

Rounding Up Suspects in the Rise of Danish Burglary

A Statistical Analysis of the 2008/09 Increase in Residential Break-ins

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The views expressed in this report are those of the author, and are not necessarily shared by the Danish Crime Prevention Council or the Ministry of Justice.

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Summary | i |
| Section 1. Introduction | 1 |
| Burglary in Denmark..... | 2 |
| Political reactions to the rise in burglary..... | 3 |
| Sources of Data | 4 |
| Causal Explanations Examined | 5 |
| A Road Map | 6 |
| Section 2. Trends | 7 |
| Detailing the Rise by Type of Property and Administrative Region..... | 7 |
| Type of property | 7 |
| Administrative region..... | 8 |
| Trends in Burglary Compared to Overall Property Crime | 9 |
| Trends in other forms of burglary | 9 |
| Trends in residential burglary versus overall property crime..... | 11 |
| Does the Danish Burglary Rise Reflect an International Phenomenon? | 13 |
| EU trends..... | 13 |
| Nordic trends | 14 |
| Conclusion..... | 17 |
| Section 3. Explanations | 18 |
| Reporting and Recording..... | 18 |
| No evidence for an increase in the proclivity to report | 18 |
| An increase in average financial loss could have increased the tendency to report | 19 |
| No change in the proportion of attempts | 19 |
| No change in the ease of reporting for burglary | 20 |
| No problems with or changes in POLSAS or the way burglary data are archived..... | 20 |
| Socioeconomics: Age, Drugs, and Economic Trends | 20 |
| Age demographics | 20 |
| Drug use | 22 |
| Economic trends | 23 |
| Increasing Professionalism..... | 25 |
| Items stolen as a measure of increasing professionalism | 26 |
| Repeat burglary victimization | 29 |
| Burglaries cleared by citation..... | 30 |

| | |
|---|----|
| Average age of burglars | 31 |
| Lambda and co-offending: Average crimes per person and average persons per crime..... | 32 |
| Crime Tourism | 33 |
| The growth of crime tourism | 34 |
| Nationality of crime tourists | 35 |
| Evidence against crime tourism as a major explanation of the rise in burglary..... | 36 |
| Increasing lambda is not only due to crime tourists..... | 39 |
| The Police Reform of 2007 | 42 |
| Conclusion | 45 |
| Section 4. Conclusion | 47 |
| References..... | 50 |
| | |
| Appendix..... | 54 |
| About the Author | 58 |

Summary

During the 18-year period 1990 to 2007, the number of reported residential burglaries (*indbrud i beboelse*) was very stable. This changed in 2008 to 2010, when burglary increased by 30% (averaged over these three years) as compared to the previous 18-year average. Seen in its most extreme light, the number of reported burglaries in 2009 was 65.3% higher than in 2005. Little solid evidence exists as to *why* residential burglary increased so dramatically in 2008 and 2009. The current report examines this question using POLSAS data on 234,745 residential burglaries reported in Denmark during the six-year period 2005-2010, plus data on long term crime trends (1990-2010) and other social indicators.

The report begins with a comparison of the rise in burglary to trends in overall Danish property crime. This reveals that the increase in burglary is far greater than that for any other major crime category. Burglary is therefore unique in this regard. Trends in Danish burglary are then compared to burglary trends in the EU and other Nordic countries to see if Denmark's increase is part of a wider EU/Nordic phenomenon. The EU countries worst hit by the economic recession of 2008 experienced the sharpest increases in burglary. Denmark shares little in common with these countries, but shares much in common with Sweden, which also experienced a (far more modest) rise in burglary. In sum, domestic and international trend analyses reveal that the increase in Danish burglary probably has multiple causes emanating from both within and outside Denmark.

The report examines whether any of the following factors may have contributed to the rise in Danish burglary:

- Changes in public reporting tendencies and police recording practices
- Population age, drug use and economic recession
- Increasing professionalism
- Crime tourism
- The Police Reform of 2007

The results are as follows:

- **Reporting/Recording:** The report finds no evidence of increased reporting tendencies other than the fact that victim loss per burglary has increased, which all else equal should increase the likelihood of reporting. There have been no changes in police recording practices or in the ease with which burglary can be reported to police. There is, therefore, no reason to believe that the increase in reported burglary stems from a simple change in the way in which it is reported or recorded by police.
- **Age/Drugs/Economy:** There has been a small increase in the proportion of the Danish population in the peak crime ages (16-25), as well as increases in the use

of cocaine and amphetamines. The economic crisis of 2008/9 increased unemployment, which created financial hardship especially for young adults. All of these factors may have contributed to the increase in burglary, but none are likely to have caused it on their own.

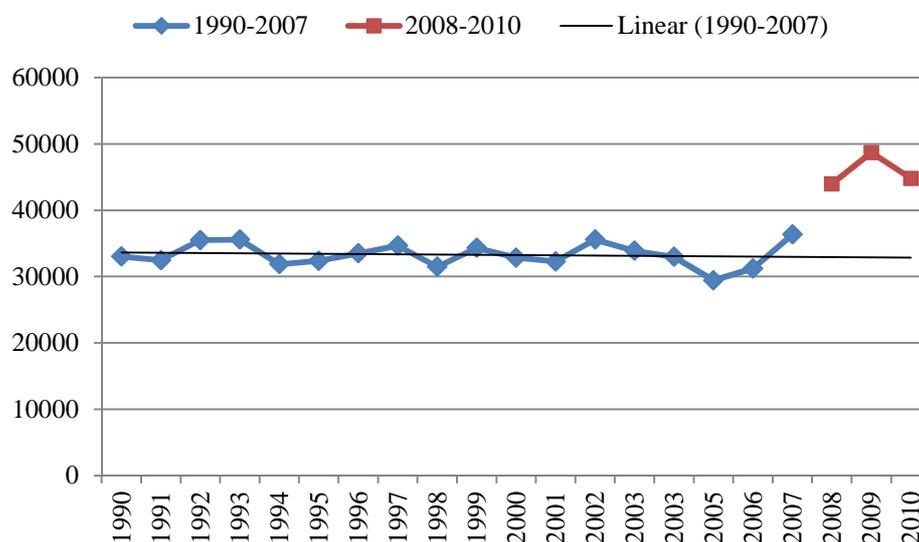
- **Professionalism:** Increased professionalism is likely to manifest itself in greater efficiency and greater productivity, i.e., more burglaries. There is evidence that burglars are becoming more professional in Denmark. This evidence includes an increase in the theft of expensive designer furniture (which requires trucks to transport), an increase in repeat victimization at the same households, and an increase in the average number of charged crimes per offender.
- **Crime Tourism:** While there has been a significant increase in crime tourism, i.e., burglaries committed by persons who have their legal residence outside of Denmark, it seems unlikely to explain the increase in burglary on its own. This is because the overall raw number of burglaries estimated as attributable to crime tourists is simply too low. Furthermore, part of the apparent increase in crime tourism may reflect an increased focus on the part of the police. This said, crime tourism does seem to be growing, and crime tourists have a higher crime frequency per person (as measured via average number of charges) than Danish residents and tend to operate in larger co-offending groups. The average number of charged crimes per offender is also increasing among Danish residents. Only 6.5% of all cases result in charges against one or more offenders. The figures on crime tourism are based on this minority of apprehended offenders and therefore must be interpreted with caution.
- **Police Reform:** Distractions caused by the Police Reform of 2007 are likely to have temporarily reduced police performance resulting in decreases in clearance rates (*sigtelsesrater*). Decreased clearance may have contributed to the rise in burglary via its negative effects on incapacitation.

The influx of crime tourism and distractions caused by the Police Reform are likely to have had the most influence amongst the factors listed above. This said, the evidence for their involvement is not especially compelling. There may be other factors far more important that have not been considered in this report. One factor completely missing from this report is the possibility that changes in police tactics (i.e., use/disuse of Top Ten lists, DNA, etc.) influenced the rise. Any future investigations of the 2008/9 rise in residential burglary should consider this.

Section 1. Introduction

During the 18-year period 1990 to 2007, the number of reported residential burglaries (hereafter burglaries¹) was very stable – never differing by more than 12% of its mean. This changed in 2008 to 2010, when the number of burglaries (averaged across these three years) increased by a whopping 30% as compared to the previous 18-year average.² Seen in its most extreme light, the number of reported burglaries in 2009 was 65.3% higher than in 2005. While burglary declined somewhat in 2010, it still remained far higher than earlier levels. These patterns are shown in Figure 1.1. Data for the first three quarters of 2011 (not shown) are stable as compared to the first three quarters of 2010. Whatever caused residential burglary to rise has therefore not yet completely abated. Burglary remains at far higher levels than most of the previous two decades.

Figure 1.1. Number of residential burglaries, Denmark 1990-2010



N=736,604. Raw data are in Appendix Table A1.

Source: Statistics Denmark

Little solid evidence exists as to *why* residential burglary increased so dramatically in 2008 and 2009. The current report examines this question using POLSAS data on 234,745 residential burglaries reported in Denmark during the six-year period 2005-2010, plus data on long term crime trends (1990-2010) and other social indicators.

¹ Unless specifically stated, the term “burglary” is used in this paper to refer to residential burglary (*indbrud i beboelse*). Likewise, the term “year” refers to the year in which the burglaries were reported to police.

² Any description of a percent increase is directly dependent on the years for which it is calculated. The 30% figure mentioned above is based on the average number of burglaries in 2008 to 2010 (three-year average (45,811) as compared to the average number in 1990-2007 (18-year average=33,287). If instead one calculates the increase from the lowest year (2005; n=29,439) to the highest (2009; n=48,670), the increase derived is 65.3%. If the increase is calculated as a comparison of the two-year mean for 2005/6 (two-year average=30,321) as compared to 2008/9 (two-year average=46,322), the increase is 52.8%. No matter the measure, the increase in question is exceptionally large.

The report begins with a description of burglary in Denmark followed by an examination of domestic and international trends designed to determine whether the Danish increase was unique or part of a broader Nordic/European phenomenon. Finally, it looks at a series of possible explanations - including changes in reporting levels, age demographics, drug use, economic factors, professionalism, crime tourism, and police performance – and considers their relevance for the increase.

Burglary in Denmark

Comparative international statistics placed Denmark very high on the list of countries plagued by burglary even before the current rise began. Figure 1.2 shows the most recent International Crime Victim Survey (ICVS) data on burglaries internationally, and indicates that Denmark ranked surprisingly high on an international scale in 2003/4 (van Dijk et al. 2007: 65). In 2004/5, 2.7% of Danish survey respondents reported having experienced a burglary in their home at some point during the previous year. England was the only European country surpassing Denmark in this regard. Official police statistics on reported crimes paint the same picture. While generally considered inferior to survey data for international comparative purposes, police statistics ranked Denmark number one in Europe for rates of reported burglary (per 100,000 population) in 2003-6 (Aebi et al, 2010, p.52).³

In 2010, 44,788 residential burglaries were reported in Denmark. This amounted to 9.5% of all reported penal code offenses that year. Residential burglary is therefore a major volume crime, whose total proportion of all crime is surpassed only by bicycle theft (15.2%) and general theft (27.5%) (Statistics Denmark).⁴ More than two-thirds of all residential burglaries occurred in stand-alone houses (*villaer*) – an overrepresentation given the fact that stand-alone houses accounted for only 55% of all Danish residences in 2010. Not surprising, the greatest number of burglaries occurred in the Greater Copenhagen Area (*Region Hovedstaden*), though rates of burglary were surprisingly similar across regions when residential density is taken into consideration. Only 7.5% of the total cases resulted in charges against one or more suspects. Persons charged were overwhelmingly young and male. Insurance companies paid out almost one billion kroner (946,569,000 kr.) in burglary claims at an average of 23,043 kroner per claim (Forsikring & Pension 2011). Just under half of all burglaries involved the theft of computer

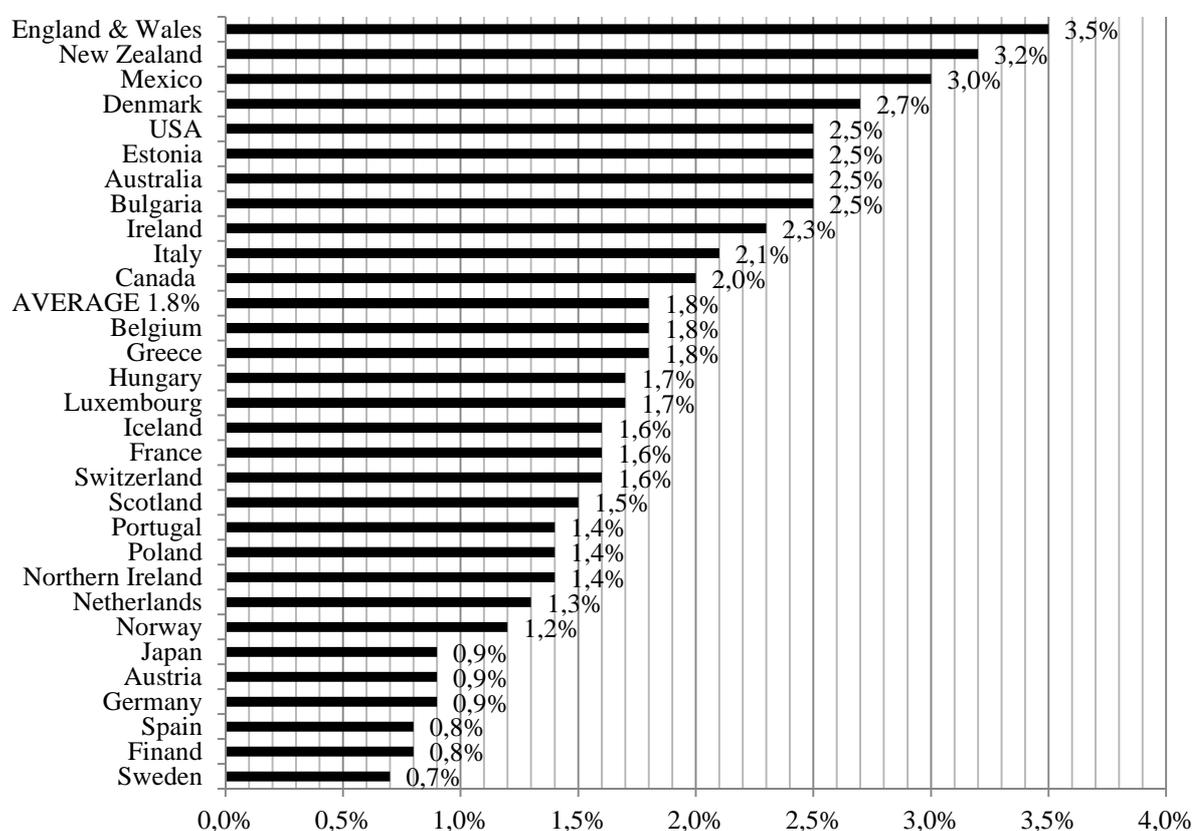
³ These data, which come from the European Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics, are reproduced in this report in Appendix Table A2. Official data on crimes reported to police are considered inferior to survey data for international ranking purposes due to cross-national differences in penal codes, public reporting tendencies, and police recording methods. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that in this case, the official statistics and survey data agree on Denmark's high rank.

⁴ In 2010, there were 71,736 thefts/use thefts of bicycles, and 129,410 "other thefts" – the latter of which is all thefts other than shoplifting and those directed against motor vehicles and bicycles. Combined, these two categories accounted for 42.7% of the 471,088 reported offenses against the penal code. Residential burglary accounted for 9.5% of all reported penal code offenses. The magnitude of this is underscored by the fact that all violent crime comprised only 3.8% of total penal code offenses, i.e., less than half the proportion of residential burglary.

equipment, jewelry and/or cash money. Meanwhile, nothing was stolen in the 13.5% of all residential burglaries that were classified as attempts in 2010.

