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Imprisonment and penal theory
An empirical analysis of Sweden 1965–2018

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Expansion and contraction of penal law legislation in Sweden 1965–2018

	General prevention		Individual prevention		Just deserts		Symbolic legislation	
	+	–	+	–	+	–	+	–
<i>1965-1987</i>	14	5	–	9	3	3	1	–
<i>1988-2018</i>	26	0	2	6	16	1	5	–

<i>1965-2018</i>	40	5	2	15	20	4	6	–

Sentencing principles in Sweden 1965 – 1988 and 1989 -

1965 – 1988: "In the choice of sanctions, the court, with an eye to what is required to maintain general obedience to the law, shall keep particularly in mind that the sanction shall serve to foster the sentenced offender's rehabilitation in society."

1989-: "Penalties shall be decided with regard to the desirability of uniform and consistent adjudication and set within the scale of punishment applicable to the culpability of the offence taken as a whole."

Expansion of penal law justified by just deserts or symbolic legislation in Sweden, by type of crime, 1965-2018

Violent and sex crimes

1983/84:105
1992/93:141
1993/94:101
1996/97:135
1997/98: 55
1997/98: 55
2008/09:118
2009/10: 50
2009/10:147
2010/11: 77
2012/13:108
2012/13:111
2013/14:194
2016/17:108
2016/17:214
2017/18:177

