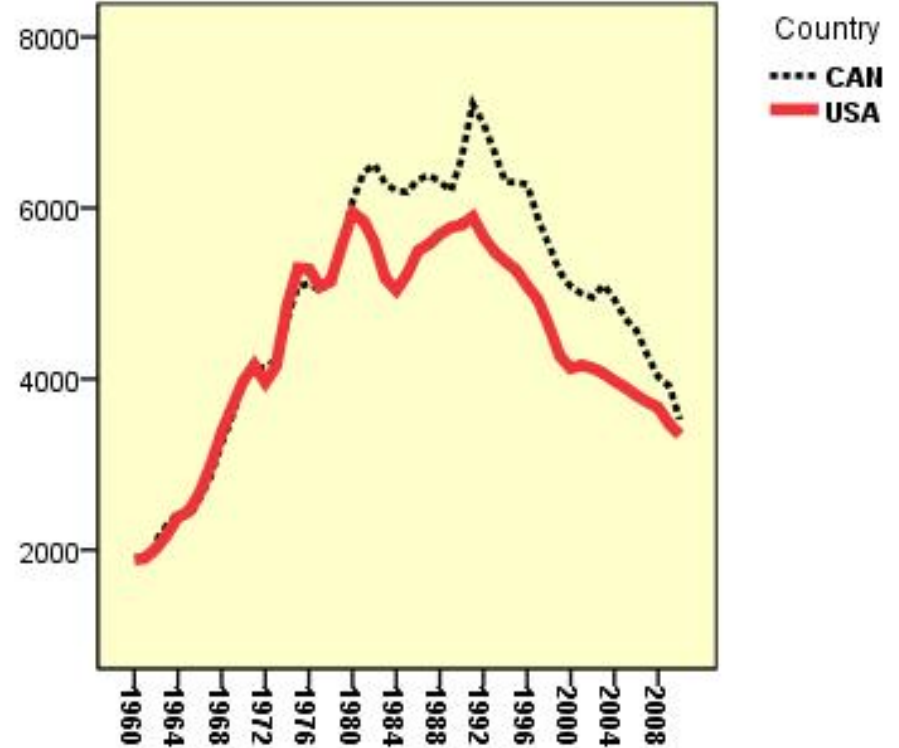
# US and Canada

Completely different prison trends, but almost identical total crime trends

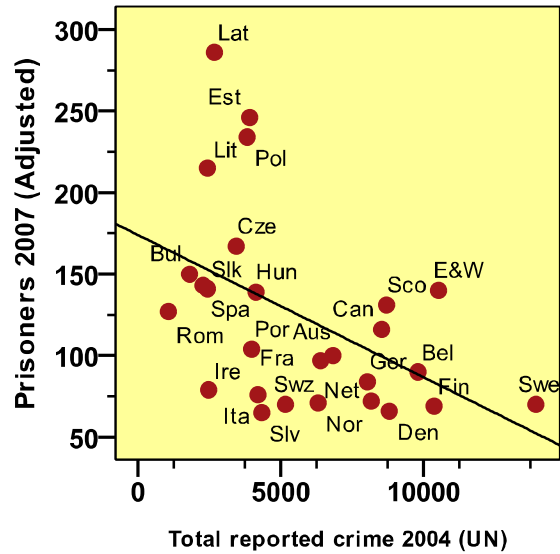
### Prisoner / pop



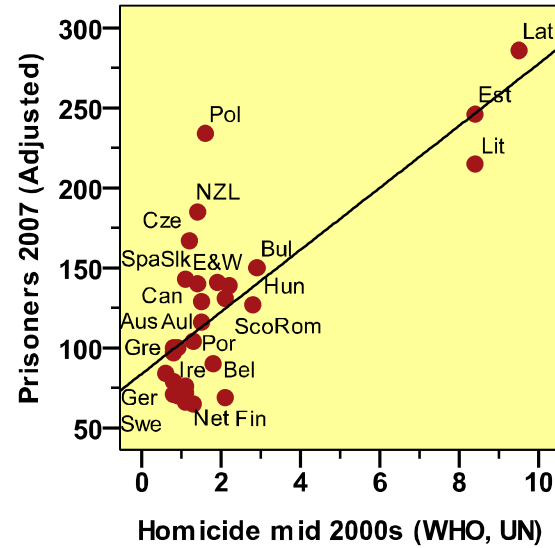
### Total crime / pop



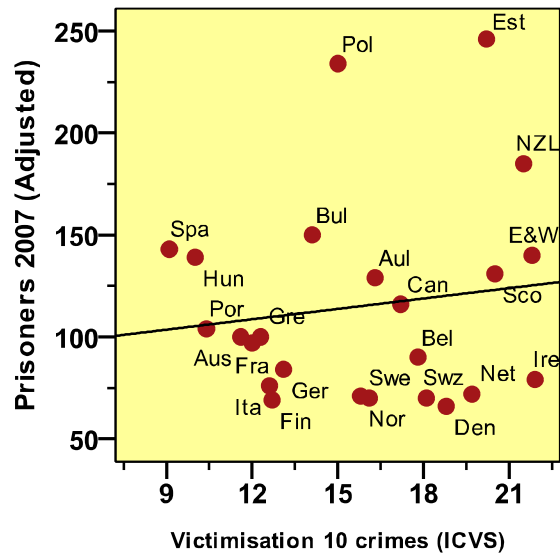
