

Plenary 1

Nordic Penal Exceptionalism and the winds of change. Francis Pakes (IS).

Since John Pratt wrote about Nordic Penal Exceptionalism in 2008, a large amount of scholarly literature has been devoted to debating it. Much current debate focuses on whether Nordic penal exceptionalism is under threat, and what its future might hold. At the same time, we see Nordic penal principles exported to a range of countries. It therefore seems that while Nordic penal exceptionalism is, at least in some places, under acute threat, it may serve to inspire and inform prison policy in whole host of locations at the same time. In this talk I will discuss these matters, adopting, in part, a personal perspective. I will discuss and reflect on my own long-standing engagement with penal exceptionalism discussing my work in the Nordic countries, with a specific focus on Iceland, but also including my home country, the Netherlands, a country once lauded as world leading because of its humane and rehabilitative prison system. I will try to tie these strands together highlighting the global importance of Nordic penal exceptionalism, despite the myriad of threats it is currently facing.

Plenary 2

From Crime Control to Security Governance: Expanding the Criminological Toolkit for Understanding the Nordic Nation-State in the Age of Hybrid Threats. Sine Vorland Holen (NO).

Hybrid threats have become a defining feature of the contemporary Nordic security landscape. These threats not only challenge existing models of state governance, but also criminology's traditional focus on crime control as its primary object of analysis. This talk addresses how Nordic criminology can expand its analytic focus from crime control to security governance - not to abandon its critical core, but to fully capture the pressures reshaping Nordic societies and the Nordic nation state today. Drawing on the case of Norway, the talk outlines the problem of hybrid threats to governance and discusses how the state has responded through a dual governance shift: reasserting hierarchical control while simultaneously emphasizing horizontal cooperation and whole-of-society preparedness. Against this backdrop, three areas where criminology can strengthen its contribution are suggested: an ontological rethinking of crime, security, and war; an epistemological shift toward security governance and boundary

work between professions; and a normative reassessment of securitization that balances concerns about power expansion with under-protection.

Workshop A

1. Chess Behind Bars & Dynamic Security: An Exploratory Study from Two Danish Prisons. Jacob Askham-Christensen (DK).

"Dynamic security" – maintaining control through positive staff-prisoner relationships – is a cornerstone of the Nordic penal model. However, establishing these relationships in a modern correctional landscape remains a significant challenge. This paper presents findings from a novel exploratory study, "Fængselsskak®" (Prison Chess), which is the first of its kind to empirically examine the connection between organized chess activities and dynamic security. The study evaluates a pilot intervention in 2 Danish prisons in 2025. It involved 271 incarcerated participants in weekly 1.5-hour sessions led by professional facilitators. Notably, uniformed officers actively participated, playing alongside the inmates. Drawing on mixed-methods data – comprising a survey and interviews with inmates (n=10) and officers (n=4) – we explore the chessboard as "neutral ground." Preliminary findings suggest shared play suspends the traditional "us vs. them" hierarchy, facilitating the professional dialogue and observation essential for dynamic security. Moving beyond chess as solely cognitive rehabilitation, this study argues that such activities are critical "soft power" instruments to ensure penal safety.

2. Er dansk prøveløsladelsespraksis lovstridig? Hans Jørgen Engbo (DK).

Prøveløsladelse blev indført i dansk ret i 1933 som en normal strafafkøring, som kun skulle udeblive, når den indsattes forhold gjorde løsladelsen utilrådelig. Prøveløsladelse skulle »ikke betragtes som en Naadesakt, men som et vigtigt og regelmæssigt Led i Straffuldbyrdelsen« hed det i forarbejderne til loven. I de første mange år blev mellem 5 og 10 procent af de indsatte nægtet prøveløsladelse, fordi den blev anset for utilrådelig. Straffelovens regel, om at »løsladelse på prøve forudsætter, at den dømtes forhold ikke gør løsladelsen utilrådelig«, har stået uændret i alle årene, men myndighedernes praksis har i de seneste årtier udviklet sig eksplosivt, så det nu er over halvdelen af de indsatte, som nægtes prøveløsladelse. Betegnelsen »utilrådelighed« er en elastisk formulering, hvis nærmere indhold det overlades til de udøvende myndigheder at udfylde. Men der er en grænse for myndighedernes udfyldning - en »elasticitetsgrænse« - og spørgsmålet er, om fængselsmyndighederne har holdt sig inden for denne grænse. Det konkluderes i

oplægget, at elasticitetsgrænsen efter alt at dømme er overskredet, og at nutidig praksis derfor er lovstridig.

3. Exemplary neighbours: building moral citizens in Norwegian penal practice. Pernille Nyvoll (NO).

This paper examines how the idea of the 'good neighbour' functions as a normative governing premise within Norwegian penal practice, based on the assumption that the reshaping of people in prison into 'good' or 'better' neighbours is a central task of the Norwegian correctional services. Although this notion of forming good neighbours is commonly found amongst both people in prison, prison staff and in the Norwegian media, there has been hitherto little academic exploration of what constitute good neighbours and how the ideological construct of the good neighbour impacts prison officers' work. This paper seeks to rectify this gap. By drawing on extensive fieldwork and interviews conducted across several open and closed prisons in Norway, we explore how these expectations are disseminated and enacted by the Norwegian correctional services. In doing so, we seek to examine more closely the meaning of the good neighbour in the formation of moral citizens, and how individuals in turn govern their own behaviour in response to the idea of the good neighbour.