Since most Danes have household insurance (*familieforsikring*), the financial consequences to the immediate victim are generally relatively minor. Research suggests, however, that the emotional costs of burglary can be intense. Almost two-thirds (65%) of British Crime Survey burglary victims report having been affected “very much” (37%) or “quite a lot” (28%) by the experience. The most common reactions are anger (70%), shock (44%), fear (34%) and difficulty sleeping (32%) (Budd, 1999: 66-67). One British study describes the emotional effects of burglary victimization as akin to those of robbery – despite the absence of victim-offender contact (Hough and Mayhew, 1985, as cited by Shover, 1991: 96).

Figure 1.2. Comparative international rates of burglary victimization (past year prevalence) 2003/4



Note: Percentages indicate the proportion of ICVS survey respondents who report having had a completed burglary (with entry) in their home during the 12 months before the survey.

Source: 1989-2005 International Crime Victims Survey (ICVS) and 2005 European Survey of Crime and Safety (EU ICS), as cited in van Dijk et al. (2007), Table 8, p.65

Political reactions to the rise in burglary

The rise in burglary in 2008/9 generated tremendous media coverage and alarmed politicians, law enforcement and the insurance industry. In March 2010, the Danish Crime Prevention Council (*Det Kriminalpræventive Råd*) held its annual conference

naming residential burglary as its theme. Police officials, criminologists, politicians and journalists, as well as others, were gathered there to discuss the rise in burglary, but no conclusions were reached regarding its cause. Less than a week later, on March 24, 2010, the Ministry of Justice issued a new “Burglary Package” (*Indbrudspakke*). This Burglary Package identified residential burglary as a top priority area for crime prevention in Denmark and outlined four broad avenues for action: target hardening; targeted policing; targeting of known burglars; and a crackdown on the sale of stolen property. It also established a special Burglary Task Force (*Indbrudsstab*) consisting of regional commissioners from the National Police (*Rigspolitiet*) to monitor trends and operational approaches to burglary. Theories concerning the possible influx of organized burglary gangs from outside Denmark have been the bases for two recent legal-political developments. The first is L209, a May 2011 proposal to double the length of prison sentences for home invasion robberies and increase sentences for organized burglary by 33% (Justitsministeriet 2011). The second is the controversial July 2011 decision to increase customs controls along the Danish border – though this decision was ultimately rescinded following the election of a new government in November 2011. Despite this flurry of activity, little if any solid evidence exists as to *why* residential burglary increased so dramatically in 2008 and 2009, and why it remains nearly so high in 2011.

Sources of Data

This report relies on three primary types of data:

- Long term trends (1990-2010) in burglary and other forms of crime during the 21-year period 1990-2010. These data are accessed from Statistics Denmark and its sister organizations in Sweden, Norway and Finland, as well as Eurostat. Comparative trend data are useful for determining whether the rise in burglary was unique to Denmark or part of a wider, international increase.
- POLSAS data on all 234,745 residential burglaries reported in Denmark during the six-year period 2005-2010. The POLSAS database, which was designed by the Danish National Police for case tracking and operational investigation, contains a rich collection of information on all reported crimes in Denmark (e.g., type of crime; location/address; date/time; items stolen; etc.), as well as on criminal suspects (age; gender; residency status; court decisions; etc.).⁵
- Other data (various years): Other data used in this report include comparative rates of criminal victimization (ICVS from the International Crime Victims Survey); trends in Danish drug use (SUSY data from the National Institute of Public Health/*Statens Institut for Folkesundhed*); economic indicators from various

⁵ I gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Detective Chief Inspector Ole L. Jacobsen of the GIS Office, National Center of Investigative Support, National Commissioner’s Office. Ole extracted the POLMAP data used in this report for me on 13 January 2011, and has generously given many hours of his time to explain its content.

sources including Statistics Denmark and the National Labour Force Survey (Arbejdskraftundersøgelsen) ; and industry data on insurance claims from Forsikring & Pension (*Insurance & Pension*), the national branch organization of the Danish insurance and pension industry.

Causal Explanations Examined

The sources above are used to consider whether any of the following factors might have contributed to the rise.

- **Reporting and Recording**

The fact that burglary increased so much and so quickly suggests the possibility that some kind of change occurred in the way burglary is reported or recorded. The report therefore looks for whether there is evidence of any of the following:

 - Reporting: An increase in public reporting tendencies (e.g., due to changes in insurance practices; the advent of crime reporting over the internet; or changes in burglary seriousness as measured via % attempts and the average amount claimed for insurance reimbursement per burglary)
 - Police Registration: A change in or problem with the police POLSAS database

- **Socioeconomics: Age, Drugs and Economic Trends**

While the following factors would be unlikely to be able to explain the entire rise in burglary on their own, each could play a role. All are classic factors known to affect crime rates over time (Blumstein and Wallman 2000):

 - Age demographics: An increase in the proportion of the population in the peak crime ages (16-24)
 - Drugs: An increase in the use of heroin, cocaine, or amphetamines, which are associated with criminal activity
 - Economics: Effects of the global financial crisis of 2008, including (a) creating a demand for low cost luxuries (e.g., flat screens at reduced prices) and (b) increasing burglary due to financial need, as evidenced by unemployment and the number of people receiving social assistance (*kontanthjælp*)

- **Increasing Professionalism**

The Danish Police have suggested that burglaries seem to be increasingly committed by “professionals.” If true – and assuming that professionals are more efficient and speedier than non-professionals – this could explain at least part of the rise in residential burglary. Evidence of increasing professionalism might include increases in:

 - The value of stolen goods
 - The frequency of repeat victimization
 - Average burglar age

- Lambda, or the average number of crimes each burglar commits
- Co-offending, or the average number burglars per burglary

- Crime Tourism
An influx of burglary gangs from outside Denmark. This is one of the primary theories voiced by the press, politicians, police and the public to explain the rise in burglary. This explanation is therefore given considerable focus in the current report.

- The Police Reform of 2007
A decrease in the deterrence and/or incapacitation of offenders due to disruptions caused by the police reform of 2007. Given the temporal correspondence of the police reform and the rise in burglary, this report pays considerable focus to the reform's potential significance for the burglary increase.

A Road Map

The remainder of this report proceeds as follows:

Section 2 examines the rise in burglary within the context of other domestic property crime and trends in international burglary.

Section 3 looks for evidence to support or dismiss the suspect causes laid out above.

Section 4 consists of a short conclusion and suggestions for future investigations.

Section 2. Trends

This section of the report begins by detailing the nature of the rise in residential burglary by property type and administrative region. It then compares the rise in burglary to trends in overall property crime in order to see whether the burglary increase is unique or simply part of a broader increase in property crime. After this, trends in Danish burglary are compared to burglary trends in the EU and in other Nordic countries to see if Denmark's increase may simply be part of a wider EU/Nordic phenomenon. This will help in determining whether the cause of the Danish increase should be sought within or outside Denmark's borders.

Detailing the Rise by Type of Property and Administrative Region

Type of property

Table 2.1 shows the number burglaries in stand-alone houses (*villaer*), farmhouses (*landsejendomme*), apartments (*lejligheder*) and rooms (either rented or in institutions) (*værelser*) during the 6-year period 2005-2010.⁶ The final column shows percent rise between 2005 and the peak in 2009. At the peak of the rise in 2009, burglaries at houses and apartments had grown by just under 64% and 63%, respectively, while burglaries at farms had risen by almost double that (111%). The rise was smallest in rooms (7.1%). But rooms make up an extremely small proportion of the total. Given the very small proportion of all burglaries that occur in rooms (1.3%), and the physical similarity of rooms to apartments, data for rooms and apartments are merged in this report.⁷ While the total number of house and apartment/room dwellings rose by approximately 4.4% in Denmark between 2005 and 2010, the total number of farmhouse dwellings declined by approximately 3.7% (extrapolated from Statistics Denmark BOL33). This makes the dramatic growth in burglaries at farmhouses even more remarkable.

Figure 2.1 provides a visual look at indexed growth in burglary by property type since 2000. While there is some minor fluctuation earlier in the series, major growth for all three types of property is evident in 2008 and 2009. Interestingly, all three types of property also show a drop in burglary in 2010.

⁶ This report excludes burglaries committed in storage areas such as sheds, garages, common stairwells, cellars and lofts that may be associated with these properties. Burglaries in these non-residential areas are excluded for two reasons. First, they are less serious in terms of psychological impact on victims, and thus constitute a less pressing public policy issue. Second, burglaries in these areas tend to differ from those committed in residential interiors in terms of characteristics of the crime (e.g., time of day, mode of entry, type of goods stolen), characteristics of the offender (e.g., offender age), and victim likelihood to report the crime to police (which is significantly lower).

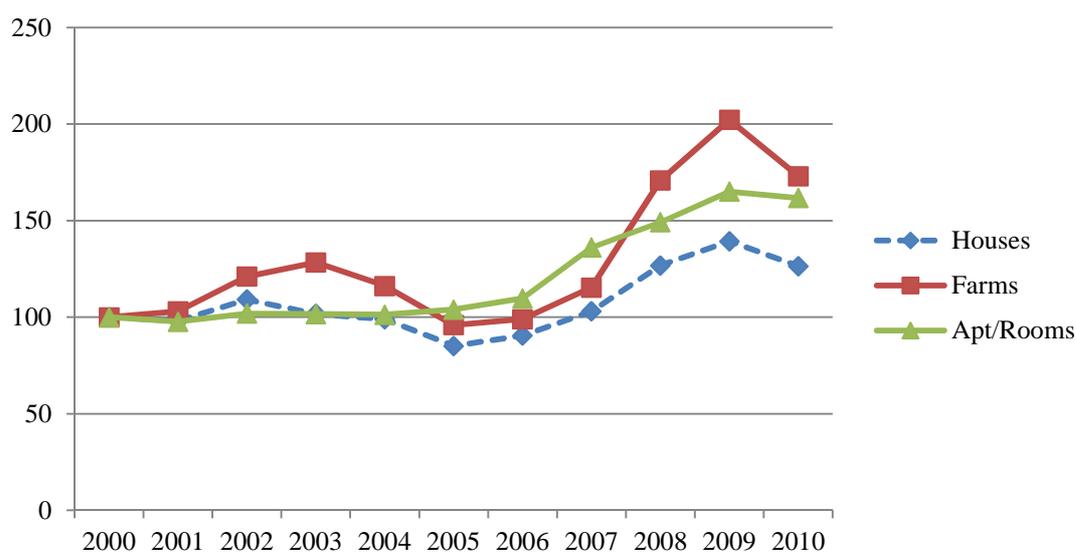
⁷ Rooms tend to be either rented rooms or rooms in residential communities, for example, university or inpatient housing. The decision to merge rooms with apartments is also based on the fact that, unlike other property types, rooms seem to suffer a small degree of police misclassification as to property type. I became aware of this during an analysis of repeat victimization when I noticed that a certain proportion of dwellings (i.e., unique residential units as characterized by street address, floor and apartment unit designation) were sometimes classified as apartments and other times as rooms. Given this, and the small overall number of rooms in the data, it makes good sense to merge these data with those for apartments.

Table 2.1. Number of burglary cases by type of property and year, 2005-2010

| | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | % rise 2005-9 |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------------|
| Houses | 20,549 | 21,860 | 24,890 | 30,625 | 33,659 | 30,532 | 63.8% |
| Apts | 6,623 | 7,088 | 8,854 | 9,741 | 10,789 | 10,722 | 62.9% |
| Rooms | 538 | 471 | 519 | 529 | 576 | 414 | 7.1% |
| Farms | 1,729 | 1,785 | 2,079 | 3,079 | 3,646 | 3,120 | 110.9% |
| Total | 29,439 | 31,204 | 36,342 | 43,974 | 48,670 | 44,788 | 65.3% |

Source: Statistics Denmark

Figure 2.1. Indexed rise in residential burglary by type of property, 2000-2010



Source: Statistics Denmark

Administrative region

The first two columns of numbers in Table 2.2 show the distribution of burglary across Denmark's five administrative regions during the period 2005-2010. The greatest proportion of burglaries occur in *Hovedstaden* (Greater Copenhagen, the region of the capital), which isn't surprising given the high population density in this part of the country. In terms of overall number of burglaries, *Hovedstaden* is followed by *Syddanmark* (Southern Denmark), *Midtjylland* (Central Jutland), *Sjælland* (Zealand), and finally *Nordjylland* (Northern Jutland). Interestingly, however, once corrected for population and household density, rates of burglary (i.e., per 1000 population and per 1000 households) by region are all relatively similar (Table 2.2). This means that differences in urbanicity, resident demographics, and police effectiveness have little influence on burglary rates across regions. Thus, while many people harbor the notion that urbanicity breeds criminality (due to anonymity, ghetto neighborhoods, etc.), rates of burglary in Greater Copenhagen (*Hovedstaden*) are only slightly higher than the national average. And they are slightly lower than those for (largely rural) *Region Sjælland*. The lowest rates of burglary are found in middle and northern Jutland, though only the latter is significantly lower than the national average.

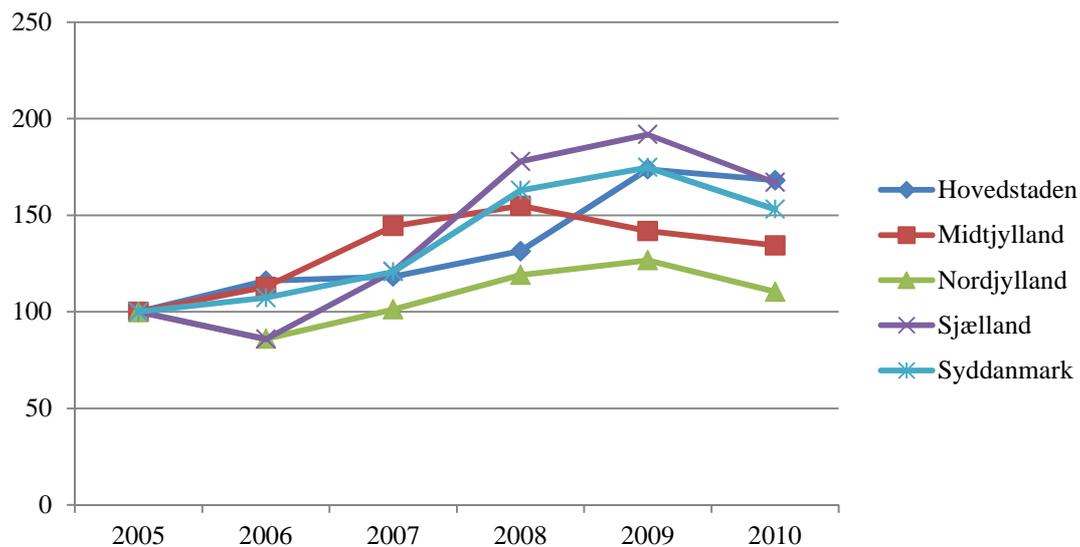
Table 2.2. Number and rates of residential burglaries by regions, 2005-2010 average

| | All burglary cases | | % of DK's | % of DK's | Burglary rate per | |
|-------------|--------------------|------|------------|------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| | n | % | population | Households | 1000 pop | Per 1000 Hshlds |
| Hovedstaden | 75,218 | 32% | 30% | 31% | 45.7 | 94.3 |
| Sjælland | 39,141 | 17% | 15% | 15% | 47.8 | 105.4 |
| Syddanmark | 51,549 | 22% | 22% | 22% | 43.1 | 93.7 |
| Midtjylland | 49,167 | 21% | 23% | 22% | 39.7 | 87.8 |
| Nordjylland | 19,524 | 8% | 11% | 11% | 33.7 | 72.6 |
| TOTAL | 234,599 | 100% | 100% | 100% | 42.8 | 92.1 |

Source: POLSAS

Figure 2.2 shows indexed trends in burglary by region since 2005. Rates of burglary have increased in all five regions, though the increase was greatest in Sjælland (92% in 2009) and least in North Jutland (27%). Note that, with one exception, all regions show the characteristic decline in burglary in 2010. The exception is Midtjylland, where the decline had already begun in 2009.