# Crime & prison correlates



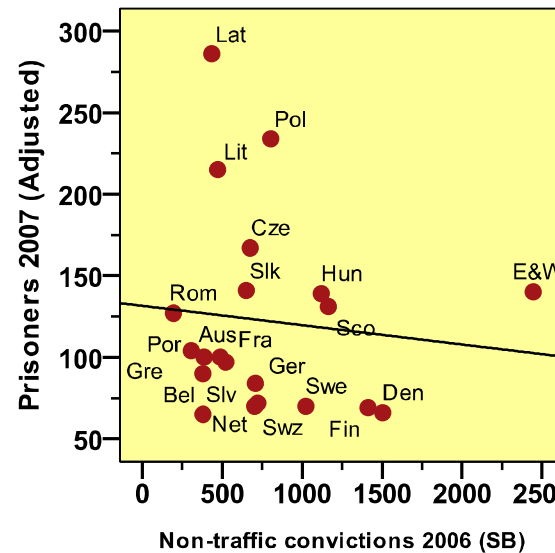
R<sup>2</sup> Linear = 0,225



R<sup>2</sup> Linear = 0,591



R<sup>2</sup> Linear = 0,018



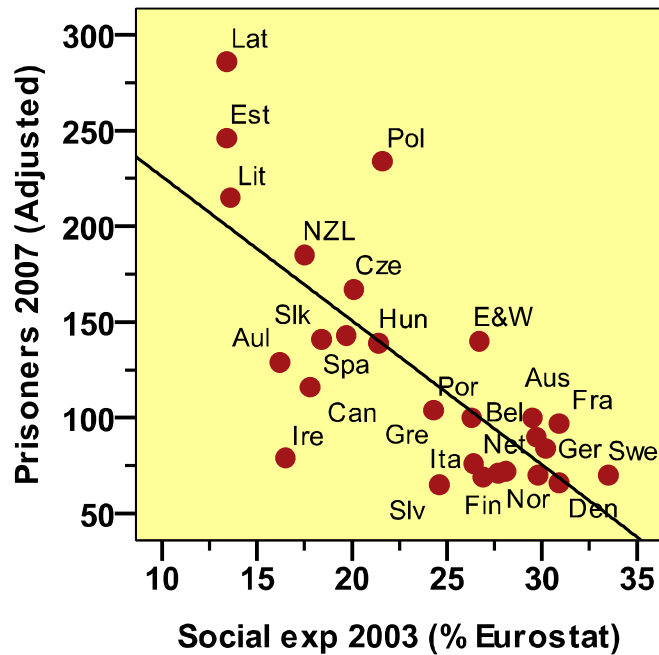
R<sup>2</sup> Linear = 0,011

Crime rates and prison rates  
may walk hand in hand  
– or they may walk the opposite  
directions