4. Constructing the 'hard core': Political framing and the establishment of the Danish Youth Crime Board. Iman Azamigilan (DK).

In 2019, Denmark established the Youth Crime Board (YCB) to address offending among 10- to 17-year-olds. The reform was introduced during a period of historically low levels of recorded youth crime. Rather than responding to a documented rise in youth offending, it was justified by the perceived need to act more firmly against a so-called 'hard core' of young offenders and to prevent other young people from entering this category through early and consistent interventions. Drawing on a qualitative content analysis of political documents and media material, this article examines the narrative through which the "hard core" is constructed. The study shows how young people are framed as particularly dangerous, persistent, and resistant to existing welfare-based interventions, and how this framing positions them as a group that the social system has been unable to manage effectively. The study further highlights how calls for more consistent measures are linked to the ambition to 'break the chain of recruitment,' and how statistical claims are selectively framed and mobilised to legitimise risk-oriented governance and consistent responses towards convicted or suspected youths.

Workshop B

1. A sense of justice? Attitudes to punishment in Sweden. Klara Hermansson (SE).

In the fall of 2026, Sweden will hold a parliamentary election, and for the third consecutive election cycle, issues related to “law and order” appear to be a central concern among voters. In an ongoing research project, we investigate the Swedish population’s attitudes and emotional responses to crime and punishment through national surveys and focus group interviews. This emerging knowledge will shed light on how concerns about crime translate into sentencing preferences and varying degrees of punitiveness. We ask how recent political proposals align with public sentiment and whether the public favors harsher penalties than those reflected in current penal practices. In addition to mapping punitive attitudes across the population, we examine how these attitudes correlate with material conditions, ideological orientations, and emotional factors. Our ambition is to further knowledge on the underlying structures of penal attitudes and to explore alternatives to punitive sentiments.

2. Young Icelanders’ Attitudes Toward Crime and Punishment: A Call for Stricter Sentencing Practices? Helgi Gunnlaugsson (IS).

Youth crime remains a salient issue in the Nordic nations, including Iceland. Consequently, this study aims to examine how young persons aged 16 to 24 perceive crime and punishment. The findings will be juxtaposed against decisions made by a local judicial panel regarding the same offenses. A total of eight focus group interviews were conducted across various rural and urban areas in Iceland, involving more than 40 participants. Discussions centered on four criminal cases: drug offenses, street violence, rape, and online hate speech. Each crime type was depicted through vignettes, with two cases analyzed in each session. Participants filled out a questionnaire on their expectations regarding local judicial outcomes for each case, their own preferred responses, and the rationale behind their views. Participants called for harsher penalties in three out of the four examined cases, while their responses to the drug offense were comparatively lenient. The rationale for these sentencing preferences was predominantly framed through victim interests, primarily focusing on compensation to the victim.

3. Presentations of public in Finnish and Swedish political debates on legal change.

Tiina Malin (FI).

Crime is a heated topic in both Finland and Sweden, and it has been argued that criminal policy is becoming increasingly politicized. Further, researchers have highlighted the fact that politicians often refer to the public and/or its sense of justice when arguing for legal change. However, most studies on the topic have focused on mapping the level of punitiveness among people or reasoning if this should play a role in criminal policy. There is very little empirical knowledge on when and how politicians refer to public. In this article, we will study how public is presented by the politicians while arguing changes in the criminal law in Finland and Sweden. Our data is gathered from both countries' parliamentary debates between years 2015 and 2024. We focus on debates 1) where public sense of justice is mentioned explicitly and 2) which focus on changes on law on four different offence types. The analysis will show how the public sense of justice is discussed as a concept and how the public is presented on broader level. The results will bring new insights to the discussion on the public sense of justice and interesting comparative findings on Nordic criminal policy.

4. Hate speech in Iceland: Legal Developments and Parliamentary discussions. Eyrún Eypórsdóttir (IS).

In 1967, Iceland ratified the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination of 1965, thereby committing to ensuring equality among individuals and preventing one group from asserting superiority over others. As part of the convention's implementation, Iceland introduced Article 233(a) into the General Penal Code in 1973, prohibiting public expressions that ridicule, defame, demean, or threaten individuals based on nationality, skin color, race, or religion. Over time, the law has been expanded to include extended protection. Recently, parliament introduced proposals to alter the procedural rules governing hate speech, making it more difficult to prosecute such cases. Drawing on Carol Bacchi's critical policy analysis framework, "What's the problem represented to be?", this paper examines how parliamentary discussions and public statements by members of Alþingi have shaped the framing and implementation of hate speech legislation in Iceland. It further explores what these discourses reveal about the ideological and political underpinnings of these developments. This analysis provides insight into Iceland's legal approach to hate speech.

Workshop C

1. *Evaluation of Swedish security zones.* Tove Strömberg Rask (SE).

With the rise of organized crime, Swedish criminal policy has taken a repressive turn. In addition to policies such as more severe penalties, the government has implemented security zones, based on a Danish model. Security zones are geographically and temporally limited stop and search zones in which police can stop and search persons and vehicles in order to prevent shootings and bombings in the area. When the implementation of security zones was proposed in early 2024, the proposition received a large amount of criticism. It was feared that security zones would disproportionately affect vulnerable areas, and that the zones would lead to an increased risk of discrimination and stigmatization. Considering the invasive nature of, and the critique brought forward towards security zones, the policy becomes especially important to evaluate, not only in terms of the potential crime preventative effects, but also in terms of the potential damaging effects the zones can have on the relationship between the police and the public. To begin this evaluation, interviews have been carried out with Swedish and Danish police. Preliminary results of these interviews will be presented.