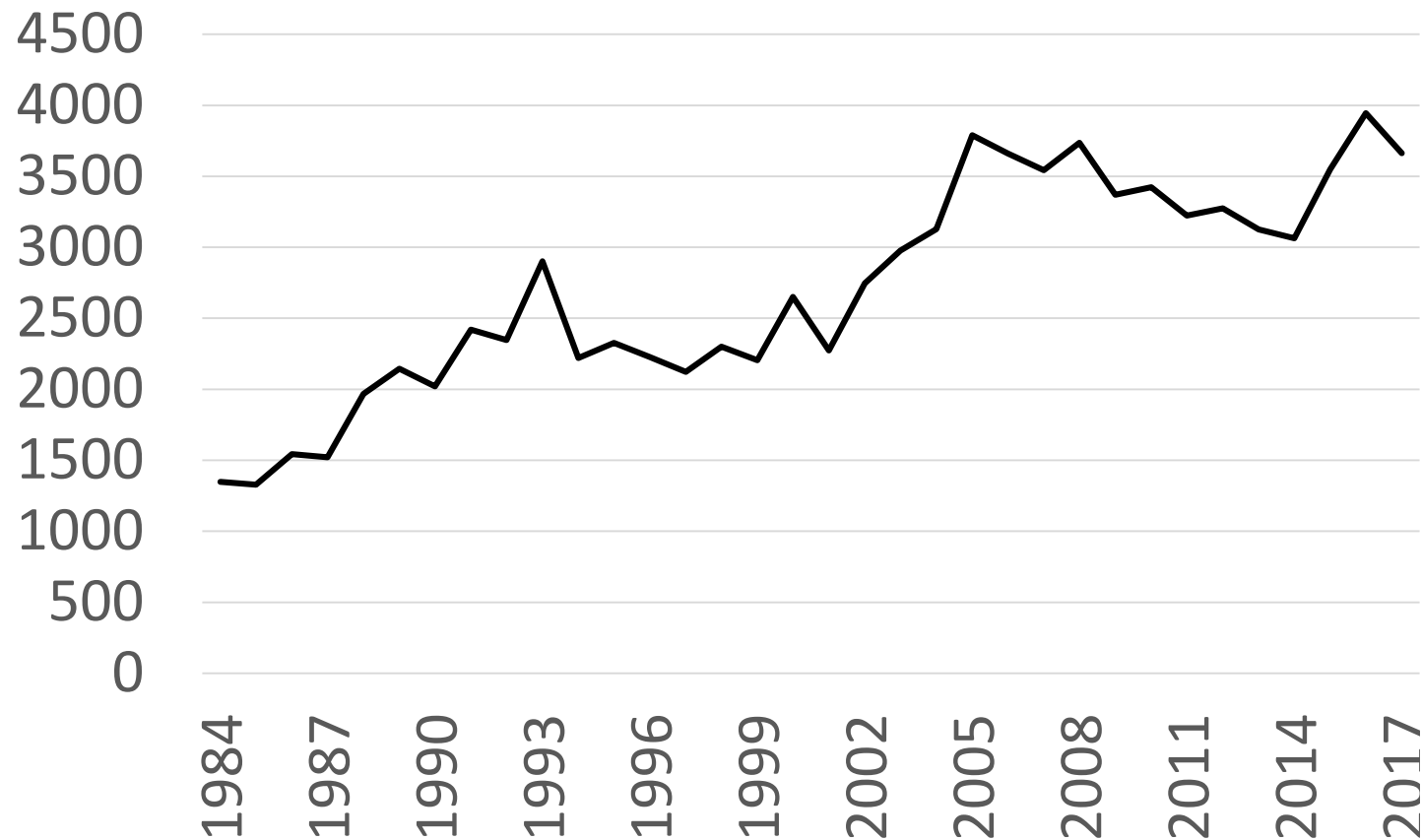
Drug crimes

1980/81: 76
1982/83:141
1984/85: 46
1987/88: 71
1992/93:142
2015/16:111

Other crimes

1987/88:120
2007/08: 97
2013/14:226
2015/16:151

Number of years of imprisonment meted out by courts involving violent, threat or sex crimes in Sweden 1984-2017 (excl. life imprisonment and psychiatric treatment)



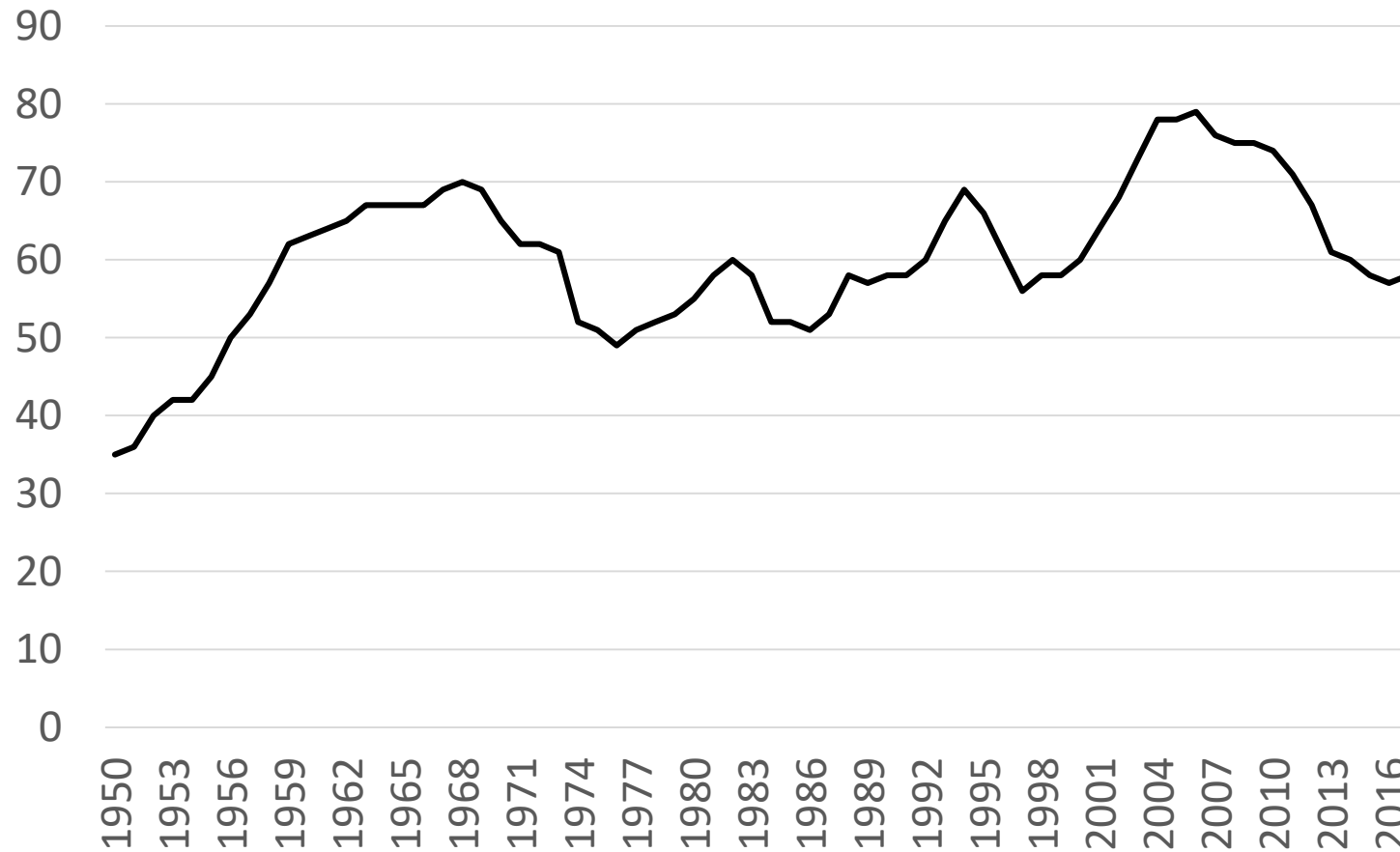
Expansion and contraction of penal law legislation in Sweden 1965–2018 by type of government