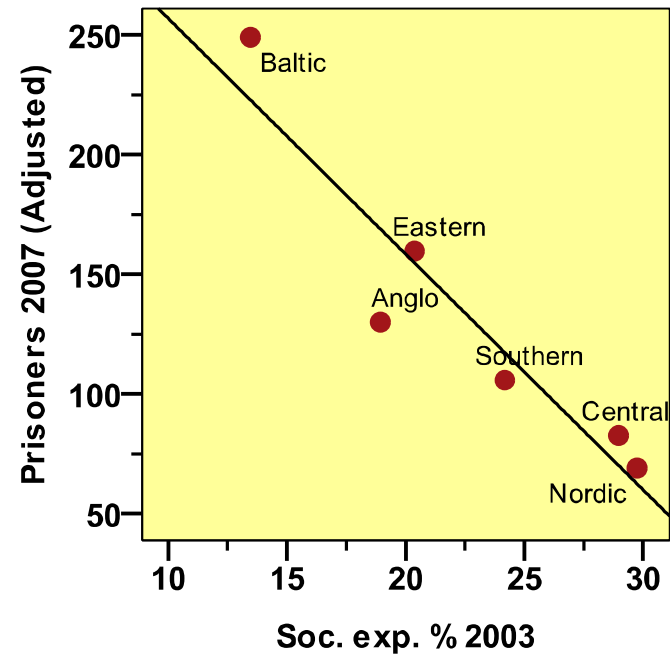
II

Explaining differences  
in incarceration rates  
(and penal severity)

# Social expenditures and imprisonment rates. Europe by regions



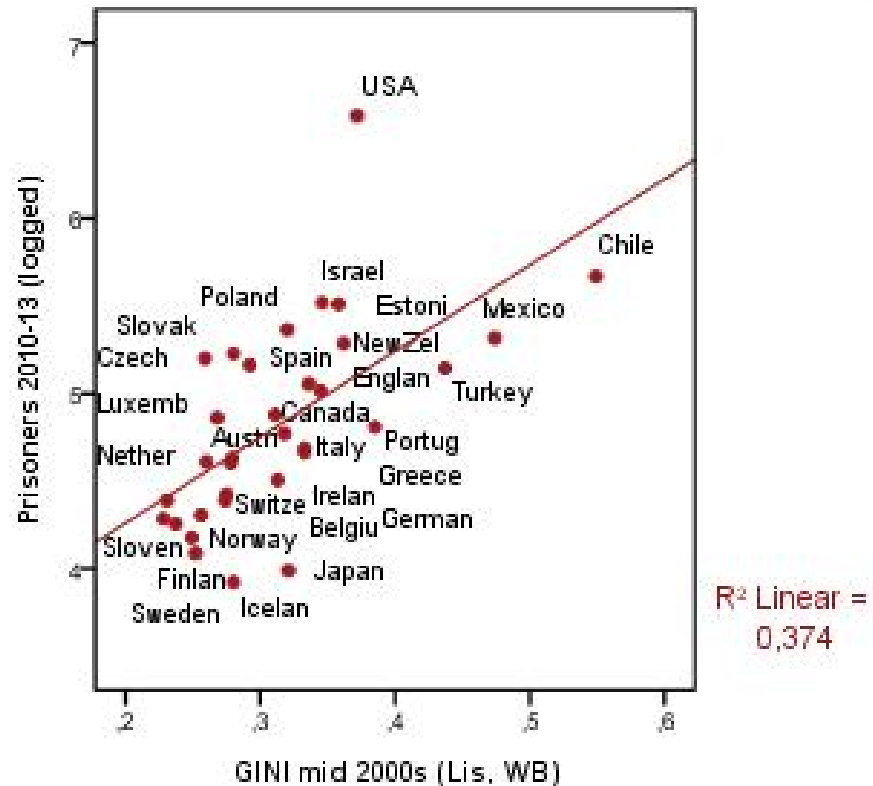
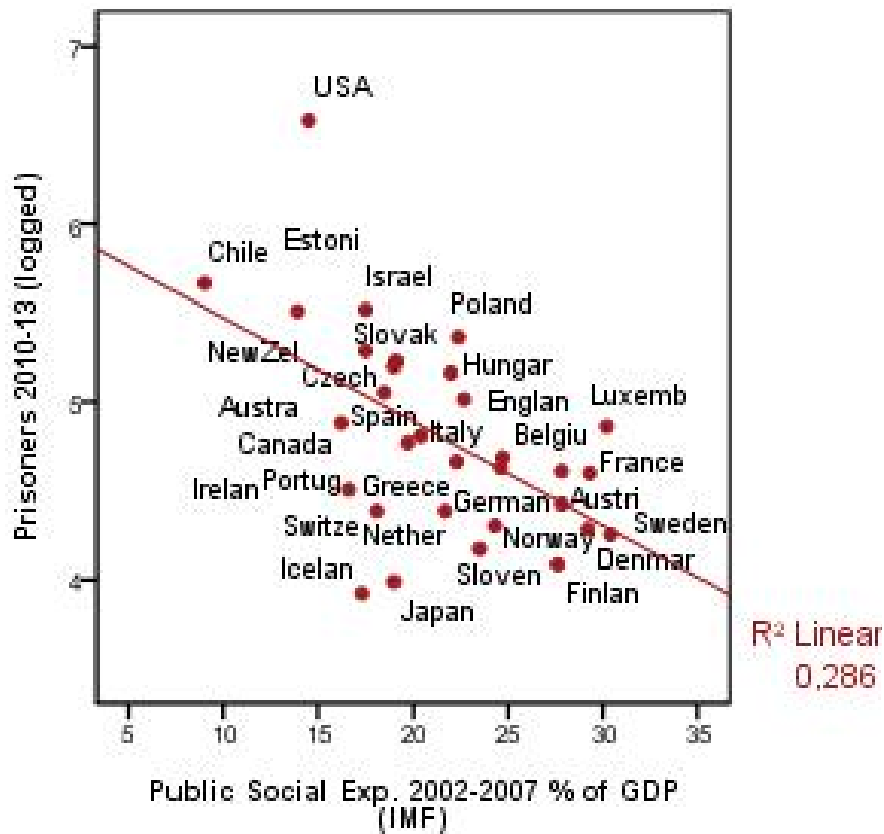
$R^2$  Linear = 0,561