2. *Surveillance and fear of crime.* Mona Tykesson (SE)

In response to escalating gang violence and organised crime, the Swedish government has launched an extensive surveillance strategy. New surveillance acts have been introduced and the number of police-operated CCTV cameras is set to increase tenfold. Besides lowering crime and enabling clearance, the expansion of cameras is based on the notion that it alleviates fear of crime among ordinary citizens. But is that really the case? The existing evidence is limited and point in different direction. There is also a striking lack of theory explaining how surveillance is expected to mitigate fear. Drawing on a systematic review and an empirical study of CCTV installations in Sweden, this paper examines whether, how and for whom increased surveillance affects fear of crime. The paper also links the expansion of CCTV to broader debates about state power, legitimacy and the growing overlap between protection and control.

3. *Impact of community service on recidivism.* Aaro Beuker (FI).

In Finland, many short prison sentences are replaced with community service. Community service was introduced as a more humane option for low-risk offenders, as it does not sever social ties as drastically as imprisonment. In recent years, research has increasingly examined the potential effects of various non custodial sanctions. However, evidence on the impact of community service on recidivism and other relevant

outcomes, such as employment, remains unclear. In the Finnish context, the use of community service began in 1994. The policy change redirected some offenders - who would previously have been incapacitated - to community service, creating the conditions for a quasi-experimental design. We leverage this reform to apply a difference-in-differences approach, and estimate the impact of community service on recidivism. Preliminary results will be presented.

4. Diversion from criminal justice after VOM? A study on judicial decision-making of criminal cases sent to mediation in Finland. Aino Jauhiainen (FI).

Victim-offender mediation is widely used in the Nordics as an alternative response to crime. In Finland, a reached agreement in victim-offender mediation may lead to the diversion of criminal cases from the judicial procedures if the mediation leads to an agreement. Recently, many studies have explored how mediation agreements are acknowledged by police and prosecutors separately. However, few studies have followed judicial decisions on mediation cases. This study draws on register-based data throughout the Finnish judicial procedures from the police, prosecutor, court, and mediation databases to examine the extent of diversion for criminal cases sent to mediation. The data consists of criminal cases (N = 700) from the year 2019, including torts, assaults, defamation as well as domestic violence. Utilizing descriptive statistics, the study outlines judicial decisions to these cases, including those offered mediation. Differences in mediated and non-mediated outcomes are explored. Finally, predictors of various judicial outcomes are explored using a multi-variate regression model.

Plenary 3

A Whole-of-Society Approach to Foreign Espionage: Engagement of Civil Society in Scandinavian Counterespionage. Kira Vrist Rønn (DK).

In this presentation, I argue that co-production of intelligence has been taken up by Scandinavian intelligence services. Thus, Scandinavian services increasingly align with a traditional US/UK approach to intelligence communication, where civil society actors are envisioned as central actors in intelligence matters. Additionally, I argue that this approach is applied in the context of Scandinavian counterespionage, not counterterrorism as in the US/UK cases, along with the current focus on total defence, societal security, and whole-of-society approaches to security matters. Furthermore, I provide three concepts and examples of the co-production of counterintelligence in

Scandinavia: 1) ad hoc chipping-in, 2) formalised networks, and 3) institutionalised partnerships. Finally, I discuss three types of potential implications of intelligence co-production which will need further attention: 1) new visions and ideals of knowledge in the intelligence context, 2) increased responsabilisation of civil society actors and a subsequent risk of turning civil society into security policy actors, and 3) a move toward even more blurry accountability mechanisms in the context of intelligence.

Workshop D

1. Tracing police misconduct complaints in Finland. Heini Litmanen (FI).

Finland, like other Nordic countries, is going through a punitive turn marked by the widening of police powers. At the same time, police misconduct in Finland remains understudied despite its increased media visibility. While approximately 1,000 complaints per year are filed concerning police misconduct, why most of them do not proceed in the system remains unclear. This article aims to fill this gap by exemplifying data from the Office of the Prosecutor General's Police Crime Unit to investigate which types of complaints do not proceed and why from 2017-2025. Next, it examines district court cases of police misconduct involving Public Offences in Office from 2017-2025 to understand how the rare cases that proceed to the criminal justice system are handled. Theoretically, the article draws on Critical Policing Studies, which encourage scholars to examine the police institution critically and challenge taken-for-granted assumptions. The findings are connected to broader discussions on police accountability, the difficulty of tracing police misconduct and the lack of transparency.

2. Exceptional measures, ordinary practice: The resilience of pre-trial solitary confinement in Sweden. Emelí Lönnqvist (SE).

As recently argued by Crewe et al. (2023), extreme forms of custody are analytically revealing for how the boundaries of legitimate coercion and state power are drawn. In Sweden, such boundary practices are paradoxically most visible prior to conviction, where remand prisoners are subject to conditions that amount to solitary confinement — a practice regarded as among the most intrusive and dangerous interventions in modern democracies (Lobel and Smith 2019). How this practice continues despite human rights criticism and repeated reform efforts remains an open question. Drawing on interviews

with prosecutors, judges and defense lawyers, this paper examines how decisions authorizing these measures are produced in the pre-trial process to shed light on their resilience. Building on Thomas Mathiesen's theorizing of legal processes as insulated and socially detached, it explores how harm and suffering enter—or fail to enter—legal reasoning and how procedural safeguards operate under asymmetrical power relations. In doing so, it interrogates how legitimacy is maintained under external pressure and how exceptional forms of state coercion are stabilized as ordinary practice.

