

Review

Juvenile crime – the most criminal children and youth

Background and objectives:

- The aim of this report is to show how the most criminal children and youth between the ages of 10 and 17 differentiate from other children and youth.
- The report is based on analyses of what characterises the most criminal children and youth compared to others and touches on the characteristics of the type of crime committed, the minors themselves, their schooling, their family etc.

Research design:

- The report is based on register data supplemented with characteristics of both individual and family circumstances. The analysis is based on minors born in 1996.
- The report contains both a descriptive analysis and a regression analysis.
- The children and youth are separated into four categories: law-abiding, small-scale criminals, serious criminals and the most criminal children and youth. This is done on the basis of the severity and frequency of the crime.

Findings:

- The most criminal children and youth make up 1 per cent of those born in 1996 and 7 per cent of those charged with an offence. They are responsible for about one third of the crime.
- The most criminal children and youth are charged with 13.2 cases each on average.
- 65 per cent of the most criminal children and youth are suspected of/ charged with violence, while 38 per cent are suspected of/ charged with robbery.
- The large cities are overrepresented as crime scenes.
- The share of those who have received one or more unconditional sentences is largest in the most criminal group compared to the other groups.
- More than nine out of ten of the most criminal children and youth are boys.
- Of the most criminal children and youth immigrants and descendants account for a larger share than the other groups.
- The share of those who lived in a SUB area¹ in 2014 is highest for the most criminal children and youth.
- The most criminal children and youth had a more unstable schooling and a large share did not finish the 9th grade (primary school) or started a youth education or other schooling.
- About half of the parents of the most criminal children and youth are unemployed.
- A larger share of the parents of the most criminal children and youth have been in contact with psychiatric services or have received an unconditional sentence compared to the parents of the other groups of children and youth.
- When checking for various factors there is still a correlation between the risk of being in the group of the most criminal children and youth and gender, housing situation, ethnicity, schooling, level of education, contact with psychiatric services, crime committed by siblings, substance abuse of parents, parents receiving an unconditional sentence and the age of the mother.

¹ Housing area at particular risk (Særligt Udsat Boligområde)