Figure 2.2. Rise in residential burglaries by administrative region, 2005-2010



Source: POLSAS

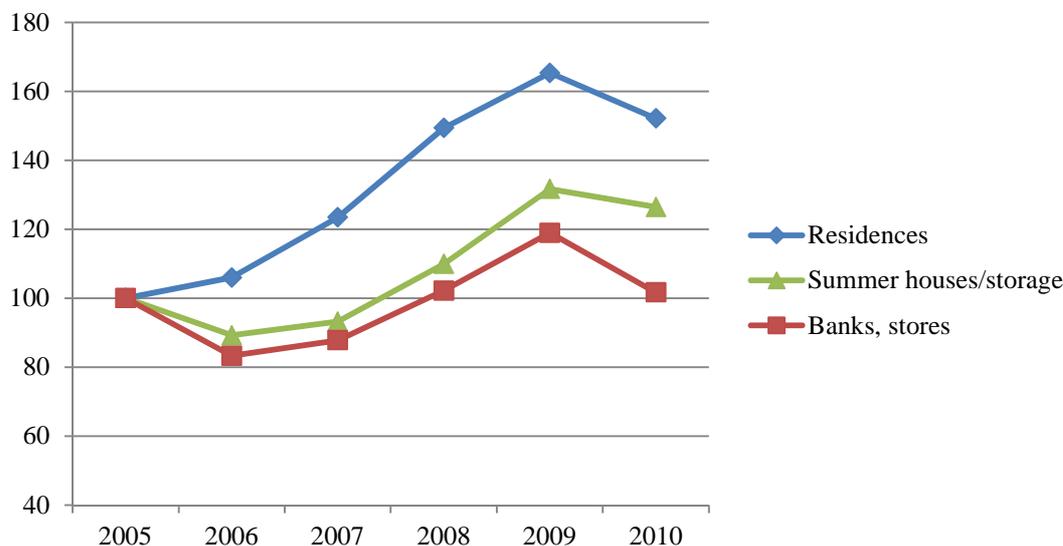
Trends in Burglary Compared to Overall Property Crime

Trends in other forms of burglary

Home residences were not the only type of property for which burglary rates increased in 2008/9. Figure 2.3 shows that between 2005 and 2009, burglary also increased in free time houses/residential storage (summer houses, garages, cellars, sheds, etc.) by 31.7%

and at businesses (banks/stores, etc.) by 19.0%.⁸ These increases were, however, far smaller than the 65.3% increase at residences.

Figure 2.3. Indexed trends in burglary at residences, businesses and holiday homes/storage, 2005-2010



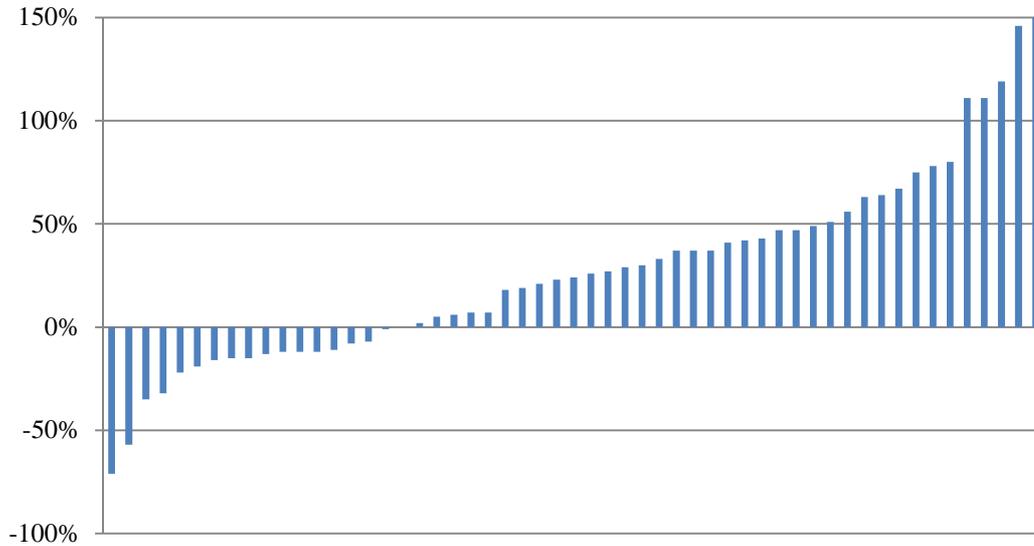
Source: Statistics Denmark

In fact, burglary increased in almost all forms of property. The Danish Police use numerical offense codes (*gerningskoder*) to distinguish burglary at 59 very specific types of property. Figure 2.4 shows that 37 of the 59 burglary types increased between 2005 and 2009 – five by well over 100%, eight by over 50%, fourteen by 25-49%, and ten by 1 to 24%. These are major increases. The fact that so many forms of burglary increased during the same period is interesting since it speaks against attributing the rise to factors that are generally only relevant in specific forms of property. For instance, an increased demand for stolen iPods (expensive mobile cellphones) should have no significance for burglary rates at optician shops (up 146%), watchmakers/goldsmiths (up 119%), or post offices (up 111%).

Of course many of the forms of burglary exhibited above in Figure 2.4 are very rare. Figure 2.5 provides the same statistics on the most frequent forms of burglary (i.e., all with more than 1,000 cases in 2010). Amongst these burglaries, all but three types increased and most of the increases were dramatic (i.e., over 25%). Apart from free time (holiday) houses and burglary at “other” locations, increases were biggest at residential farms, houses and apartments/rooms. The increase in residential burglary therefore stands out as compared to increases in other forms of burglary. Nonetheless, the fact that burglary rose, and rose so much, in so many types of non-residential property is intriguing.

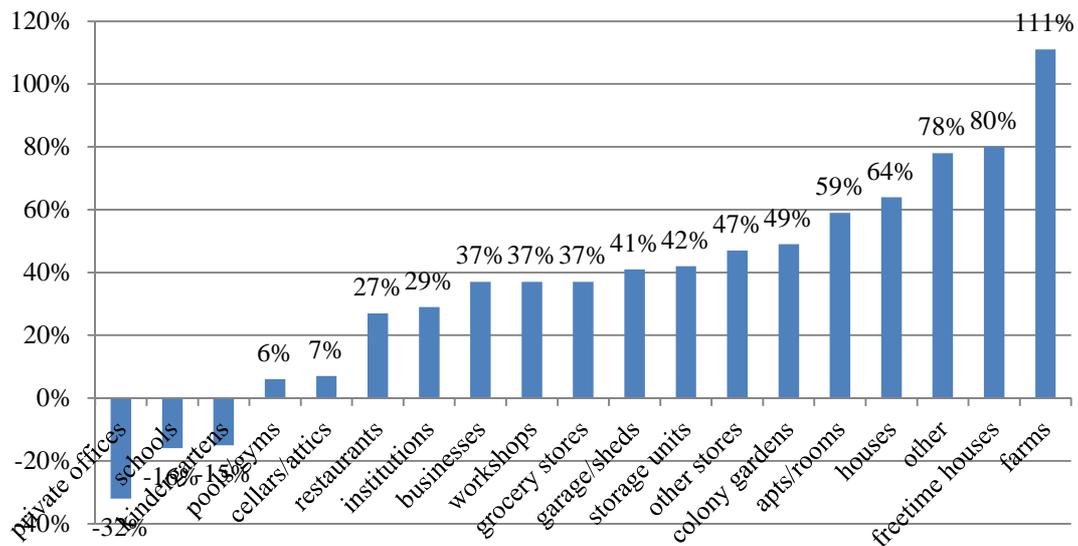
⁸ These are standard categories from Statistics Denmark: Residences (*Indbrud i villaer, lejligheder mv*); Free time houses/storage (*Indbrud i fritidshuse, garager mv*); Banks/stores (*Indbrud i bank, forretn. m.v.*). Raw data are available in Appendix Table A3.

Figure 2.4. Percent change in 59 types of burglary, 2005 to 2009



Source: Statistics Denmark

Figure 2.5. Percent change in 19 frequent types of burglary, 2005 to 2009



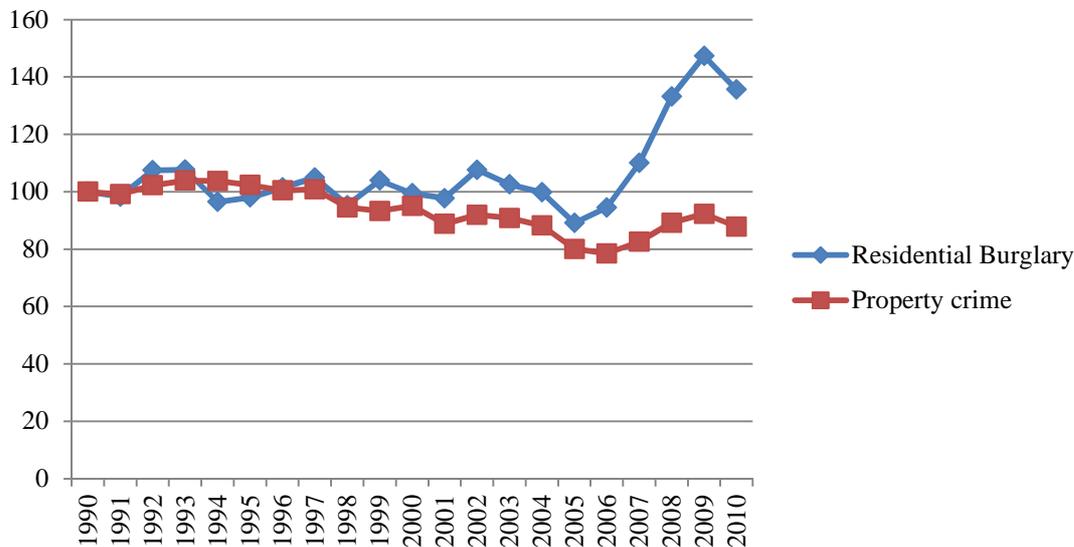
Source: Statistics Denmark

Trends in residential burglary versus overall property crime

Figure 2.6 shows indexed change in residential burglary as compared to overall property crime during the long term period 1990-2010 (raw data are in Appendix Table A1). The two trends almost overlap from 1990 until 1998, after which they separate slightly but follow each other fairly closely until a 2006. Suddenly, the two diverge in 2006, after which residential burglary skyrockets. At the peak for residential burglary in 2009, it had risen 47.4% above the index (1990=100) level while overall property crime (9.5% of which is comprised of residential burglary) had dropped 7.7% below the 1990 level.

Burglary clearly stands out as following a very different pattern from overall property crime.

Figure 2.6. Indexed trends in residential burglary and overall property crime, 1990-2010



Source: Statistics Denmark

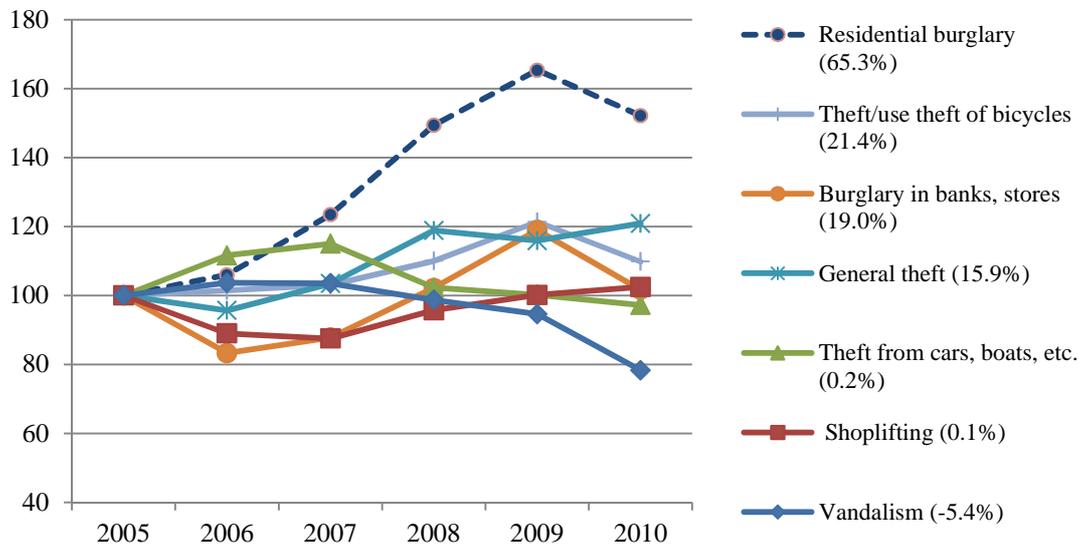
A look at trends in the specific types of crime that comprised overall property crime might help us to understand its divergence from burglary. Figure 2.7 shows indexed trends in the seven most frequent forms of property crime which collectively comprised 84.5% of all reported property crime in 2010 (raw data are in Appendix Table A4). General theft is the biggest crime category routinely reported by Statistics Denmark. This category comprises 29.2% of all property crime. The second biggest category is theft/use theft of bicycles, which comprises 16.2% of all property crime. Thus, these two categories alone account for almost half of all property crime (and by extension, almost half of all crime).⁹ The remaining five crime categories in Figure 2.7 each account for between 4.7% (shoplifting) and 10.1% (residential burglary) of all property crime. The percent rise (2005-9) in each crime category is given next to its name in the figure. While it is difficult to discern the different trends in the figure, one thing is clear: The 65.3% increase in residential burglary stands way above the rest – the next biggest increase being 21.4% for theft/use theft of bicycles.

In sum, between 2005 and 2009, residential burglary rose 65.3% while overall property crime (including burglary) rose only 15.3%. The clear message here is that the trend in residential burglary is unique. Overall property crime rose during this period, but

⁹ Interestingly, despite some ups and downs, general theft has risen on average since 1990 while theft/use theft of bicycles has generally fallen. Yet when these two mega categories of reported crime are combined in a single trend line, that combined trend appears flat (neither rising nor falling). This is due to the fact that the two opposing trends cancel each other out. Meanwhile, these two trends collectively account for almost half of what we call “the crime rate.” This goes to show the importance of disaggregating crime data.

residential burglary rose more than four times as much. Something unique was driving the rise in residential burglary.¹⁰

Figure 2.7. Indexed trends in “volume” property crime, 2005-2010



Source: Statistics Denmark

Does the Danish Burglary Rise Reflect an International Phenomenon?

Identifying the cause(s) of the Danish rise would be easier if we knew whether those causes are likely to originate within or outside Denmark. We can test this by looking at burglary trends in other nearby Nordic and European countries. If we see similar increases elsewhere, this would suggest that we look for causes on a cross-Nordic, European or international level. If, on the other hand, the increase appears unique to Denmark, we can focus our search within Danish borders. This section begins with an examination of European trends, after which it focuses in on our closest Nordic neighbors.