3. *Consequences for Individuals Convicted of Child Sexual Offences.* Kasper Jørgensen (DK).

Despite the Nordic countries' long-standing tradition of penal welfarism and humane, rehabilitation-oriented criminal justice, new and intrusive crime-control strategies targeting individuals convicted of sexual offences against children (ICSOCs) have emerged. A striking example is Denmark's introduction of police supervision, which mandates regular, unannounced police home visits to ensure compliance with post-conviction restrictions. Drawing on multiple narrative interviews with 25 ICSOCs conducted over several years, this article examines how this intrusive form of control shapes their everyday lives. While the supervision scheme pursues the legitimate aim of public protection, the study suggests that its collateral consequences may be counterproductive by contributing to poorer mental health, unstable housing and living circumstances, and the entrenchment of a criminalised identity. In doing so, the article provides unique empirical insight into lived experiences of post-conviction control as part of the broader shift towards a preventive state in the Nordic region.

4. *Radicalisation and the Limits of Nordic Exceptionalism.* Camilla Gissel (SE).

This article critically investigates the idea of Nordic exceptionalism in the governance of radicalisation and violent extremism. Through a comparative analysis of the latest versions of national action plans (NAPs) for preventing radicalisation and violent extremism in the Nordic countries the article explores how radicalisation is constructed as a threat, how the notion of Nordic exceptionalism and welfare state principles shape preventive and penal strategies, and how international frameworks influence national approaches to prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism. While all countries frame extremism as a challenge to democratic values and social cohesion, their plans differ greatly in emphasis. Despite these differences, all Nordic countries foreground the multi-agency cooperation, democracy education in schools, social and health care

services, revealing a common reliance on the welfare state as a domain for both care and control. The article challenges the notion that Nordic approaches are inherently humane or exceptional, arguing instead that these action plans blend rehabilitation welfare traditions with expanding securitisation.

Workshop E

1. 'We also see the other side with young men who lose everything': Gendered Affects as Epistemic Orientation Devices in Danish Rape Cases. Liv Henningsen (DK).

While the Nordic welfare states have long promoted a pioneering vision of gender equality, sexual violence remains prevalent and under-prosecuted in the region. Along with legal developments in neighbouring countries, the actus reus of the Danish rape provision has been amended from coercive sex to non consensual sex, signalling a shift towards a more gender-sensitive and victim-oriented approach. Following the reform, this paper explores how gendered affects—emotive-cognitive orientations formed by gender norms—shape legal reasoning and evidentiary assessment in rape cases. Based on court observations, focus group interviews with 14 legal actors, and 306 judgments in rape cases, I argue that gendered affects enfold and unfold in the legal assessment of various complex evidence, orienting the law in some direction and not others, and obscuring the statutory ideals of gender equality and sexual autonomy. Thereby, gendered affects become an integrated part of the legal apparatus as decisive epistemic devices in cutting the legal phenomenon of rape together and apart.

2. Nordic Ideals to Baltic Realities: Norway-Latvia Correctional Service Cooperation.

Permillie Nyvoll (NO).

Abstract: Nordic penal systems are frequently presented as humane, progressive and rehabilitative, and have increasingly become objects of international penal reform. Through the EEA and Norway Grants, Norwegian correctional values and practices are actively promoted beyond the Nordic region, contributing to the positioning of penal norms as a distinctive export from Norway. This paper centres on a case study of a prison collaboration project between Latvia and Norway, funded by the EEA and Norway Grants. The paper asks how Nordic penal values are framed from the Norwegian side and examines efforts to de-sovietise Latvia's penal approach by adapting Norwegian penal ideals to the Latvian context, rather than directly importing them. The analysis draws on qualitative data from ethnographic fieldwork and

interviews with key Norwegian actors and partners, Latvian project members, as well as staff and prisoners at a Latvian prison unit constructed through this collaboration.

3. Rape in Denmark: Insights from sentences about ideas of women's sexual freedom.

Annick Prieur (DK).

While consent-based rape laws are not unique for Nordic countries, the underlying idea of them align well with Nordic understandings of gender equality, individual liberty and autonomy. The court's practice of the rape law before and after the consent-based law was introduced in 2021 in Denmark may therefore be illustrative of how a Nordic take on this crime has developed. The presentation is based on an ongoing analysis of sentences from 2018 and from 2024, with the aim of assessing which difference the amendment of the law makes. I will highlight some aspects of the argumentation by both defendants and juridical actors regarding the view on sexual freedom and responsibilities in order to discern ongoing changes in norms and understandings. This purely qualitative analysis is part of a larger project conducted together with colleague Rasmus Munksgaard (within the PEEREC research project about rationalities, effects and consequences of penal policies) and journalist Frauke Giebner from Politiken.

4. Cross-national comparison of hate crime victimization across different societal and attitudinal contexts – ISRD-4 framework. Essi Pentikäinen (FI).

