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Presentation title: Homicide by firearms and other means in Sweden and other European countries - Rates and trends since the turn of millennium

The Swedish government has instructed the National Council for Crime Prevention to analyze recent trends and rates in homicide in Sweden in comparison to other European countries, with a main focus on cases involving firearms. The background to the study is an increasing number of cases of firearm-related violence with lethal (as well as non-lethal) outcomes in Sweden, which are concentrated among young men in socially deprived areas. The analyses are primarily based on cause of death statistics collected by Eurostat and the WHO, for the period from 2000 and for as long data is available. For both firearm-related and other homicides, the results show a clear downward trend in almost all of the 23 countries studied, together with an increasing degree of convergence, as a result of the sharpest decreases being found in countries with high homicide levels at the beginning of the period examined. Some countries have experienced substantial variations from year to year, but Sweden emerges as an outlier, being the only country in which an increase in firearm homicides can be observed since 2005, with a particular surge since 2013, following a period of decline. Today, Sweden has the highest rate of firearm homicides in Europe and lies above the European average for homicide in general. In Sweden, the victims of firearm homicide are mainly men aged 20-29, and 8 of 10 lethal shootings take place in the criminal milieu.