



## ***Crime as a Social Problem***

### ***Description***

Crime and Insecurity are currently among the main problems in the political debates in both Chile and Sweden. Crime can of course be described as a threat for both individual well-being and the sustainability of our societies. It is often argued, not least in the media, that crime is increasing rapidly. We can also find claims that crimes committed by immigrants are making our societies more insecure than before. There are also political dynamics in both countries that make the crime issue more salient, not least during election years. Last but not least, the relationship between crime and social inequalities have been stressed in several studies. This workshop aims to describe and discuss current trends in Crime and Reactions to crime in two very different societies. We aim to explore the availability of comparative data in our countries and analyse historical and current trends as far as possible. Obviously, we expect many differences in crime trends, the reactions the state chooses to enact and the political climate between a social-democratic welfare state (Sweden) and a neo-liberal state (Chile). But perhaps there also exist unexpected similarities that need to be understood?

There are several possible ways to develop future collaborations beyond the forum. One obvious would be to use this Workshop as a starting point for a more ambitious comparative research project on "Crime as a Social Problem in the North and the South". Such a collaborative project could for example analyse different crime trends by crime type and by sociodemographic groups (Gender; Age; Immigrants/Native; Rich/Poor), in how the so-called "punitive turn" in crime policy materialises in our different societies, and how media and politics make use of the crime problem to mobilise emotions. All these are issues that Felipe Estrada has worked with extensively during his career in Sweden. There also could be, in addition, a comparative approach on alternative responses to crime, such as problem solving courts or restorative justice.

A comparative project characterised as "a most different case" as this one has the potential to contribute to both current theories on crime trends and research on how crime policy is connected to developments in media and populist political campaigns.

### ***Expected outcomes***

The workshop can of course also be a hub for sociologist, political scientist, criminologist and others interested in Crime as a Social Problem to meet and develop ideas and collaborations regarding university courses at master/phd level, panels at international conferences, visits to each other's departments and to co-write scientific articles.

**Possible site-visits**

Attend hearing sessions such as "audiencias de control de detención" in a lower criminal court in either Santiago or Punta Arenas, or hearing sessions in a drug treatment court in Santiago.

**Planned activities**

## Session 1: Introduction

- Round table: short presentations of all participants
- KNS 1-2 Crime and Reactions in Chile/Sweden
- Research presentations participants divided in themes

## Session 2: Identify urgent issues

- Small groups 1: common interest? Similarities/differences in Crime and Reaction
- Presentation small group
- Small groups 2: Data and research methods for comparative work
- General discussion comparative data

## Session 3: The Future

- Round table: written and oral reflections.
- Final general discussion on future of WS

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