Within recent years, hate crimes have increased notably in Europe and overseas, hand in hand with a polarized societal and political atmosphere. Since hate crimes are motivated by hatred towards the victim's social group, it is essential to study where these attitudes stem from. We utilize an international comparison design to study whether youth hate crime victimization is associated with a hostile societal climate in 15 European countries. Using two extensive and mutually supplementary data sources – International Self Report Delinquency Survey (ISRD-4) and European Value Survey 2017-2022 (EVS) – this study combines individual level hate crime data to societal level predictors. Results of logistic multilevel models show that country-level ethnic prejudice and nationalistic attitudes are associated with hate crime victimization among youth. At the individual-level, immigration background is a robust predictor of hate crime victimization, especially the victims' parents were born in Africa or Middle East.

Workshop F

1. *The Social Learning of Misogyny: Differential Association and Narrative Construction in Online Incel Communities.* Sabrina Skjold (DK).

Drawing on Differential Association Theory and Narrative Criminology, the study conceptualises digital forums as peer environments in which harmful orientations are transmitted through interaction and storytelling. Using qualitative netnographic methods and critical discourse analysis, the study investigates how members of online incel subcultures articulate experiences of marginalisation, construct collective identities, and circulate recurring narratives of victimhood, entitlement, and gender antagonism.

2. *Youth violence beyond gangs: Vape-dealing as a form of solo venture.* Malin Fransberg (FI).

Public debate has increasingly framed youth violence in the 2020s as driven by new phenomena, such as youth subcultures that allegedly glorify crime and gang life. This study challenges these interpretations by examining youth violence by focusing on meso-level factors such as peer relations, youth group practices, and neighborhood contexts. Drawing on multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork conducted in three urban areas (Oulu, Tampere, and Vantaa), the study is based on participatory-observations, interviews with 44 youths aged 13–16, and interviews with youth workers. We use the concept of street-level solo entrepreneurship to describe informal, profit-oriented activities through which young people seek autonomy and financial independence. Rather than organized youth gangs, these practices are largely individual and opportunistic. However, they reshape the conditions of youth violence by relocating economic conflicts—such as unpaid debts and robberies—into peer interactions. We argue that contemporary youth violence is increasingly linked to economic logic rather than subcultural group antagonisms.

3. *Defenders of the Nation State? Nordic Volunteers in the Russo-Ukrainian War.* Sébastien Tutenges (DK).

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has prompted volunteers from across the Nordic countries to go to war. This paper examines why Nordic volunteers chose to take on front-line roles in Ukraine as soldiers, drivers, and combat medics. The data consist of interviews and follow-up interviews with forty volunteers. In early conversations, volunteers typically frame their involvement in altruistic and ideological terms (e.g. defending civilians, democracy, Europe, and their own nation). Beneath these official narratives lie

more personal ones, which speak to the pursuit of thrill, status, learning, self-exploration, and the emotional rewards of helping people in desperate need. The paper contributes to criminological debates on risk-taking, trauma, and contemporary warfare.

4. Tobacco restrictions in Finnish prisons and opening the black box of evaluation research. Helena Huhta (FI).

In 2023, Finland enforced a law amendment restricting prisoners smoking inside the prison facilities. Since then, prisoners have been permitted to smoke only during outdoor exercise, which typically occurs once a day. Various problems relating to the enforcement were anticipated. In our ethnographic research, we have studied the social processes that followed the new restrictions. The aim has been to open the 'black box' of evaluation research that mostly focuses on measuring the effects but do not explain the mechanisms of influence. Adopting the perspective of normative pluralism, we have analysed how the law amendment collided with cultural norms pre-existing in prison. We show how old habits organized around smoking were partly destroyed, partly restored and how new smoking habits were created in the social processes involving various cultural norms. The results of the law amendment were largely in line with the aims of the amendment. The effects, however, were not achieved through the planned mechanisms of influence.

5. Companies as Tools of Crime: Corporate Involvement in the Criminal Milieu. Johan Dahlberg (SE).

Legitimate business structures play a key role in serious and organized crime by offering legitimacy, access to markets, and financial infrastructure while obscuring control and responsibility. This paper presents findings from a government-commissioned study by the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention, examining how individuals linked to criminal networks in Sweden use companies. Combining register-based data with interviews and police intelligence, the study identifies both structural patterns and concrete criminal arrangements. About one fifth of network-associated individuals held formal company roles, though involvement is uneven. A small group cycles through many short-lived firms, often preceding bankruptcy, suggesting specialization. Companies linked to these actors frequently show signs of irregular activity, including debt and low transparency, consistent with instrumental use. The study also highlights systemic vulnerabilities, such as weak oversight, reliance on self-reported data, and limited information sharing between authorities.

Workshop G

1. *Private numbers, public issues.* Heidi Mork Lomell (NO).

Statistics are the hallmark of state knowledge production. However, the production of numbers is increasingly being taken over by private actors. By producing global indexes, benchmarks and indicators, consulting firms, think tanks and civil society organizations are gaining a central role in the production of statistics and knowledge about various forms of crime and shaping national policies and the agenda of international organizations. Moreover, most criminal justice agencies are moving their data (i.e. state archives and statistical data) to commercial cloud services. Digital platforms offered by private providers have become an essential component of the state bureaucratic infrastructure, a trend that has been described as “platformization of the state”. This paper examines the trend towards the privatization of numbers production and examines how this may be influencing the organizational logic of the state and crime policy. The paper draws on interviews with those producing state and private statistics, top-level bureaucrats and criminal justice decision-makers as well as other actors who extract value from crime data as well as an analysis of new statistical "products".