EU trends

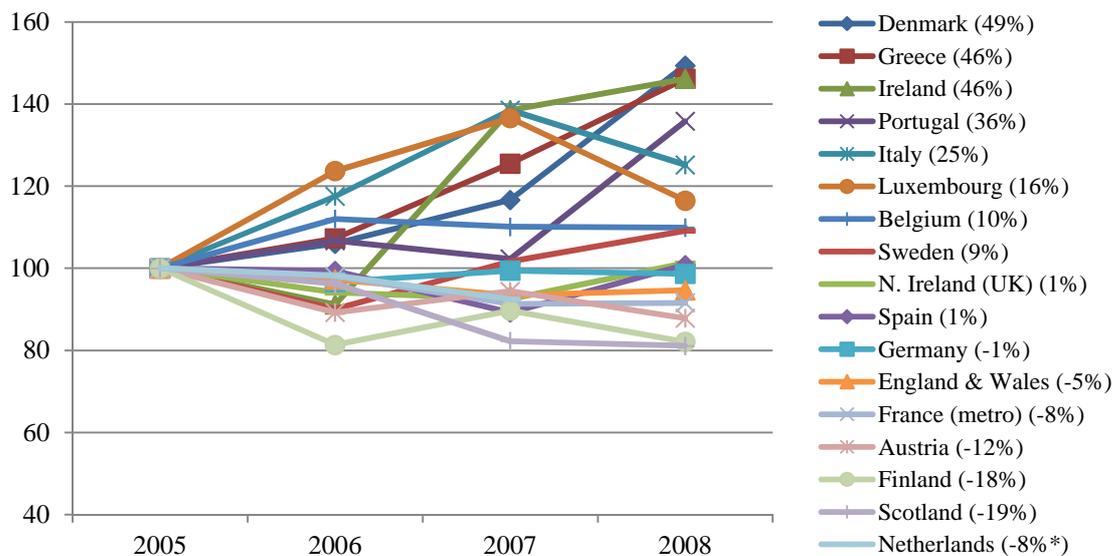
Figure 2.8 shows the relative (indexed) change in burglary in EU15 countries during the period 2005-2008.¹¹ The percent rise based on 2005/2008 differences is given next to each country's name in the right hand side of the figure. Here we can see that Denmark's increase (49%) was the largest of any country, and only Greece (46%), Ireland (46%)

¹⁰ While the 15.3% increase in reported property crime observed between 2005 and 2009 is minimal compared to that of burglary (65.3%), it contradicts trends observed for “theft” in victim survey data which indicate no change whatsoever during the same period (Balvig & Kyvsgaard 2010: Figure 3.3, page 16). Balvig & Kyvsgaard (2010: 16-17) offer several explanations for the discrepancy between their survey data and police reported crime, including: (1) surveys capture prevalence while police data capture number of incidents. Police data therefore fail to capture increases in repeat victimization; (2) Surveys fail to capture increases in the raw numbers of crimes due to simple population growth; (3) Surveys cover only private victims and will therefore fail to capture crimes displaced from private to public victims.

¹¹ As of July 2011, 2008 is the latest year for which data are available from Eurostat.

Portugal (36%) and Italy (25%) had increases anywhere near as big. Contrary to Denmark, all of these other countries were especially hard hit by the economic recession of the late 2000s, a fact discussed in more detail in Section 3. It is, however, unclear why Denmark lies among these countries - indeed, leads them - when it comes to increases in burglary. The potential economic link is weakened when one considers that there were other countries hit far harder by the economic crisis that experienced no rise in burglary, e.g., Spain. It is also notable that apart from Sweden (9%), the countries geographically closest to Denmark exhibit either stability (Germany -1%) or decline (Finland -18%) in residential break-ins.

Figure 2.8. Indexed trends in EU15 countries, 2005-2008



*The Netherlands has no data for 2008, but exhibited an 8% drop by 2007.

Source: EuroStat

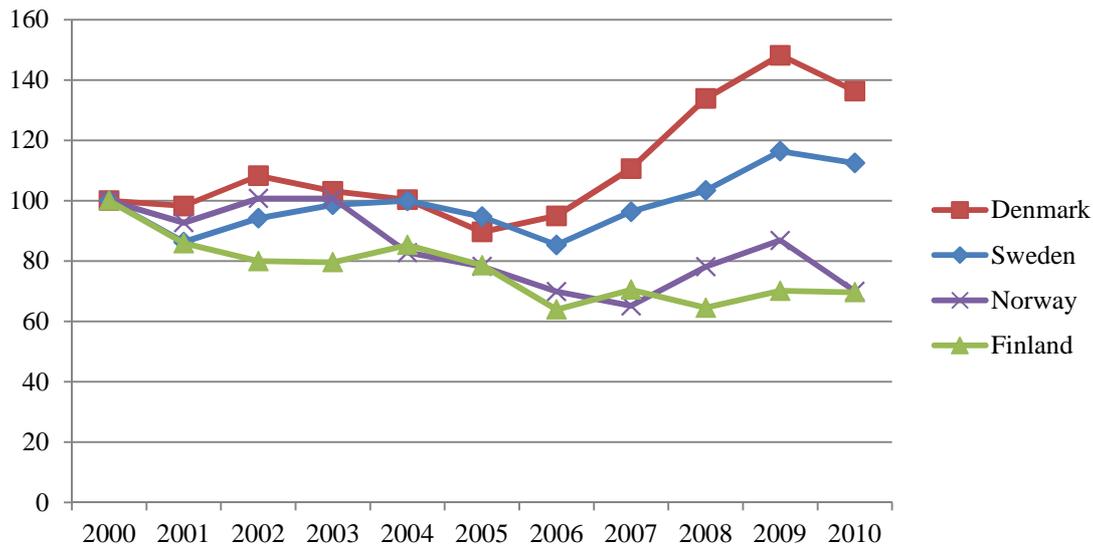
It is a shame that the Eurostat data lack information from 2009, which was a year of even more increase in Denmark and in Sweden (as shown momentarily). The trends shown in Figure 2.3 are certainly messy, and it is hard to discern any particular pattern in the jumble of criss-crossing lines. For our purposes, however, this mess is instructive, since it demonstrates the absence of any clear EU-wide increase in burglary rates. There is therefore no evidence that the cause of the Danish rise in burglary reflects a wider cohesive phenomenon on an EU level.

Nordic trends

A Nordic comparison is particularly instructive because of geographic proximity, cultural similarity, and the fact that full data through 2010 are available. Furthermore, since these Nordic countries share similar insurance and police practices, the public's likelihood of reporting burglary is probably more similar between them as compared to some other European locales.

Figure 2.9 shows indexed trends in residential burglary for four Nordic countries during the years 2000-2010. The increase in burglary is clearly biggest in Denmark, though there is a smaller increase in Sweden, and a very small increase toward the end of the series for Norway.¹² It is interesting to note that Figure 2.9 shows the upswing in burglary beginning in Denmark in 2006, in Sweden in 2007 and in Norway in 2008. This pattern could suggest a force moving across these countries reaching a little bit farther north each year.

Figure 2.9. Indexed trend in burglaries by Nordic country, 2000-2010



Source: Eurostat (2000-08) and national statistical archives (2000-10)

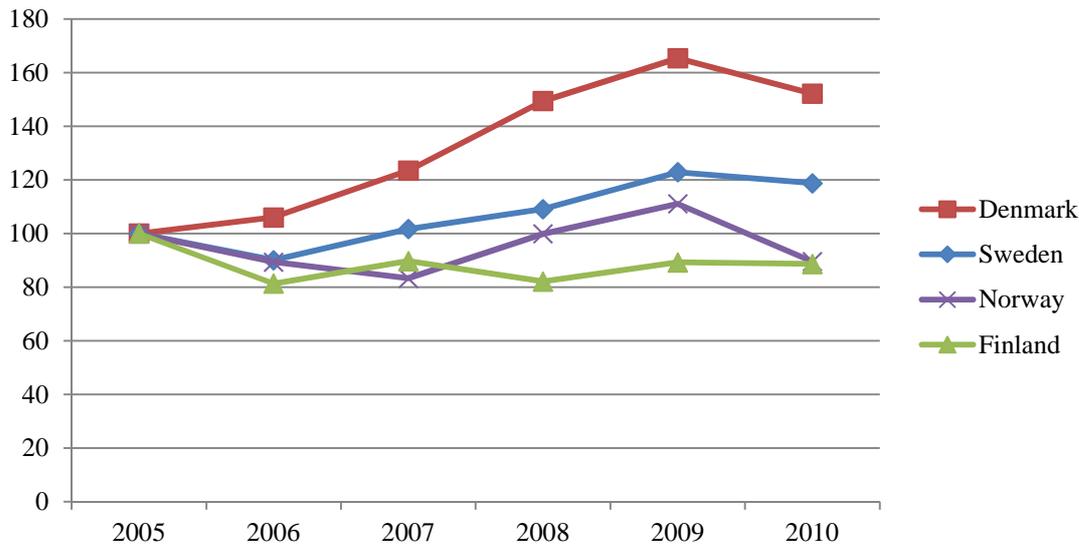
Figure 2.10 provides a short term look at indexed trends for our specific period of interest, 2005-2010. If we compare increases between 2005 and the peak values at 2009, then we can quantify them as follows: Denmark (65.3%); Sweden (22.9%); Norway (11.0%); and Finland (-10.8%). There has thus been a rise in Denmark, Sweden and Norway, and a drop in Finland.

Figure 2.11 provides the most detailed look at changes in absolute numbers of residential burglaries across different periods. Each of the four countries has seven “bars” of data – each of which show the number of burglaries per year during a given period. The first bar for Denmark indicates that there was an average of 33,287 burglaries per year during the 18-year period 1990-2007. The second bar for Denmark shows that the yearly average number of burglaries was very similar (33,062) during the 8-year period 2000-2007, but that it dropped to 29,439 burglaries in 2005. The average number of burglaries increased somewhat during 2005-2006 (due to an increase in 2006) and again in 2005-2007 (due to an increase in 2007). The number then shoots way up in 2008 and 2009 – a rise which constitutes the subject of this report.

¹² The raw data for Figure 2.9, and the penal code definitions upon which it is based, are provided in Appendix Tables A5 and A6.

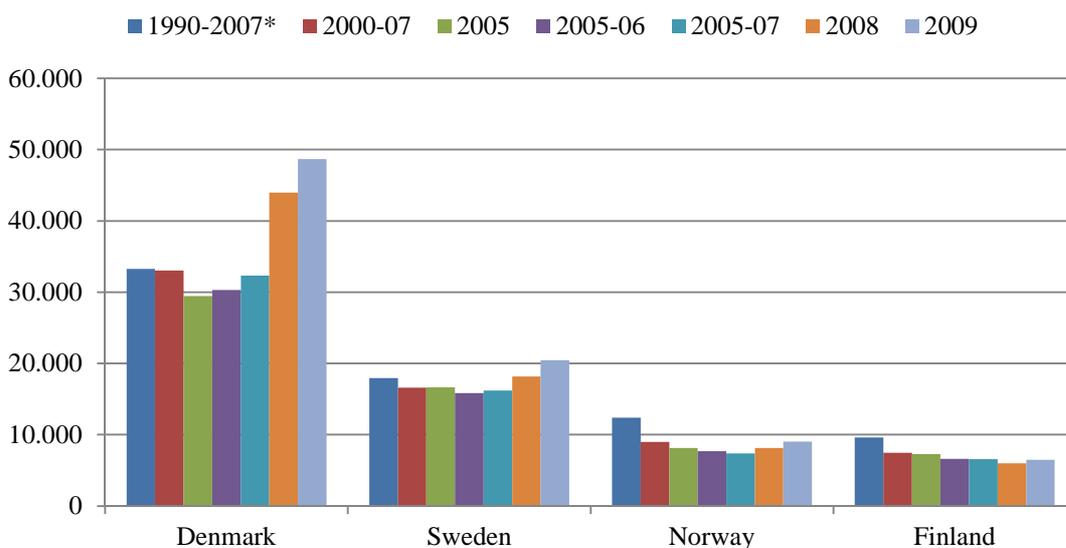
Looking at the data for the other Nordic countries one can see that, like Denmark, the number of burglaries in 2009 is significantly higher than at any of the earlier periods to which it is compared. This 2009 increase is, however, far less dramatic than the one seen in Denmark. Norway illustrates a very different pattern characterized by a steady decline in the number of burglaries from the earlier comparison periods right up until 2008. This decline is, however, followed by the familiar upswing 2008 and 2009. There is a tiny increase in Finnish burglary in 2009 (as compared to 2008). This said, Finnish patterns seem completely different from those in the other Nordic countries and do not suggest a similar increase in burglary.¹³

Figure 2.10. Indexed trend in burglaries by Nordic country, 2005-2010



Source: Eurostat (2005-08) and national statistical archives (2005-10)

Figure 2.11. Comparative levels of burglary averaged across seven different time periods in four Nordic countries, 1990-2009



* Data for Norway based on 1993-2010. Source: Eurostat and national statistical archives

¹³ Data for Figure 2.11 can be found in the Appendix Table A7.

Conclusion

The rise in residential burglary in Denmark was far bigger than increases in overall Danish property crime during the same period. This suggests that at least part of the rise in burglary is likely to be driven by factors other than those that caused the much more modest rise in property crime overall. Most of the countries worst hit by the economic recession in 2008 (though this does not include Denmark) experienced unusually sharp increases in burglary. Nonetheless, there is no evidence of a widespread European rise in burglary, though there has been an increase in Sweden that may well have overlapping causes with the increase in Denmark. A minor increase in Norway during the period 2005-2009 could be part of the same phenomenon or might be random fluctuation. The fact that burglary rates dropped in 2010 in all three countries suggests the possibility of a common cause. Alternatively, these contemporaneous declines may simply reflect overlap in the timing of Nordic law enforcement efforts to combat burglary. One thing is clear: The rise in Denmark is unique in terms of magnitude. Therefore, if there is some common connection between burglary trends in these countries, there must still be additional factors within Denmark that are aggravating the Danish situation. In other words, the Danish increase in burglary is likely to have causes both within and outside Denmark.

Section 3. Explanations

This section of the report examines whether any of the following factors may have influenced the rise in burglary:

- Reporting and recording
- Socioeconomics: Age, drug use and economic trends
- Increasing professionalism
- Crime tourism
- The Police Reform of 2007

Reporting and Recording

This report focuses on a rise in burglary seen in police data and assumes that these data reflect actual trends in criminal activity. This is probably a reasonable assumption when it comes to burglary given the high level of coverage by household insurance. But it should not be taken for granted. There are a number of factors that can cause reported crime to rise or fall quite independent of actual changes in criminal behavior. The most important of these factors include changes in the public's propensity to report crime, and changes in police registration practices. The fact that burglary increased so much and so quickly immediately suggests the possibility that some kind of change occurred in the way burglary is reported or recorded. However, an examination of the evidence suggests that this has not been the case.