Government + -

1968-1976 Social democratic	1968:7 Drugs 1969:13 Drugs 1971:10 Tax fraud 1971:92 Aircraft high jacking 1972:67 Drugs 1973:37 Terrorism 1973:115 Temporary arrest 1975/76:82 Debt crimes	1970:125 Pornography 1972:138 Military arrest 1972:138 Death penalty in war 1972:146 Prison term 1974:20 Prison regime 1974:70 Abortion 1975/76:42 Theft and robbery 1975/76:42 Recidivism 1975/76:113 Drunkenness
1976-1982 Center right	1978/79:62 Prison regime 1979/80:66 Receiving 1979/80:100 Gambling 1980/81:76 Drugs 1980/81:108 Environment. crime 1981/82:43 Women battering 1981/82:85 Economic crime 1981/82:141 Drugs in prison 1981/82:142 Economic crime 1981/82:187 Pornography	1976/77:104 Conversion of fines 1978/79:212 Youth prison 1980/81:1 Prison regime 1980/81:44 Prison two weeks 1980/81:76 Internment 1981/82:153 Parole
1982-1991 Social democratic	1982/83:141 Drugs 1983/84:105 Sex crimes 1983/84:148 Prison regime 1984/85:46 Drugs 1984/85:116 Pornography 1987/88:71 Drugs 1987/88:120 Recidivism 1987/88:137 Women battering	1982/83:85 Half time parole 1982/83:93 Conversion of fines 1986/87:106 Contract treatment 1989/90:2 Drink-driving 1989/90:7 Community service
1991-1994 Center right	1991/92:35 Sex with children 1992/93:4 Parole 1992/93:141 Assault, threats etc. 1992/93:142 Consump. of drugs 1993/94:44 Drink-driving 1993/94:101 Hate crimes	1991/92:109 Community service 1993/94:184 Electron. supervision
1994-2006 Social democratic	1996/97:135 Witness threats etc. 1997/98:55 Abuse of women 1997/98:55 Buying sex 1997/98:96 Parole 1998/99:43 Drugs while driving 1999/00:108 Insider trading 1999/00:124 Smuggling 2001/02:124 Trafficking, sex. 2002/03:138 Graffiti 2004/05:45 Rape 2005/06:177 Special powers	2001/02:126 Restorative justice 2004/05:34 Electr. supervision
2016-2014 Centre right	2007/08:53 Drink-driving 2007/08:97 Mentally ill 2007/08:163 Special powers 2008/09:118 Murder 2008/09:149 Grooming 2009/10:50 Statute of limitation 2009/10:70 Child pornography 2009/10:105 Drug test, children 2009/10:147 Violent crimes 2009/10:152 Trafficking 2010/11:45 Stalking 2010/11:77 Buying sex 2011/12:79 Bribes 2011/12:109 Guns 2012/13:69 Intrusive photography 2012/13:108 Abuse of women 2012/13:111 Rape 2013/14:120 Hiding one's child 2013/14:121 Insider trading 2013/14:194 Murder 2013/14:226 Guns	2009/10:191 Criminal records
2014-2017 Social democratic/ Green party	2015/16:78 Terrorism 2015/16:50 Theft of identity 2015/16:111 Drugs 2015/16:113 Organized crime 2015/16:151 Recidivism 2016/17:92 Explosives 2016/17:108 Violent crimes 2016/17:214 Grooming 2016/17:222 Personal integrity 2017/18:26 Explosives 2017/18:59 Hate-crime 2017/18:81 Protective order 2017/18:123 Trafficking 2017/18:177 Rape	2014/15:37 Penalty reduction

Imprisonment in Sweden 1950-2017

Per 100 000 inhabitants



Proportion of years of imprisonment meted out by courts involving violence, threats or sex crimes of all crimes in Sweden 1984-2017. (%)
(excl. life imprisonment and psychiatric treatment)