2. *Boundary Work and Risk Governance: Managing Individuals Convicted of Serious Violence.* Elli Jutila (FI).

Forensic psychiatric evaluation practices and assessment tools for violence risk have been utilized to enable both sentencing stricter sanctions and offender rehabilitation based on recognized risk factors. The aim of this study is to understand the selective and field of expertise-specific nature of the violence risk assessment processes, as well as their offender rehabilitative and criminal penal meanings. The research advances Nordic research on violence risk assessment within the correctional system, considering the forensic psychiatric expertise in the risk assessment of prisoners and applying the concept of boundary work. The research data comprises information extracted from criminal behaviour and forensic psychiatric assessment research register, data from the prisoner information system, and interviews with employees from the Prison and Probation Service who conduct risk and need assessments for prisoners. Research produces novel empirical knowledge to forensic psychiatry and correctional system from the new social science perspective of risk management and recidivism, which contributes to scientific debate on prisoner rehabilitation and re-crime.

3. Evidence management, the rule of law, and changing landscapes of justice. Maja Vestad (NO).

The ways that evidence is managed can enable or hinder future justice claims. Following criticisms over poor evidence management at local police stations, the Norwegian police are currently undergoing a major change in its evidence storage practices - moving all evidence from serious crimes from local police stations across the country into a single, centralised, high security storage facility. This major centralisation invites questions of how the state perceives its responsibility for the "objects of crime", and of the relationship between evidence management, the rule of law, and the legal protection of the people whose investigations the evidence has originated from. In the presentation, I discuss how the transition is not only managerial, but part of a changing culture of justice in Norway.

4. Hate Crime In The Justice System: A Typology of Police-Misclassified Hate Crimes in Sweden. Louise Gustafsson (SE).

Hate crimes have severe impacts on victims and pose a threat to democratic values. Previous research and official reviews have identified substantial shortcomings in how hate crime cases are identified and handled within the criminal justice system (Hagerlid & Granström, 2023; Brå, 2018:13). Research by the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå) shows that crimes with a hate motive are often overlooked, while non-hate crimes are commonly misclassified as hate crimes (ibid.). Agreement between police classifications and Brå's independent assessments increased from 5% in 2009 to 54% in 2020, yet accuracy remains insufficient (Brå, 2021). Existing research on hate crime identification is limited and largely interview-based. This study addresses this gap through a qualitative content analysis of over 2500 misclassified and ambiguous hate crime cases from Sweden in 2018. The analysis develops a typology identifying recurring patterns in both misclassified and ambiguous cases and outlines possible ways forward and practical recommendations for improving the identification and classification of hate crimes.

5. Finnish fingerprint forensic history: Collecting fingerprints from misfits to utilization of passport biometric identifiers. Marko Piipponen (FI).

Currently, the Parliament of Finland is considering the utilization of biometric identifiers from all Finnish passports for criminal investigation purposes, a policy that the Parliament initially rejected in the 2000s. This issue has provoked extensive debate

regarding the expansion of state control over citizens under the guise of enhancing criminal investigation efficiency. To fully comprehend this phenomenon, it is essential to recognize that this development has not emerged in a vacuum; rather, it follows a distinct historical trajectory. In my presentation, I will present how the history of fingerprint collection in Finland originated in 1909, underwent a rapid decline, and experienced a new evolution in 1926, when the systematic retrieval of fingerprints from crime scenes was established. Ultimately, usage of fingerprints in forensics has persisted even beyond the forensic DNA revolution. This presentation is part of my ongoing doctoral research, which examines the history of Finnish forensic investigation from the 1920s to the 1950s.

Plenary 4

How Liberal Democracies Bend, not Break: The Right against Rights in Sweden.

Vanessa Barker (SE).

In the past few years, we have seen the use of legal instruments such as litigation and rights claims to thwart political opponents, assert or deny rights, and weaken democratic procedures (e.g., Orban in Hungary). We know that violent extremists pose serious risks to liberal democracies but we do not whether or not legal campaigns pose the same kind of risks even as they are fast becoming the tools of choice by right-wing populists around the world (Blokker 2019; Pinos and Friis Hau 2023; Gloppen 2018). In Sweden, the Quran burnings in 2023 thrust legal conflicts over rights onto center stage of national and international politics, making visible competing rights claims between freedom of expression and freedom of religion, both protected in the Constitution. This set of events provides a methodological tool to explore under-researched social fault lines around rights in the Nordic context and their potential historical retrenchment. The talk will contend that right wing legal movements have been influential not because they harken back to tradition, parrot strongmen, or engage in raw power grabs, but instead, by promoting fundamental freedoms of democracy. In Sweden, right wing movements promote themselves as protectors of democracy while counterposing Muslims as threats to that very order and Islam as incompatible with liberal democracy. They capitalize on the duality of democracy in Sweden, that is, it's cracked foundation that both espouses equality for all while affirming the worthiness of rights based on ethnic boundaries and shared cultural values.

This set of legal contentions may be used to legitimate their demands for the expulsion of noncitizens, particularly racial and religious minorities who do not adhere to Swedish values. This talk will conclude lessons for how democracies bend rather than break under right-wing pressure, implications for criminology, our shared future, and how we might de-escalate these developments.