No evidence for an increase in the proclivity to report

Household insurance (*familieforsikring*) covers losses incurred from burglary provided (a) that the crime is reported to police and (b) that the police register the crime as a *burglary* (as opposed to a *theft from a dwelling*).¹⁴ Household insurance policies generally have a deductible (*selvrisiko*), known as an “*excess*” in the United Kingdom, which is the portion of expenses that must be paid out by the insured before the insurance policy covers additional expenses. The deductible for Danish household insurance differs by company, but tends to run anywhere from 0 (no deductible) to 5000 DKK. According to Tenna Westergaard, a consultant at Forsikring & Pension (*Insurance & Pension*), there has been no change in the requirements surrounding police reporting and no significant change in the average deductible during the period covered by this report. Ms. Westergaard therefore states that she has no reason to think that changes in policies of the insurance branch have had any influence on the increase in reported burglary (Westergaard 2011). Recent victim survey research by Balvig & Kyvsgaard (2010: 17)

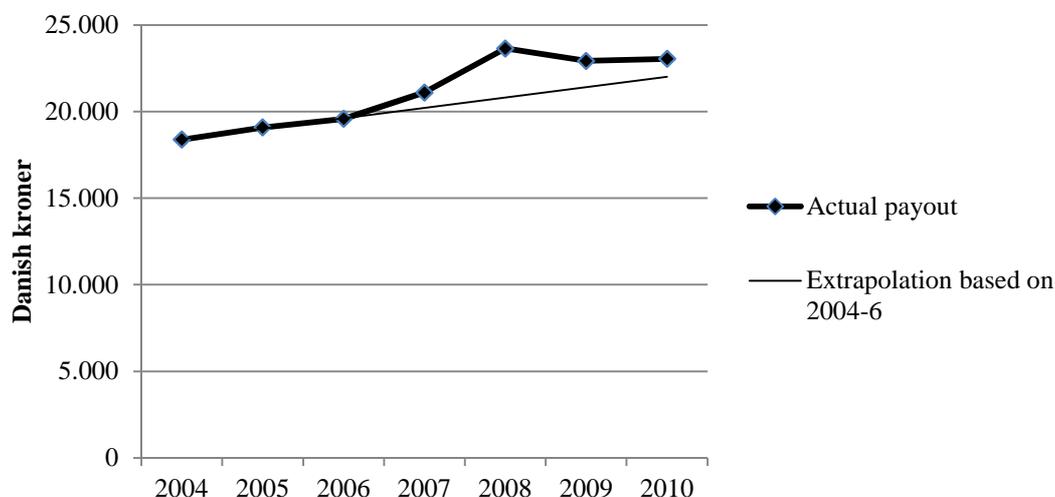
¹⁴ *Burglary* requires evidence of forced entry, whereas *theft from a dwelling* does not. *Theft from standalone houses/farmhouses* and *theft from apartments/rooms* both rose by 13.5% between 2005 and 2009 (Statistics Denmark). The increase in *theft from dwellings* is thus far closer to the overall increase in property crime (15.3%) than it is to the increase in residential burglary (65.3%).

would support that conclusion. They find no significant change in the public's general proclivity to report crimes of theft during the period 2005-2010.

An increase in average financial loss could have increased the tendency to report

It is worth noting, however, that according to data from Forsikring & Pension, the average payout per household burglary claim rose 20.7% between 2005 and 2010 (from 19,081 to 23,043 DKK). The *seriousness* of burglary in terms of reported financial loss thus increased – a trend that may reflect reported increases in the theft of designer furniture. All else being equal, an increase in the average financial loss associated with burglary will result in higher rates of insurance claim filing, which means high rates of reporting to police. The increase in average insurance compensations per claim is shown in Figure 3.1 (numeric data are available in Appendix Table A8). The figure shows both average payouts actually made and an extrapolated line based on payouts made in 2004-2006. Comparing these two lines shows that there was a sudden increase in average payouts in 2008. Payouts were also above expected levels in 2009. This increase in reported financial loss – and its presumed effects on tendency to report - certainly can't explain the overall increase in burglary on its own. However, it may have contributed to the size of that increase.

Figure 3.1. Insurance compensation per burglary claim in Danish kroner, 2004-2010



Source: Forsikring & Pension (2011)

No change in the proportion of attempts

The increase in burglary does not reflect an increase in attempts. As shown in Table 3.1, the proportion of residential burglaries that police classified as attempts was very stable between 2005 and 2009. It rose very slightly in 2010.

Table 3.1. Number and proportion of burglaries classified as attempts

| | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Total burglaries | 29,536 | 31,216 | 36,326 | 44,028 | 48,812 | 44,827 |
| Total attempts | 3,663 | 3,835 | 4,582 | 5,339 | 6,213 | 6,047 |
| Percent attempts | 12.4% | 12.3% | 12.6% | 12.1% | 12.7% | 13.5% |

Source: POLSAS

No change in the ease of reporting for burglary

In the mid-2000's, it became possible to report certain forms of theft to the police over the internet at their website (www.politi.dk). Changes in the ease with which one can report crime are likely to increase the tendency to do so. In 2006, 9,337 crimes were reported over the net. The number of internet-reported crimes rose to 17,536 in 2007 and to 24,955 in 2008 – an increase of 167% in just two years (Reinhardt 2008). This said, the introduction of internet reporting cannot explain the rise in burglary since online reporting is only allowed for minor thefts.¹⁵ It has never been possible to report burglary over the internet.

No problems with or changes in POLSAS or the way burglary data are archived

There have not been any obvious problems with the POLSAS system or the way POLSAS data are archived. POLSAS was established in the early 2000's and became fully operational in all (then 54) police districts on January 1, 2002. Given this, any problems with the system should have been worked out long before the period examined in this report (2005-2010). Furthermore, POLSAS users at the National Police's Center for Investigation Support (*Rigspolitiets Nationale Efterforskningsstøttecenter*) report no evidence of double counting with POLSAS since its inception. If there were any such problems, one would expect them to affect crime reporting more generally as opposed to only affecting burglary.

Socioeconomics: Age, Drugs, and Economic Trends

This section of the report looks at whether the burglary increase can be explained by demographic shifts in the average age of the Danish population, by increases in the use of certain drugs, and by the economic recession of the late 2000's. It concludes that trends in these factors may have added to the increase, but cannot have caused it on their own.

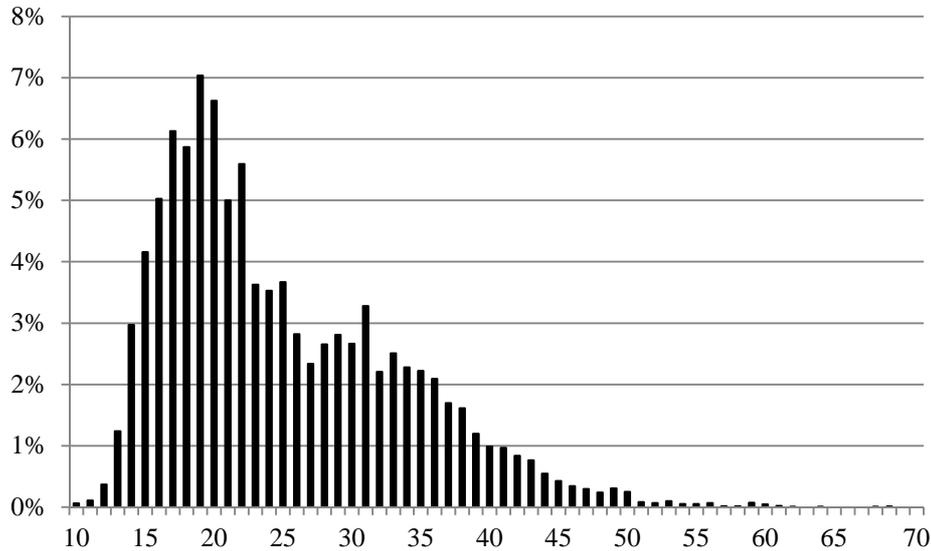
Age demographics

Age is one of the best predictors of individual involvement in crime. The general shape of the age crime curve is well-documented and substantively similar across time and

¹⁵ In 2008, the biggest category of internet reported crime was bicycle theft – which accounted for 62% (15,407) of the 24,955 crimes reported over the internet (Reinhardt 2008).

place (Quetelet 1831; Farrington 1986). Reaching a peak in the late teenage years, involvement in crime decreases thereafter – often to 50% of its peak by age 25. As expected, this pattern also characterizes the current POLSAS data, where the peak age of persons charged with burglary is 19 (See Figure 3.2). Over half (52.1%) of all persons charged are in the peak crime ages of 16-25. ¹⁶

Figure 3.2. Age of persons charged with burglary, Denmark 2005-2010



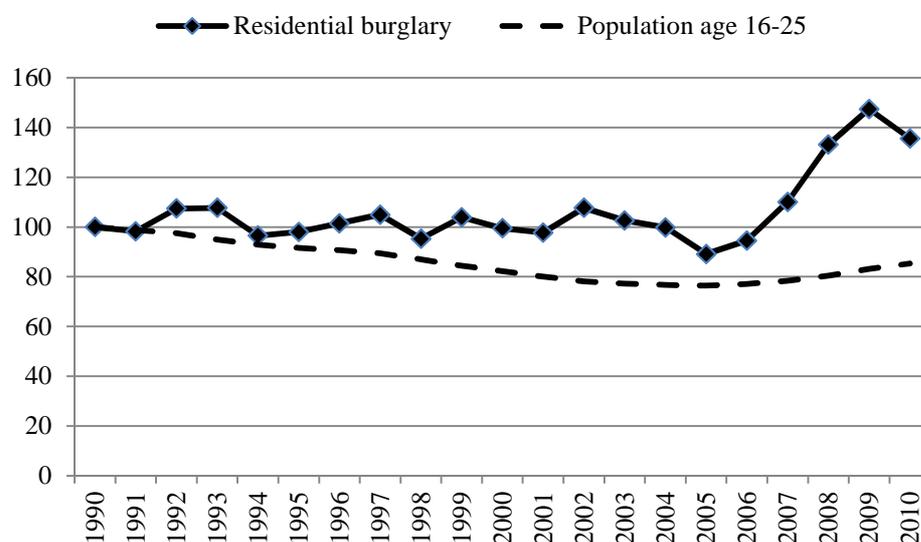
n=21,891 person-cases

Source: POLSAS

All else being equal, a society’s crime rate will be affected by the proportion of its inhabitants in the peak crime ages of 16-25. Data from Statistics Denmark indicates that that the proportion of Danes in that age group rose by 8.7% between 2005 and 2009. Yet residential burglary rose by 65.3% during this period. Long term indexed data on these relationships are shown in Figure AGE2. Thus, while the increase in persons age 16-25 may have added a small boost to the rise in burglary, it was clearly not its primary cause. The fact that the proportion of 16-25-year-olds continued to rise in 2010 while burglary dropped is further evidence against a simple demographic explanation.

¹⁶ Persons charged with burglary in these data ranged from age 10 to 97. Figure AGE1 is based on 21,891 charges. Broken into categories, 8.9% of the charges involved persons ages 10-15, 52.1% 16-25, 25.8% 26-35, 11.1% 36-45, 1.8% 45-55 and 0.3% 56-70. These data and the data in Figure 3.2 exclude three persons over age 70 and six persons for whom information on age is missing.

Figure 3.3. Indexed trend for burglary and population in the peak crime ages (16-25), 1990-2010



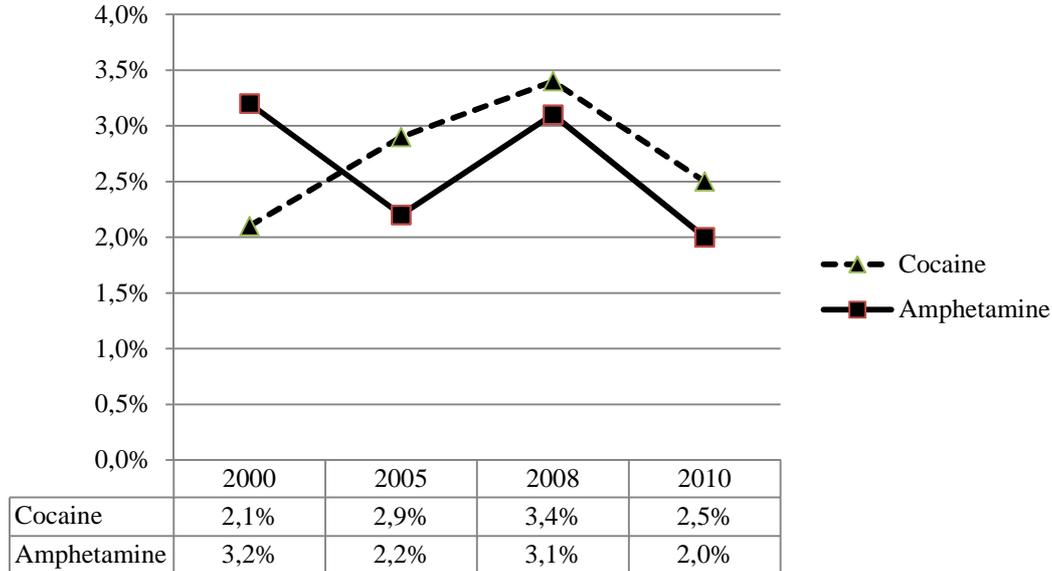
Source: Statistics Denmark

Drug use

There is a well-known association between the use of addictive drugs, particularly cocaine and heroin, and involvement in property crime (Bennett et al. 2008). If there were an increase in the use of these drugs during or just before the increase in burglary, one could argue for a possible causal relationship. The National Health Interview Survey, known as SUSY (*Sundheds- og sygelighedsundersøgelserne*) and the AiD (Alcohol in Denmark) studies, both conducted by the National Institute of Public Health (*Statens Institut for Folkesundhed*), provide period measures of population health and health-related behaviors, including drug use. Figure 3.4 shows changes in past year use of cocaine and amphetamines (“speed”) by 16-34-year-olds during the first decade of the 21st century. During the period (2005-2008) closest to our focus, reported use of cocaine rose 17% in this age group (from a prevalence rate of 2.9 to 3.4%) while use of amphetamines rose 41% (from a prevalence rate of 2.2 to 3.1%). Reported use of both substances dropped in 2010, as did rates of residential burglary (and property crime overall).¹⁷ It is therefore possible that the increased use of cocaine and amphetamines in 2008 played a role in the increase in burglary. It seems very unlikely, however, that it could have caused it on its own.

¹⁷ Sundhedsstyrelsen (2010) provides no information on confidence intervals surrounding these point estimates.

Figure 3.4. Prevalence of cocaine and amphetamine use during the previous year among persons age 16-25, 2000-2010



Source: Sundhedsstyrelsen (National Board of Health) 2010, Table 2.18.

Given the logistical difficulties of interviewing heroin users, no general representative data are available on heroin use patterns in Denmark. The best indicator available for this report is overdoses. Note, however, that overdoses can reflect a variety of factors other than prevalence of use, for example, changes in the purity of street drugs and/or in the preferred method of ingestion (heroin can be intravenously injected, smoked or sniffed). Risk of overdose is greatest with injection. With these caveats in mind, Table 3.2 shows that overdoses due to heroin and morphine (as well as those due to methadone, a heroin substitute) can be characterized as either stable or declining during the period 2005/6 to 2008/9. While this measure is far from perfect as a measure of drug use prevalence, it does not in itself suggest an increase in the use of heroin during the period in question.

Table 3.2. Overdoses from heroin, morphine and methadone, 1991 to 2009

| | 1991 | 1997 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 |
|-----------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Heroin/morphine | 94 | 153 | 60 | 81 | 77 | 83 | 69 | 70 | 75 |
| Methadone | 51 | 46 | 97 | 95 | 89 | 92 | 84 | 82 | 96 |

Source: Sundhedsstyrelsen (National Board of Health) 2010, Table 6.13.