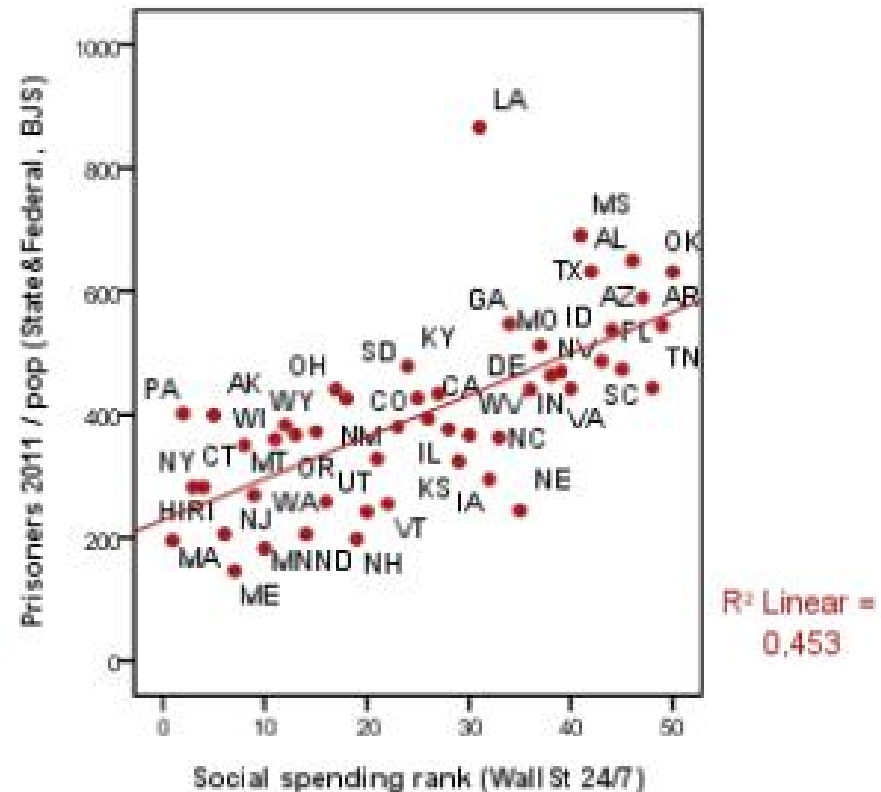
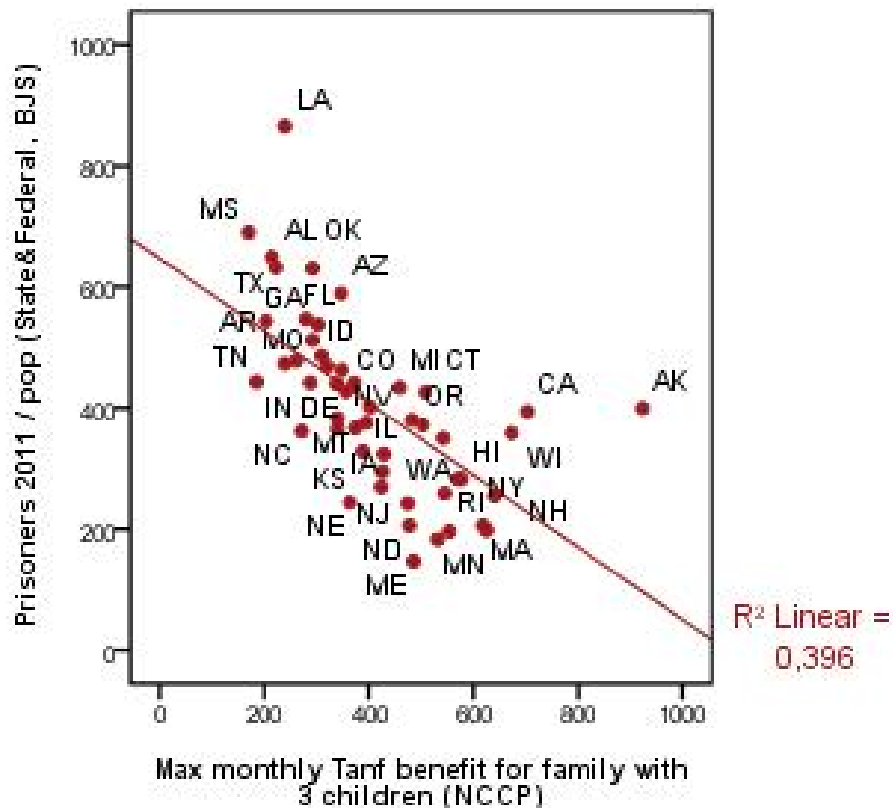
$R^2$  Linear = 0,881