Plenary 5

Surveillance technologies, sociotechnical imaginaries, and the boundaries of state power. Samuel Singler (FI).

Emerging digital technologies are transforming practices of control, surveillance, and criminal justice. This talk considers how new border surveillance tools can reshape policing and criminal policy from the outside. The adoption of new technologies has internationally resulted in diffuse practices of ‘cimmigration control’, in which distinctions between migration management and crime control have become blurred. This talk considers what cimmigration control tells us more broadly about the impact of digital transformations on criminal policy and public order. In particular, these developments point toward a new criminological research agenda that focuses on the role of sociotechnical imaginaries in shaping how state power is enacted through policing and criminal justice practices.

Workshop H

1. Social democracy and the punitive turn in the welfare state Sweden. Henrik Tham (SE).

In half a century, Swedish criminal policy has turned from de-criminalization and a low prison population to a historic escalating penal legislation, a doubling of the prison population in a decade and prognoses for almost the highest number of prisoners in Europe. While the political right all through the period have argued for law and order, the marked change is the new position of the Social Democrats that offers no opposition to the development and advocate an expansion of penal law and prisons that is very close to that of the center-right government. Contributory to this change is Social

democratic traditions of interventionism, left realism and a stress of positive rather than negative human rights. The Social Democrats are unable to pursue a welfare state based criminal policy marked by optimism, rationality and social engineering in a situation of economic neo-liberalism, right-wing populism and decreasing space for politics and social reforms.

2. Exceptional forms of coercive confinement - Pockets of punitiveness in the Welfare State. Julie Laursen (DK).

This paper aims to ignite a new dialogue on Nordic penalty, moving beyond the traditional benchmark of 'Exceptionalism'. We introduce the concept of 'pockets of punitiveness' within the context of Nordic coercive confinement. By examining these pockets within the welfare state, we highlight how certain penal practices, such as voluntary isolation and indeterminate sentencing, coexist with and emerge from broader humane policies, despite their ambiguous nature. Such pockets, in other words, expose the inherent complexities and contradictions in Nordic penal philosophy. By showcasing the breadth of Nordic coercive confinement, we argue that these punitive pockets are not anomalies but essential to understanding the multifaceted nature of Nordic penalty. The paper thereby offers a fresh conceptual vantage point, encouraging nuanced and empirically rich analyses of punishment practices in Nordic countries.

3. Criminalizing Forced Marriage in Denmark: Punishment, Politics, and the Nordic Approach. Kumm Sabba Mirza (DK).

The honour killing of Ghazala Khan in 2005 accelerated the political process leading to the explicit criminalization of forced marriages in the Danish Penal Code in 2008. Punishment in this context functions not only as a legal instrument but also as a form of symbolic and moral regulation. This presentation examines the legal and political dimensions of forced marriage legislation, highlighting how § 260(2) has become a platform for legislators to signal political values related to integration, gender equality, and "Danish values," rather than providing comprehensive protection for women. I will also discuss the most recent legislative revisions, which risk introducing intersectional gender discrimination by punishing offenders based on the type of relationship the victim entered historically, rather than the harm inflicted. Finally, the presentation situates Denmark within a broader Nordic context, problematizing how Nordic states navigate the tension between victim protection and regulation of minority practices.

Workshop I

1. *Risky migrants – towards a merging of law enforcement and technologies.* Helene Gundhus (NO).

My presentation explores how shifts in how risk and threat assessments are applied in interventions shape border control. First, I show how data from the Norwegian national intelligence project Operation Migrant has been used in practice within a law enforcement logic to combat pre-crime. Second, I analyse technological changes in 'interoperability' between databases in the EU that were implemented in 2019. I show how the concept of the virtual border and surveillance are expected to change collective practices of imagining, planning, and controlling the future(s) of border control. Risk analysis constructs understandings of what security is, how it is threatened, and what solutions are necessary and appropriate. Interoperability between police and migration databases, supported by data analytics, is expected to change these processes. The paper ends by examining how ideas about automating risk assessments may lead to increased dataveillance and, by extension, increased social control that also includes national citizens, known as the net-widening effects of control.

2. *Mapping Drugs Policing in Denmark.* Tobias Kammersgaard (DK).

Drugs play a central role in the daily work of the police across many areas of intervention. At the same time, there is a need for more knowledge about how drug law enforcement is carried out, what logics and priorities underpin it, and how it affects policing in practice. In this presentation, I will present some preliminary results from an ongoing, exploratory study of drugs policing in Denmark. Based on interviews with officers across different policing domains, geographical areas, and at both the front-line and management level, the project explores how drugs travel across different fields of policing, gaining meaning and being problematized in different ways in various contexts: as a source of insecurity, a health risk, or an illegal commodity. Additionally, the project aims to explore whether the concept of harm reduction could be meaningfully applied to the policing context, and whether certain features of drugs policing in Denmark already operate according to the principles of this approach.

3. *Professionalising Police Education in Iceland: Purposes and Knowledge Priorities.*

Guðmundur Oddsson (IS).