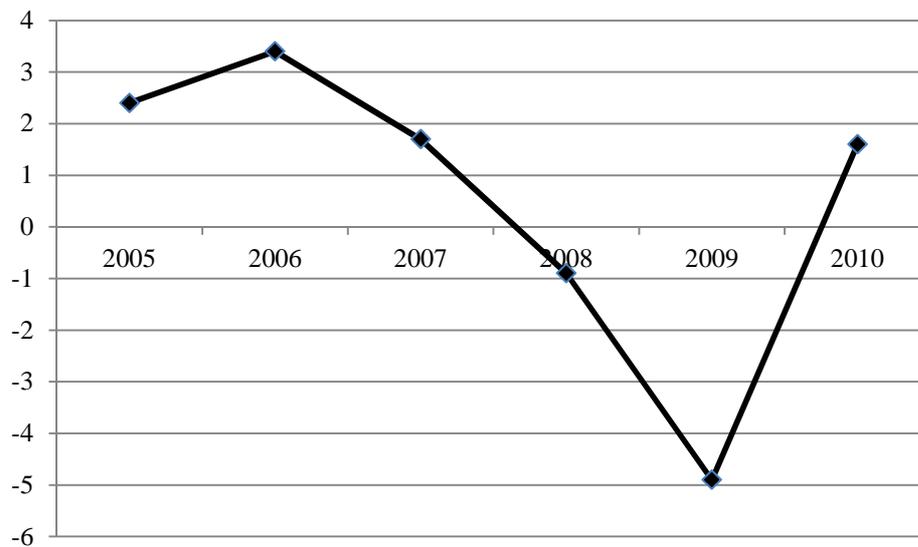
In summary, increases in the use of cocaine and amphetamines may have contributed to, but almost certainly did not cause, the increase in burglary and property crime between 2005 and 2008/9. There is no evidence that heroin use increased during this period, and therefore no evidence that it played a role in the increase in burglary.

Economic trends

After years of strong economic growth, Denmark was hit by repercussions of the global financial crisis, the worst economic upheaval since the Great Depression. The world-

wide financial recession that followed began in December 2007 and worsened in 2008. It caused stock markets around the world to plummet, veteran financial institutions to collapse, a severe downturn in worldwide housing and employment markets, and significant declines in personal wealth (Wikipedia 2011a; 2011b). Denmark did not escape the effects of this, as evidenced by the declines in economic growth shown in Figure 3.5.

Figure 3.5. Danish economic growth as measured by change in GDP, 2005-2010



Source: Nordic Statistical Yearbook 2010, Table KEY01

The economic recession in Denmark had numerous effects, including a reduction in consumer spending, government financial cutbacks, and rising unemployment. According to The National Labour Force Survey (*Arbejdskraftundersøgelsen*), unemployment among males ages 30-54 rose by 104% (from 2.4% to 4.9%) between 2008 and 2009. While the increase for young adult males ages 15-29 was somewhat smaller (63%), their overall unemployment rate was already much higher hitting 9.8% in 2009 (Statistics Denmark Table AKU22).¹⁸ Meanwhile, this is the age group with the fewest economic resources and the greatest propensity for criminal involvement.

The economic recession may have played a role in the increase in burglary in at least two ways. In one theory, the period of economic prosperity prior to the recession creates a dependence on luxury goods such as flat screen televisions and designer furniture. Suddenly, the bottom falls out, leaving many without the necessary finances to purchase such items through regular channels. Word goes around, and burglaries are “ordered” on a commissioned basis.

In a second, mutually compatible theory, unemployment and the housing crisis cause personal financial distress which is further aggravated by government cutbacks

¹⁸ These figures are based on criteria defined by the International Labor Organization (ILO). They concern people who are unemployed fulltime during the period of reference, and who are both available for, and actively seeking employment.

(*nedskaering*) in social assistance. Young adults are disproportionately affected. Persons most in need fall through the cracks and are tempted by burglary as an alternative means of making ends meet.

Evidence for the significance of economic recession is strengthened by the fact that, apart from Denmark, the European countries with the greatest burglary increases (i.e., Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Italy; see Figure 2.8) are also among those most negatively affected by the economic recession. Yet if economic decline was the primary determinant of burglary levels, then we would hardly expect Denmark to be the nation with the greatest increase in burglary in the EU15. Furthermore, as pointed out in Section 2, there are countries that were hit far harder by the economic crisis, but experienced no subsequent rise in burglary, e.g., Spain.

In addition to this, the increases in unemployment in Denmark began in 2009, at least one year *after* the start of the major upswing in burglary. While the timing of this unemployment trend does not deny the fact that economic conditions had already worsened, they speak against a direct temporal correlation between unemployment and rising burglary. For this and, even more so, the first reason mentioned above, it is unlikely that the global recession can explain the rise in Danish burglary on its own. This said, it certainly provided fertile grounds for an increase in economically-motivated criminality.

Increasing Professionalism

The Danish Police report that the rise in burglary has been accompanied by an apparent increase in the professionalism and organization with which burglary is carried out. If correct, this would certainly be congruent with an increase in burglary since professionalism implies speedier and more efficient techniques on the part of burglars. Political concern over rising professionalism has led to a suggested change in the sentencing frame for burglary, where evidence of “organization” provides for a 33% increase in possible prison time. Examples of “organized burglary” given by the Ministry of Justice focus on burglary committed by (a) multiple offenders who (b) carefully plan their burglaries and who (c) focus on expensive (often designer) items, and sometimes (d) come from outside Denmark for the express purpose of committing burglary (Justitsministeriet 2011: 2.1.2). Some of these burglaries are said to be commissioned by buyers or middlemen beforehand (Retsudvalget 2011).

The first part of this section looks for evidence of increasing professionalism regardless of domestic or foreign origin. It does so by looking at changes over time in the characteristics of burglaries and the persons charged with committing them. Specifically, it looks at whether there have been changes in the nature of the goods stolen, the rate of repeat victimization at previously burgled households, the average age of burglars, the average number of crimes burglars commit, and the average number of co-offenders they commit those crimes with. Analysis of the first two issues (items stolen and repeat targeting of the same property) is based on all reported burglaries, regardless of whether a

suspect is identified. Analysis of the last three issues (age, average crimes per offender, and average offenders per crime) is based solely on apprehended offenders. As described below, apprehended offenders can differ in important ways from non-apprehended offenders. These results should therefore be interpreted with caution. A subsequent section of this report, on crime tourism, takes up the related issue regarding how much of the increase in burglary is connected to an increase in criminal gangs from outside Denmark.

Items stolen as a measure of increasing professionalism

There has been a good deal of discussion in the media and from the insurance industry about the rise in burglary of designer furniture. For example, a November 2009 article from a major insurance company, *IF*, quotes claims consultant Peter Rasmussen as saying: “We can see a clear rise in the theft of designer furniture from our business customers this year. The thieves go after the totally classic icons of Danish design.” The article goes on to mention that burglars target classic, expensive furnishings such as Arne Jacobsen’s *Svanen* (The Swan), *Ægget* (The Egg), *Myre* (Ant) and 7’s-chairs, as well as PH lamps, the PH Cone, Bang & Olufsen electronic equipment and Montana shelves (IF Forsikring 2009).

The perception that burglars are increasingly targeting designer furnishings is also shared by the Danish Ministry of Justice, which specifically mentions “expensive designer furniture and PH lamps” as the types of items increasingly favored by professional, organized burglars (Justitsministeriet 2011). This section of the report takes a quick look at changes in the types of items stolen in burglaries as potential evidence for increasing professionalism.

POLSAS data for all reported burglaries includes the variable “Case Description” (*Sagens Genstand*) that provides information on the types of items stolen. This information is entered by investigating officers as freehand text, much of which is quite detailed. The current analysis is based on a rigorous content analysis of the “Case Description” variable in an effort to correctly count the frequency of specific categories of stolen items. The “Case Description” variable contained text that was usable for this analysis in over 99% of all 234,745 cases.¹⁹

¹⁹ While the police have recently (2007?) started to routinely record the term “design” in the “Case Description” for all burglaries involving the theft of designer furniture, one cannot simply search “design” and expect to achieve valid results. First off, simply searching the term “design” will produce hits for designer clothes, designer handbags, and designer jewelry, as well as all kinds of items, including homemade items, made “in a special design”. Second, prior to police instructions to routinely use the term “design,” some officers entered the name of the designer, rather than noting the “design” designation. Thus, some entries list “Arne Jacobsen stole” (chair) without mentioning the term “design.” Other times, designations for this same item might appear as “AJ-stole” (AJ-chair), or as “Ægget” (The Egg) or “Svanen” (the Swan) (both popular Arne Jacobsen chair designs), or in numerous other formats. The search for Arne Jacobsen furniture alone required 17 different search terms, for example, “ARNE,” “ÆGGET,” “SVANE,” “MYREN,” “7’ER,” “7R,” “SYVER,” “AJ” (with spaces purposefully inserted so as not to get

Table 3.3 provides a list of the items that burglary victims most often report stolen, and how this list changed over the period 2005-2010. The table is ordered roughly in terms of the top items stolen in 2010. The final column in the table shows the percent change in theft of various items between 2005 and 2010. Theft rates for computers and laptops are shown both together (under Computers/Laptops) and separately. The same goes for PH lamps and Arne Jacobsen furnishings, which are included both separately and together with all other designer furniture under "Design furniture." Note that the columns are not designed to add to 100%.

Computers/laptops were the most stolen items in all years. In 2005, 17.1% of all burglaries involved the theft of a desktop or laptop computer. By 2010, this proportion had risen to 27%. This increase from 17.1% in 2005 to 27.2% in 2010 represents a 59% rise (final column) in the rate of computer/laptop theft per burglary. The popularity of computers/laptops among burglars is followed by jewels and cash (25.5% and 15.5% in 2010). Just under half (47.4%) of all burglaries in every year involved theft of either a computer/laptop, jewels and/or cash.

Turning our attention to the most expensive items in Table 3.3, one can see that the prevalence of reported theft of designer furniture rose from 1.5% in 2005 to 4.0% in 2010 – an increase of 167%. At first glance, this looks like evidence of an increase in the targeting of expensive items, which may be evidence of increasing professionalism. However, before reaching that conclusion one must consider at least three rival explanations: First, increased reports on designer furniture could stem from a simple increase in opportunity (i.e., an increase in the proportion of homes that have these furnishings). This is clearly the explanation, for example, of the increase in the proportion of burglaries involving laptops, iPods and GPS devices. Second, the increase could be due to an increase in the public's awareness of the worth of designer furnishings (and therefore an increased tendency to report them as missing). Finally, the increase could be due to rising awareness on the part of the police and an increasing tendency to clearly record designer furniture thefts. (An unconfirmed report states that starting around 2007, the police instructed officers to consistently use the term "designmøbler" (design

"KAJ" and "KAJAK"), etc. The content analysis done in connection with PH lamps required 33 different search terms. In total, the analysis used to identify designer furniture required 110 different search terms. By designer furniture, I refer to exclusive furnishings of the type sold at FritzHansen.com and Lauritz.com. Designs and designers included under "Design furniture" in Table 3.3 are Finn Juul, Arne Jacobsen, Poul Henningsen, Piet Hein, Poul Kjærholm, Hans J Wegner, Le Corbusier, Corona, Cecilie Manz, Bruno Mathsson, Louis Poulsen, Verner Pantone, Poul Vother, Fritz Hansen, Børge Mogensen, Montana, Christian Dellrex, Hans Jacobsen, Hiromichi Konno, Kasper Salto, Jehs + Laub, Morten Voss, Piero Lissoni, Rønnau+Furnid, Todd Bracher, Pelikan Design, Fabricius & Kastholm, Charles And Ray Eames, Mogens Voltelen, Jens Juul, Eilersen, Arne Vodder, Nanna Ditzel, Morten Voss, Ole Wanscher, Eva Dux, and Mogens Koch.

furniture) in electronic police reports when burglaries involved the theft of such furnishings).

With these caveats in mind, the 167% increase in reported theft of designer furniture is certainly compatible with the notion of an increase in burglar professionalism. This is especially true when one considers that, unlike laptops, iPods and GPS devices, the theft of furnishings often requires the use of vans or other transportation equipment – which must be planned for in advance.

*Table 3.3. Items stolen in residential burglaries by year, 2005-2010**

| | 2005 (29,536) | 2006 (31,216) | 2007 (36,326) | 2008 (44,028) | 2009 (48,812) | 2010 (44,827) | % chg 2005-10 (234,745) |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------------|
| Computer/laptop | 17.1% | 21.4% | 23.1% | 24.2% | 25.8% | 27.2% | 59% |
| Jewels | 22.0% | 22.2% | 20.3% | 21.6% | 24.0% | 25.5% | 16% |
| Laptop | 11.5% | 15.8% | 17.9% | 19.4% | 20.8% | 21.8% | 90% |
| Cash | 20.3% | 18.1% | 17.6% | 17.2% | 16.4% | 15.5% | -24% |
| Flatscreens | 5.7% | 10.1% | 12.8% | 14.6% | 14.1% | 12.8% | 125% |
| Camera | 10.2% | 11.7% | 10.5% | 10.1% | 9.6% | 9.2% | -10% |
| Beer | 7.1% | 6.8% | 6.3% | 5.9% | 5.9% | 6.3% | -11% |
| Desktop PC | 5.6% | 5.5% | 5.2% | 4.8% | 5.0% | 5.3% | -5% |
| Console games | 4.6% | 4.1% | 3.9% | 4.7% | 6.3% | 6.7% | 46% |
| B&O | 5.8% | 4.3% | 3.2% | 2.5% | 2.1% | 1.6% | -72% |
| Design furniture | 1.5% | 1.8% | 2.4% | 3.1% | 3.5% | 4.0% | 167% |
| ID card | 2.9% | 2.8% | 2.5% | 2.6% | 2.4% | 2.5% | -14% |
| Clothing | 2.3% | 2.5% | 2.4% | 2.3% | 2.4% | 2.6% | 13% |
| Ipod | 0.4% | 1.1% | 1.8% | 2.3% | 2.9% | 3.5% | 775% |
| Credit cards | 2.6% | 2.1% | 2.1% | 2.1% | 2.2% | 1.8% | -31% |
| Strong spirits | 3.2% | 2.4% | 1.9% | 1.7% | 1.7% | 1.5% | -53% |
| PH lamps, etc | 0.9% | 1.1% | 1.5% | 1.8% | 2.2% | 2.4% | 167% |
| Cigarettes | 1.0% | 1.0% | 0.9% | 0.8% | 0.8% | 0.8% | -20% |
| GPS | 0.2% | 0.5% | 0.9% | 1.3% | 1.1% | 1.1% | 450% |
| Guns | 0.8% | 0.9% | 0.9% | 1.0% | 1.0% | 0.7% | -13% |
| Arne Jacobsen | 0.4% | 0.6% | 0.7% | 1.0% | 1.1% | 1.3% | 225% |
| Buscard | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0.4% | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0% |
| Art | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0% |
| Antiques | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0.2% | 0.2% | 0.2% | 0.2% | -33% |
| Wine | 0.4% | 0.3% | 0.2% | 0.2% | 0.2% | 0.2% | -50% |

* The percentages shown in the first six data columns indicate the proportion of burglaries involving theft of a given type of item. The final data column indicates the percent change (growth/decline) in theft of a particular item between 2005 and 2010. Note that the following categories overlap: Computer/laptop and laptop and desktop PC; Design furniture, PH lamps, and Arne Jacobsen. Thus, while 17.1% of burglaries in 2005 involved theft of a computer and/or a laptop, only 11.5% of burglaries that year involved theft of a laptop.

Source: POLSAS

Repeat burglary victimization

Repeat victimization refers to the “recurrence of crime in the same places and/or among the same people” (Pease, 1998, 1). Both international and Danish research indicate that a significant proportion of burgled households are victimized more than once in any given year (Farrell & Pease 1993; Sorensen 2004). The more frequently a household has been burgled in the past, the more likely it is to be burgled again. This relationship is partially due to the fact that doors or windows broken during an initial burglary serve as a welcome sign for opportunist burglars. But it is also due to the tendency for some burglars to return to the sites of their previous burglaries for goods left behind, or goods they expect residents to replace in the near future (e.g., stereo systems, computers, etc.). Furthermore, a burglar’s prior experience at the site gives him an intimate knowledge of the interior, including location of entry/exit points and things of value. The risk of repeat burglary is highest in the days and weeks immediately following an initial break in (Sorensen 2004). The tendency to return to prior burglary sites could be interpreted as evidence of professionalism. Pease (1998:15) writes that when compared to other burglars, burglars who favor repeat targeting of the same households are more likely to have had longer, more prolific criminal careers.