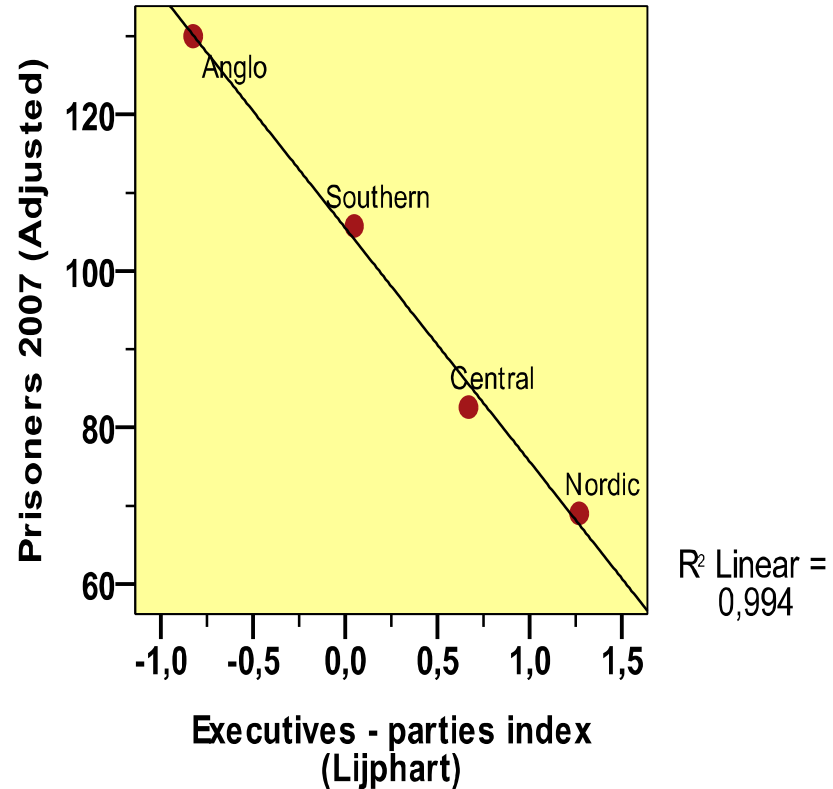
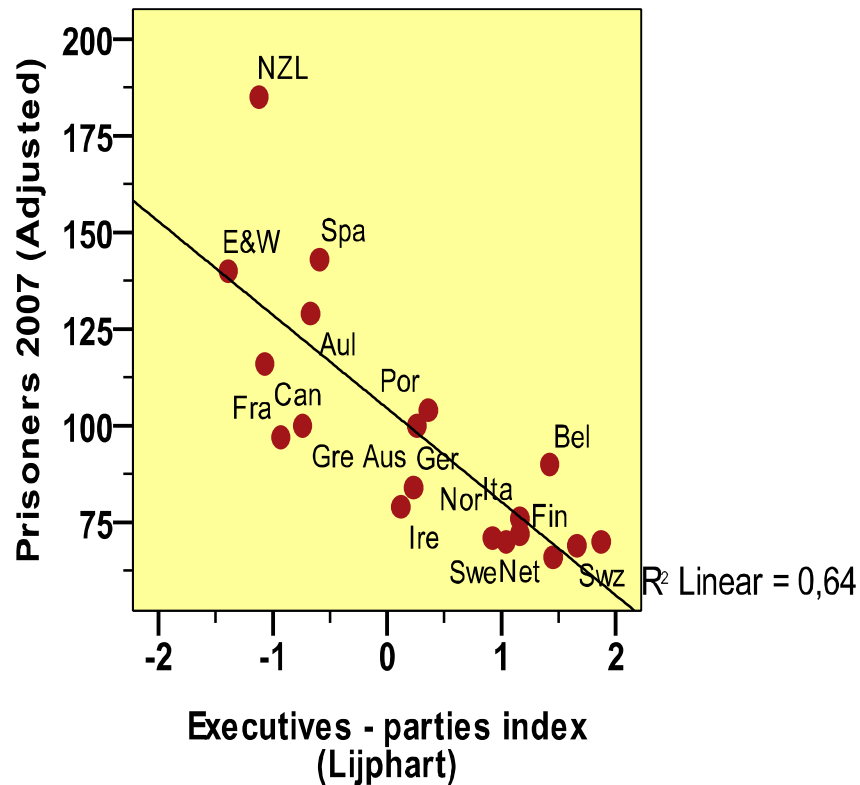
# Social expenditures & Income distribution – OECD countries