Iceland's police service has been profoundly shaped by both external and internal pressures to professionalise. A key milestone was reached in 2016, when the government

moved initial police education to the university level. In this article, we examine to what extent Iceland's 2016 police education reform has reshaped the professional purposes and knowledge priorities of initial police education as understood across policy, educational, and occupational domains. For our data, we analyse policy, legislative, and program documents alongside survey data from police students (N=504 and 193) and active police officers (N=360), which we interpret using Gert Biesta's tripartite model of educational purposes (qualification, socialisation, and subjectification) as an analytical lens. Our findings indicate that the reform has strengthened qualification and broadened the ethical and relational dimensions of socialisation, while support for subjectification is only beginning to emerge through new opportunities for critical reflection and independent judgement. These developments suggest a shift toward a more coherent and comprehensive, yet still developing, model of police professionalism.

4. Violence against children as a criminal matter: Mandatory reporting to the police, criminal investigations, and interagency cooperation. Mari Fadjukoff (FI)

Violence against children is a problem that society must address as effectively as possible. In Finland, efforts to address violence against children have included strengthening the role of the police in such cases. Since 2015, professionals have been legally obligated to report suspicions of child abuse directly to the police, with a reporting threshold that is remarkably low by international comparison. In my PhD, I research the development reporting trends from 2009 to 2024 analyze the progression of these cases and the duration of preliminary investigations over the same period. I am also exploring professionals' views on when a criminal investigation is in the best interest of the child. My research is based on national crime statistics and qualitative interview data from professionals. The results show that, although crime reports have increased, the number of cases proceeding to the consideration of charges has not. At the same time, the duration of criminal investigations has steadily lengthened. Our findings suggest that expanding mandatory reporting does not strengthen children's legal protection and may, in fact, create bottlenecks in the investigative process.

Workshop J

1. Marginalization, Discrimination, and Youth Gang Involvement in Iceland: A Multilevel Analysis Using ISRD4. Margrét Valdimarsdóttir (IS).

This study examines individual- and class-level risk factors associated with youth gang

involvement in Iceland, focusing specifically on social marginalization and perceived discrimination. While Iceland has a limited history of entrenched street gangs, recent concerns mirror broader Nordic patterns. Drawing on ISRD4 data from students aged 13–17, the study investigates how a lack of sense of belonging, perceived discrimination, and immigrant background relate to self-reported gang involvement. Building on theories of multiple marginalization and strain, the analysis assesses whether indicators of social exclusion operate both at the individual level and as contextual risks within classroom environments. Multilevel logistic regression models suggest that immigrant background alone is not a strong predictor of gang involvement once experiences of marginalization and discrimination are considered, and that school-level social climates shape opportunities for gang-affiliated peer networks. The findings contribute to emerging scholarship on youth gangs in the Nordic contexts and highlight mechanisms through which social exclusion processes may place certain youths at elevated risk.

2. Cycle of Adversity: Associations Between Offending, Mental Health Problems, and Placement in Out-of-Home Care Within and Across Generations. Lars Brännström (SE).

It is well known that crime, mental health problems (MHP), and placement in out-of-home care (OHC; foster family care and residential care) tend to run in families. However, few studies have examined these intergenerational links simultaneously while also accounting for within-generational associations. We use linked longitudinal register data from the Stockholm Birth Cohort Multigenerational Study, centered on a 1953 cohort (Generation 1, G1), their parents (G0), and their children (G2). Preliminary results based on generalized structural equation modelling show strong associations between OHC and both crime and MHP within generations. Between generations, transmission emerges mainly from crime in G0 to crime in G1, from crime in G0 to OHC in G1, and from OHC in G1 to OHC in G2. MHP typically shows weaker links across generations, but significant associations are found from MHP in G0 to MHP in G1 and to OHC in G1, as well as from MHP in G1 to OHC in G2.

3. Youth deviance online and offline: Gender differences in crime and crime Control.

Serena Yunran Zhang (DK).

Young people navigate both digital and physical arenas where social relations, wellbeing, and risk behaviours interact in complex ways. This paper examines gender differences in juvenile offending and related social factors using data from the Youth Profile Survey (students in grades 7–9 across seven municipalities in Denmark).

Descriptive results show that boys report higher involvement in most forms of offline and online offending, including vandalism, violence, hacking, and non-consensual image sharing, while no gender differences are found for some minor theft-related behaviours. Multivariate analyses further reveal gendered patterns in key associations. Parental control over routine activities are more strongly associated with girls' offending, whereas emotional attachment, time with parents, peer monitoring, and wellbeing are more salient for boys. Girls' offending is more closely linked to self-harm, victimization, and risky peer networks, while boys' offending is more strongly associated with bullying perpetration and gaming-related screen use. The findings highlight the need for gender-specific approaches to crime prevention rather than one-size-fits-all strategies.

4. Incarcerated Parents: Summary of A Register-Based Doctoral Thesis. Ilona Nissinen (FI).

Prior studies link parental incarceration (PI) to adverse offspring outcomes such as criminal behavior, health issues, and premature mortality. However, research has largely relied on surveys with low exposure prevalence, and few studies examine maternal incarceration separately or assess association heterogeneity. This thesis used Finnish register-based data to study criminal behavior and violent victimization among children who were exposed to PI in their childhood. The first sub-study focused on offspring criminal behavior, examining the moderating factors of the associations, using sibling comparison modeling as a more rigorous test. In the second sub-study we examined the link between PI and offspring violent victimization and identified the victim-perpetrator relationships. In the third sub-study we used within-individual design to study if the risk of criminal behavior and violent victimization was elevated during those months, when the parent was incarcerated in comparison to times when the parent was not. By design, the model accounts for all individual and environmental factors that stay stable over time. Findings of the thesis will be discussed collectively.