POLSAS data suggest that there was an increase in repeat victimization during the period in which burglary rose in Denmark. Table 3.4 shows the number of houses and farms that were burgled each year, and the percentage of those residences (individual dwelling) that experienced two or more burglaries that same year. This proportion is referred to in the repeat victimization literature as *address concentration*, i.e., the percent of addresses experiencing two or more burglaries in a given year (Sorensen 2004). Data are only shown for houses and farms because of methodological difficulties with identifying individual dwelling units in apartment buildings.²⁰ A detailed overview of the methodology used to create Table 3.4 is available in Sorensen (2004: Section 2).

Table 3.4. Address concentration: Number of burgled residences and the % burgled 2+ times per year, by year

| | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|--------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Burgled house residences | 19,683 | 20,771 | 23,589 | 28,899 | 31,798 | 28,816 |
| % burgled 2+ times | 3.6% | 4.1% | 4.1% | 4.6% | 4.8% | 4.4% |
| Burgled farm residences | 1,631 | 1,699 | 1,966 | 2,914 | 3,436 | 2,918 |
| % burgled 2+ times | 4.3% | 3.2% | 4.2% | 3.9% | 4.7% | 5.2% |

Source: POLSAS

²⁰ While the POLSAS address data are of an extraordinarily high quality, approximately 15% of burgled apartments lack vertical address data, i.e., apartment number and floor. Burglaries in apartments lacking vertical address data in the same building would be incorrectly identified as repeats in the same dwelling unit. Likewise, if a burglary occurred in the same dwelling unit twice, but police only recorded vertical address data once, the apartment would be incorrectly identified as not having had experienced a repeat burglary. There was no such problem in regards to houses and farms, which are therefore used as the focus in this section.

Table 3.4 indicates a small, but clear rise in the proportion of residences in both houses and farms that are burgled two or more times per year. This rise may help to explain the overall rise in burglary since, all else being equal, an increase in repeat burglary implies an increase in total burglary. The rise in repeat burglary is compatible with the notion of an increased tendency toward professionalism.

Burglaries cleared by citation

Table 3.5 provides important statistics concerning burglaries cleared by citation. 234,745 burglaries were reported to Danish police during the six-year period 2005-2010. 15,252 (6.5%) of these cases resulted in charges against one or more people. There were 21,900 charges levied in connection with these 15,250 cases. 7,562 unique persons were charged during the entire six-year period – 95.4% of whom were adults.²¹ The *clearance rate*, or proportion of cases resulting in one or more charges, was 6.5% when averaged over the entire period of analysis.²² Looking at the first two columns (*total cases* and *cases w/ charges*), one can see that the number of *cases with charges* actually fell in 2006 and 2007 despite an increase both years in the number of *total cases*. This is reflected in the drop in *clearance rate* in 2006 and 2007.

Table 3.5. Descriptive statistics on burglaries cleared by citation, 2005-2010

| Year | Total Cases | Cases w/ Charges | Unique persons | Total Charges | Clearance rate** |
|---------|-------------|------------------|----------------|---------------|------------------|
| 2005 | 29,536 | 2,270 | 1,495 | 3,114 | 7.7% |
| 2006 | 31,216 | 2,221 | 1,441 | 3,144 | 7.1% |
| 2007 | 36,326 | 2,138 | 1,432 | 2,894 | 5.9% |
| 2008 | 44,028 | 2,687 | 1,714 | 3,864 | 6.1% |
| 2009 | 48,812 | 2,957 | 1,916 | 4,258 | 6.1% |
| 2010 | 44,827 | 2,977 | 1,822 | 4,626 | 6.6% |
| 2005-10 | 234,745 | 15,250 | 7,562* | 21,900 | 6.5% |

* 2005-10 data for total cases, cases w/charges and total charges are column sums. The number of unique persons over the 6-year period differs from the sum of unique persons each year because persons who offend in multiple years are “unique” within those multiple years.

** Clearance rate = Cases with charges/total cases

Source: POLSAS

²¹ The data described on apprehended offenders includes a small minority (4.6%) of juvenile offenders who had not reached the age of criminal responsibility at the time of the crime. Juveniles cannot be charged with a crime, but are instead dealt with in other ways. Nonetheless, I collectively refer to adults and juveniles as “charged offenders” in this report.

²² The Danish police prefer the term “med sigtelse” (with charges) instead of “cleared” when referring to cases where one or more persons are charged. This is quite understandable since charges can always be dropped later on, in which case the case is not truly cleared. I use the term “cleared” in this report out of habit and convenience.

Data on cleared cases can be used to shed light on the nature of burglars, and on theories concerning increasing professionalism and the influx of alien burglary gangs. The results, however, must be treated with caution, since persons charged with crime can differ significantly from those who get away with it. The need for caution is especially important when dealing with issues like professionalism. Part of the common sense definition of professionals is that they are less likely to get caught – which means that burglars who do get caught may differ from those who don't. Charged offenders may be somewhat younger, less experienced, less professional and maybe even less intelligent than those who avoid detection. The slippery slope of generalizability problems is only magnified when it comes to nationality and ethnicity – especially during times when there is a great deal of focus on these issues both in the media and operationally among the police. With this caveat in mind, the report now focuses on characteristics of offenders charged in the 6.5% of burglary cases resulting in a citation.

Average age of burglars

Professional burglars generally have more experience and should therefore be older than non-professionals. Evidence for an increase in the age of apprehended burglars over time would circumstantially support the theory of increasing professionalism. Yet Table 3.6 does not suggest any clear, stable tendency toward an increase in either the mean or median age of offenders.

Table 3.6. Mean and median age of apprehended burglars, by year

| | Mean | Median | Range |
|---------|------|--------|-------|
| 2005 | 24.8 | 22.0 | 10-60 |
| 2006 | 24.9 | 23.0 | 10-69 |
| 2007 | 24.7 | 22.0 | 11-61 |
| 2008 | 25.1 | 22.0 | 10-61 |
| 2009 | 24.6 | 22.0 | 10-64 |
| 2010 | 25.5 | 23.0 | 11-69 |
| 2005-10 | 24.9 | 22.0 | 10-69 |

N=21,891 charges (Excludes charges against 3 burglars over age 70 and 6 for whom age data are missing).
Source: POLSAS

Table 3.7 shows apprehended burglars split into six age groups. Here we can see that over half (52.1%) of all burglars apprehended during the years 2005-2010 were in the peak crime ages of 16-25. The next biggest group was those ages 26-35, which accounted for 25.8% of apprehended burglars over the full six-year period. Between 2005 and 2010, there was a drop in involvement of the youngest and oldest burglars, and an increase of those in the two most prevalent age categories, 16-25 and 26-35. On their face, these results do not seem to provide any obvious evidence of a consistent increase in age over time that could be interpreted as evidence for increasing professionalism.

Table 3.7. Age of apprehended burglars, 2005-2010

| Year | 10-15 | 16-25 | 26-35 | 36-45 | 46-55 | 56-70 |
|---------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 2005 | 13.9% | 45.6% | 24.9% | 12.9% | 2.4% | 0.2% |
| 2006 | 10.5% | 48.9% | 27.6% | 11.6% | 1.0% | 0.5% |
| 2007 | 10.7% | 48.6% | 27.5% | 11.9% | 1.2% | 0.1% |
| 2008 | 8.4% | 52.5% | 25.6% | 10.5% | 2.7% | 0.2% |
| 2009 | 6.8% | 58.4% | 22.8% | 10.5% | 1.4% | 0.1% |
| 2010 | 5.8% | 54.7% | 26.9% | 10.3% | 1.8% | 0.5% |
| 2005-10 | 8.9% | 52.1% | 25.8% | 11.1% | 1.8% | 0.3% |
| n | 1,956 | 11,406 | 5,645 | 2,438 | 393 | 59 |

N=21,891 charges (Excludes charges against 3 burglars over age 70 and 6 for whom age data are missing).
Source: POLSAS

Lambda and co-offending: Average crimes per person and average persons per crime

Table 3.8 uses data on cases with charges, unique persons, and total charges to calculate relevant parameters of criminal careers that may help to shed light on questions of professionalism and organization. For example, dividing the number of total charges by the number of unique persons cited each year gives us the *average number of crimes for which an active offender is charged per year*, a parameter known as “lambda” (Greek letter λ) within the criminological literature (Blumstein et al. 1986). The column marked Lambda indicates that the average number of burglary charges per person per year rose from 2.1 in 2005 to 2.5 in 2010. This 19% increase in charges per person is suggestive of a rise in the efficiency and industriousness of burglars, and is therefore compatible with the notion of an increase in professionalism.

Table 3.8. Crimes, persons, lambda and co-offending, 2005-2010

| Year | Cases w/ Charges | Unique persons | Total Charges | Lambda: Avg. charges pr person* | Cooffending: Avg. persons pr case** |
|------------|---------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| 2005 | 2,270 | 1,495 | 3,114 | 2.1 | 1.4 |
| 2006 | 2,221 | 1,441 | 3,144 | 2.2 | 1.4 |
| 2007 | 2,138 | 1,432 | 2,894 | 2.0 | 1.4 |
| 2008 | 2,687 | 1,714 | 3,864 | 2.3 | 1.4 |
| 2009 | 2,957 | 1,916 | 4,258 | 2.2 | 1.4 |
| 2010 | 2,977 | 1,822 | 4,626 | 2.5 | 1.6 |
| 2005-10*** | 15,250 | 7,562 | 21,900 | 2.2 | 1.4 |

* Total charges/unique persons; ** Total charges/cases with charges; *** 2005-10 data for cases w/charges and total charges are column sums. The number of unique persons over the 6-year period differs from the sum of unique persons each year because persons who offend in multiple years are “unique” within those multiple years. 2005-10 figures for Lambda and cooffending are means based on the yearly data.

Source: POLSAS

The data in Table 3.8 can also be used to calculate levels of co-offending, i.e., the average number of offenders working together in each burglary. As mentioned above, level of co-offending is one of the characteristics the Ministry of Justice mentions when describing “professional” or “organized” burglars. Average rates of co-offending can be calculated by dividing total charges by the number of cases w/charges. The column marked Cooffending in Table 3.8 indicates that the average number of persons per crime was very stable over the 6-year period at 1.4, only rising (to 1.6) in 2010. Contrary to the increase in lambda, the stability of co-offending does not support the notion of an increase in professionalism among persons cited for burglary – at least not until the very last year of the series, 2010.

Crime Tourism

It is well-established that a certain number of burglaries are committed by crime tourists, i.e., persons who come to Denmark from other countries for the purpose of committing crime. According to police, the number of burglaries committed by crime tourists is rising, and this opinion is shared by Swedish and Norwegian police (Rikspolisstyrelsen 2011; US State Department 2011). Some police officials in Denmark go so far as to suggest that the increase in crime tourism can explain the entire burglary increase (e.g., Christiansen 2009). These crime tourists, who frequently seem to work in groups, are described as “highly mobile,” “organized,” often “Eastern Europeans” who cross borders for the purpose of committing a series of crimes in a short period and then leave before police have a chance to identify and apprehend them. The Schengen Agreement, which implemented unrestricted borders for much of Eastern Europe on December 21, 2007, is often cited as an aggravating factor in this regard.²³ The increase in customs controls along the Danish border during the summer of 2011 was largely undertaken for the purpose of suppressing crime tourism.

This section of the report explores the role of crime tourism in the rise of burglary. It does so by examining increases in the proportion of burglaries in which crime tourists are charged. Despite significant increases in this proportion over time, the section concludes that the overall number of crime tourists identified in cleared burglary cases is still too low to have singlehandedly caused the burglary increase. This conclusion is, however, based on the assumption that persons cited in cleared cases are representative of those

²³ The Schengen Area, within which people can move freely without regular impediment by border controls, was established in 1995. The Schengen Area now affects 400 million people in 25 European countries covering a total area of 4,312,099 square kilometers. Dates of national implementation (when borders were actually opened) were: 1995 (Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain); 1997 (Austria, Italy); 2000 (Greece); 2001 (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden); 2007 (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia); 2008 (Switzerland). Prospective members include Bulgaria, Lichtenstein, Romania, and Cyprus, the first three of which are scheduled for entry in late 2011 (Wikipedia 2011c).

who commit burglary - at least in terms of residency status - which may or may not be the case.

The growth of crime tourism

This report distinguishes *crime tourists* from *residents*.

- *Crime tourists* refer to persons residing in Denmark temporarily as tourists, guest workers or refugees. For purposes of this study, “crime tourists” are defined as persons who (a) lack a valid CPR number and (b) have citizenship outside Denmark.²⁴
- *Residents* refer to persons who have temporary or permanent residency in Denmark as indicated by a valid CPR number, regardless of citizenship. Persons in this group are overwhelmingly Danish citizens, but can also be resident aliens from other countries. Persons in this group live in Denmark and do so legally.

Table 3.9 shows the total number of charges filed against Danish residents and crime tourists by year. It is evident that the proportion of charges levied against crime tourists has risen dramatically. The column on the far right indicates that this proportion has increased in every year except 2009.²⁵ If we compare 2005 to 2010, the raw number of charges against crime tourists has risen by almost 800% (i.e., from 80 to 704), while the raw number of charges levied against Danish residents grew by less than one-third (i.e., 29.3%, from 3,034 to 3,922). Interestingly, while the total number of reported burglaries declined somewhat between 2009 and 2010 (see Table 3.5 above), the proportion of total charges levied against crime tourists more than doubled. By 2010, just over 15%, or one in seven, of the people charged for burglary were crime tourists. Despite this increase, however, the vast majority (85%) of persons charged were Danish residents.

Table 3.9. Total charges by residency status, 2005-2010

| | Residents | Tourists | Total charges | % tourists |
|-------|-----------|----------|---------------|------------|
| 2005 | 3,034 | 80 | 3,114 | 2.6% |
| 2006 | 3,024 | 120 | 3,144 | 3.8% |
| 2007 | 2,723 | 171 | 2,894 | 5.9% |
| 2008 | 3,527 | 337 | 3,864 | 8.7% |
| 2009 | 3,912 | 346 | 4,258 | 8.1% |
| 2010 | 3,922 | 704 | 4,626 | 15.2% |
| Total | 20,142 | 1,758 | 21,900 | 8.0% |

Source: POLSAS

²⁴ When arrested, persons lacking a valid CPR (central person register) number are given a replacement number (*erstatningsnummer*). The presence of such a replacement number, in addition to foreign citizenship, are the two criteria used to define crime tourists in this report.

²⁵ I have no explanation for the sudden decline in the proportion of all charges levied against crime tourists in 2009.