# Welfare indicators and prisoners in 50 US states



# Lijphart's "consensual – majoritarian" democracy distinction



# EXPLAINING DIFFERENCES IN PENAL SEVERITY

- "STRUCTURAL"
  - Socio-, economic and political
  - Providing the framework
- "PENOLOGICAL"
  - Penal philosophies
  - Sanction structures
  - Sanction practices

STRUCTURAL

(UNIVERSALISTIC)  
WELFARE STATE

TRUST/  
LEGITIMACY

FEARS/  
PUNITIVITY

"POLITICAL  
CULTURE"

Negotiating/  
conflictua

MEDIA CULTURE

IDEOLOGICAL  
PENOLOGICAL

- Penal philosophy
- Sanction system
- Sanction practices



# PENOLOGICAL STRUCTURES CONTRIBUTING TO LOWER LEVELS OF PENAL REPRESSION

## Relevant practices for avoiding imprisonment

1. Extensive use of fines under the day-fine system.
2. Extensive use of suspended sentence and early release
3. New community sanctions as substitutes for prison sentences
4. Combine community alternatives with supportive measures
5. Minimize “secondary imprisonment” in case of breach of conditions (revocations)

## Relevant practices II

6. Penalty scales. Reduce sentence-levels for high volume non-violent offenses
7. Reduce reoffending. Minimize detrimental effects in enforcement, preserve contacts to outside world, invest in vocational training and substance abuse treatment, secure re-entry.
8. Abolish indeterminate sanctions and predictive sentencing
9. Youth justice under child welfare, not criminal justice
10. Extensive use of mediation schemes



# IV CONCLUSIONS

# CONCLUSIONS BASED ON EXPERIENCES FROM FINLAND

1. Defining high incarceration rate as a problem on political level
2. Having long term consistent policy
3. Involving and informing actors from all relevant fields, including politicians, civil servants, judiciary, enforcement, research and the media
4. Joining the Nordic Welfare Family

# CONCLUSIONS BASED ON GLOBAL COMPARISONS

1. Incarceration rates mirror the strength of welfare state and they are conditioned by political structures. However, "structure is not determination"
2. Turning the direction of the prison curve will not turn the direction of the crime curve
3. There is no shortage of technical ways of controlling incarceration rates, but...

# Thank you

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Turning the direction of the prison curve will  
not turn the direction of the crime curve

Thank you!