Nationality of crime tourists

Table 3.10 shows the top 10 crime tourist nationalities based on total charges levied each year. A number of interesting facts stand out. First, seven out of the top 10 countries are in Eastern Europe. In total, persons from these seven Eastern European nations account for 1,239 charges, i.e., 78.3% of charges levied against persons from top 10 countries and 70.5% of charges levied against all crime tourists. Crime tourists from Romania are by far the most active (or at least, the most charged). Their 692 charges account for almost half (43.7%) of charges levied against persons from top 10 countries and 39.4% of charges levied against all crime tourists. While the criminal exploits of Romanians are discussed on Danish TV news almost every evening, the nationality of the second most active group of crime tourists – Chileans – is rarely mentioned. Chilean tourists have been slightly more active during the period examined than Lithuanians. Both groups amassed a total of around 300 charges, though Chileans were more active in earlier years (2005-2007) while Lithuanians have become more active lately (2009-2010). Tourists from Poland come in fourth in the top ten list, despite the fact that over two-thirds of the charges against Polish tourists were levied in 2005. After Romanians, Poles may have the worst “reputation” in Denmark for property crime, though their actual rate of citation – at least in regards to burglary – has actually been very low in recent years. Finally, note that all 16 charges against tourists from the least active top 10 country, Argentina, were levied in 2006. Meanwhile, 45 of the 50 charges levied against Bulgarian tourists were made in 2008. These are examples (and there are many) of how a flurry of activity at one place or time can look like a “pattern” when viewed in aggregate data.²⁶

Table 3.10. Top 10 crime tourist nationalities based on total charges levied per year

| | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | Total |
|----------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| Romania | 0 | 0 | 12 | 202 | 136 | 342 | 692 |
| Chile | 14 | 63 | 102 | 0 | 27 | 95 | 301 |
| Lithuania | 0 | 7 | 18 | 29 | 115 | 128 | 297 |
| Poland | 46 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 8 | 3 | 68 |
| Bosnia-Herzegovina | 0 | 5 | 2 | 31 | 2 | 23 | 63 |
| Bulgaria | 0 | 0 | 0 | 45 | 1 | 4 | 50 |
| Latvia | 0 | 1 | 3 | 8 | 12 | 17 | 41 |
| Serbia-Montenegro | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 7 | 19 | 28 |
| Sweden | 0 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 15 | 1 | 26 |
| Argentina | 0 | 16 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 16 |
| TOP 10 total | 60 | 99 | 151 | 317 | 323 | 632 | 1,582 |
| All other countries | 20 | 21 | 20 | 20 | 23 | 72 | 176 |
| Total crime tourists | 80 | 120 | 171 | 337 | 346 | 704 | 1,758 |

Source: POLSAS

²⁶ Analyses conducted, but not shown, in connection with this report have identified numerous geographic and temporal patterns which, on closer inspection, turn out to be driven entirely by a single group of burglars on an active burglary spree.

Evidence against crime tourism as a major explanation of the rise in burglary

Thus far, the increase in crime tourism has been described in terms of *charges*. It is also interesting to consider the impact of crime tourism on the overall number of burglary *cases*. This can be done by breaking all cleared cases into three groups; burglaries committed by:

- Pure residents (where all offenders, whether one or more, are Danish residents)
- Pure tourists (where all offenders, whether one or more, are crime tourists), and
- Mixed groups (where at least one offender is a Danish resident and at least one a crime tourist). Note that burglaries committed by mixed groups have at least two offenders by definition since a single offender cannot be “mixed”.

Table 3.11 shows that over the six-year period 2005-2010, the proportion of cases attributed to pure tourists and mixed groups (combined) rose from 2% to 11.5% - a 475% increase. The rise was especially prominent for burglaries attributed to pure tourists – the proportion of which grew by a factor of eight (from 1.3% to 10.5%) and whose raw numbers grew by 10½ times (from 30 to 313).²⁷ Despite these dramatic increases, however, nearly nine out of ten cases (88.5%) cleared by police in 2010 were still attributed to burglars with Danish residence permits.

Table 3.11. Burglary cases, by year and residency status of cited offender(s), 2005-2010

| Year | Pure residents | | Pure tourists | | Mixed groups | | Total cases |
|---------|----------------|-------|---------------|-------|--------------|------|-------------|
| 2005 | 2,223 | 97.9% | 30 | 1.3% | 17 | 0.7% | 2,270 |
| 2006 | 2,145 | 96.6% | 48 | 2.2% | 28 | 1.3% | 2,221 |
| 2007 | 2,043 | 95.6% | 55 | 2.6% | 40 | 1.9% | 2,138 |
| 2008 | 2,533 | 94.3% | 138 | 5.1% | 16 | 0.6% | 2,687 |
| 2009 | 2,760 | 93.3% | 180 | 6.1% | 17 | 0.6% | 2,957 |
| 2010 | 2,635 | 88.5% | 313 | 10.5% | 29 | 1.0% | 2,977 |
| 2005-10 | 14,339 | 94.0% | 764 | 5.0% | 147 | 1.0% | 15,250 |

Source: POLSAS

The fact that such a large proportion of cases remain the domain of resident Danish burglars speaks against attributing the rise in burglary to crime tourists. *If we assume that the proportions shown above in Table 3.11 are representative of all burglary cases* (those with and without cited suspects), then it is easy to estimate the overall number of total cases committed by residents as opposed to non-residents and mixed groups. This is done in Table 3.12.

²⁷ It is interesting to note that over the entire period, burglaries attributed to one or more pure tourists were five times more prevalent than those attributed to mixed groups. And by 2010, they had become 10.5 times more prevalent than those by mixed groups. This is somewhat surprising, since one might imagine that entrepreneurial crime tourists would seek out local residents familiar with local targets, police practices, and other relevant circumstances.

Table 3.12. Estimated number of cases committed by pure resident and non-pure resident burglars

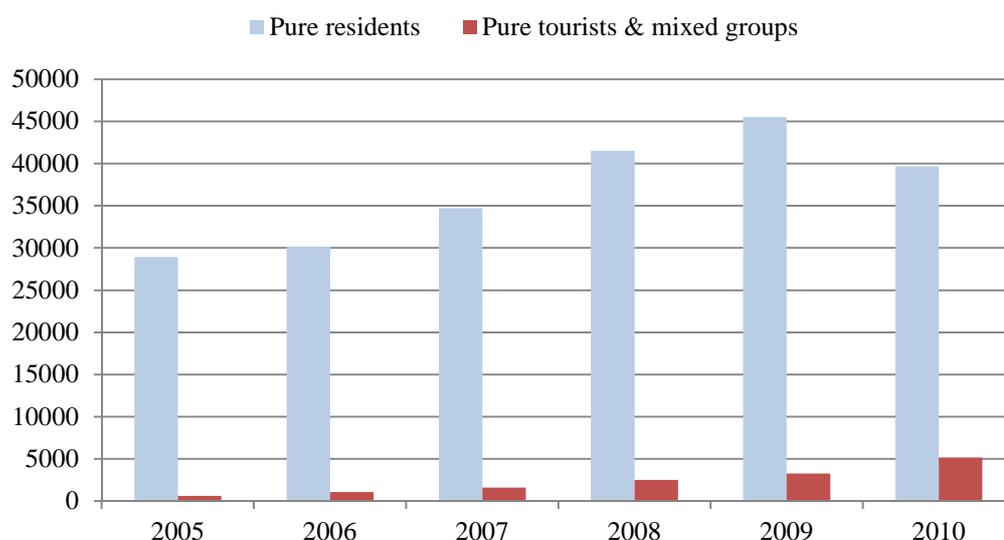
| Year | Total Actual Cases | % cleared cases attributed to pure residents | Estimated Number of Cases* | |
|---------|--------------------|--|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | | | Pure residents | Pure tourists or mixed groups |
| 2005 | 29,536 | 97.9% | 28,916 | 620 |
| 2006 | 31,216 | 96.6% | 30,155 | 1,061 |
| 2007 | 36,326 | 95.6% | 34,728 | 1,598 |
| 2008 | 44,028 | 94.3% | 41,518 | 2,510 |
| 2009 | 48,812 | 93.3% | 45,542 | 3,270 |
| 2010 | 44,827 | 88.5% | 39,672 | 5,155 |
| 2005-10 | 23,4745 | 94.0% | 22,0660 | 14,085 |

* Based on total actual cases multiplied by % cleared cases attributable to pure residents.

Source: POLSAS

Figure 3.5 now graphs these estimates, the results of which speak against the notion that crime tourism is responsible for the rise in burglary. The dramatic increases in cases attributed to pure crime tourists and mixed groups discussed above disappear when viewed in contrast to the far greater number of estimated cases attributed to pure Danish residents. (And yes, the figure correctly represents data for pure crime tourists and mixed groups who, in 2010, are estimated to have committed 5,155 burglaries, i.e., 11.5% of all burglaries). Looking at this figure, it is hard to imagine that the increase in crime tourism can explain a significant proportion of the increase in burglary. The role of crime tourists is simply too limited.

Figure 3.5. Estimated number of cases committed by pure residents and by pure tourists and mixed groups based on their distribution in cleared cases



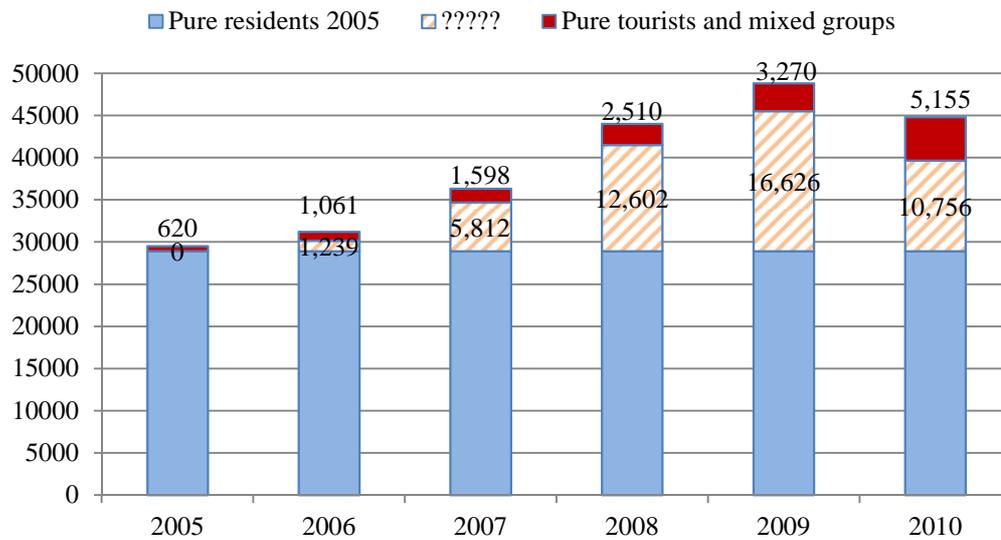
Source: POLSAS

The question remains, of course, as to whether the proportion of crime tourists cited in connection with cleared cases accurately represents their actual involvement in all cases. If, for example, crime tourists were particularly good at evading arrest, then they would be underestimated in the current analysis. Were this the case, they might have more to do with the burglary increase than the current analysis suggests.

Unfortunately, we have no means of knowing whether crime tourists are better or worse than resident Danes at avoiding detection. It is therefore impossible to say whether their proportional representation in citation statistics is representative of their involvement in burglary overall. On the one hand, crime tourists typically have the advantage of being previously unknown to police, which means they are unlikely to be caught via physical evidence (e.g., finger prints, DNA) or modus operandi. Furthermore, they are unlikely to be rounded up as one of the “usual suspects” and may have left the country before a police investigation is completed. On the other hand, being a tourist certainly has its disadvantages. Some crime tourists may have physical features and/or modes of dress or speech that cause them to stand out in certain Danish locales. Their lack of geographical and cultural knowledge may limit their ability to navigate Danish society unnoticed, as might the foreign number plates on their cars. Recent changes in police priorities and tactics further increase their risk of detection. The growth of crime tourism in the official statistics is almost surely at least partially attributable to this change in police focus. When it comes to avoiding police detection then, there are both advantages and disadvantages to being a tourist.

Figure 3.6, which holds the estimated number of burglaries attributed to pure residents in 2005 constant, shows the estimated number attributed to pure tourists and mixed groups, as well as the number that pure tourists and mixed groups would also have had to have committed if they were responsible for the entire burglary increase since 2005. Thus, in 2007, pure tourists and mixed groups would have had to have committed not only the estimated 1,598 burglaries already attributed to them, but 5,812 additional crimes as well if they were responsible for the entire burglary increase. This is a grand total of 7,410 burglaries, or 4.6 times more than estimates based on clearance rates would predict. The situation is even more extreme in 2008 and 2009, where pure tourists and mixed groups would have had to have committed over six times as many crimes as estimated if they were indeed responsible for the entire burglary increase. All of this seems very unlikely, as it would suggest that crime tourists were very busy and that Danish police were very bad at apprehending them.

Figure 3.6. Hypothetical estimates of pure tourist/mixed group burglaries assuming no rise in pure resident burglaries



Source: POLSAS hypothetical

In conclusion, the proportion of burglaries involving crime tourists has increased and this increase is likely to have contributed to the overall increase in burglary. Based on available data, however, it seems unlikely that the increase in crime tourism can explain all, or even most, of the increase in burglary.

Increasing lambda is not only due to crime tourists

In an earlier section, it was shown that lambda, the average number of charges per active offender per year, had increased during 2005 to 2010. This was interpreted as possible evidence for increasing professionalism. But the question remains as to whether this increase reflects a growing activity on the part of all burglars – including residents, or whether it is due to an influx of highly active crime tourists. The current section of the report examines this question.

Table 3.13, which might have been relegated to the appendix, is provided for those who want a sense of the raw numbers – not unimportant given the relatively small numbers for which some of the conclusions regarding mixed groups are based. The data in Table 3.13 are used to create Table 3.14, which serves as the basis for the next discussion.

Table 3.14 provides year by year estimates of lambda and levels of co-offending for persons charged in connection with burglaries committed by pure residents, pure tourists, and mixed groups.²⁸ Measures of lambda and co-offending for “All” groups combined are

²⁸ Methodological note: This gets a bit complicated. Imagine a Danish resident who is involved in three cases: Case 1 he commits alone; Case 2 he commits with another Danish resident; and Case 3 he commits with a crime tourist. This person is charged three times, twice in connection with crimes by pure residents and once in connection with a crime by mixed groups. This person therefore contributes two units of analysis to the data comprising lambda for pure Danish residents and one unit of analysis to the data

identical to those provided far above in Table 3.8.²⁹ Turning first to lambda for all groups, we see that it has generally risen between 2005 and 2010 – though this description of the trend is highly influenced by the very high value of lambda in 2010 (2.5 charges per person that year). A look at the next column shows that annual lambda for pure residents closely mimics that for all persons. On the one hand, this shouldn't be surprising since, despite the dramatic growth in crime tourism, 91.3% of all charges in this analysis were levied against Danish residents who committed crimes either alone or with other Danish residents (i.e., 19,989 out of 21,900 charges. See Table 3.13). On the other hand, this finding is very interesting since it implies that the increasing activity seen in overall lambda is not solely caused by an influx of high rate crime tourists, but also reflects an increase in the “productivity” of resident Danish burglars.

Table 3.13. Descriptive statistics on cleared cases, persons, and charges by group

| Year | Pure Residents | | | Pure Tourists | | | Mixed Groups | | |
|----------|------------------|----------------|---------------|------------------|----------------|---------------|------------------|----------------|---------------|
| | Cases w/ charges | Unique persons | Total charges | Cases w/ Charges | Unique persons | Total charges | Cases w/ charges | Unique persons | Total charges |
| 2005 | 2,223 | 1,468 | 3,016 | 30 | 18 | 63 | 17 | 9 | 35 |
| 2006 | 2,145 | 1,397 | 2,996 | 48 | 33 | 73 | 28 | 11 | 75 |
| 2007 | 2,043 | 1,366 | 2,682 | 55 | 50 | 99 | 40 | 16 | 113 |
| 2008 | 2,533 | 1,589 | 3,510 | 138 | 114 | 301 | 16 | 11 | 53 |
| 2009 | 2,760 | 1,758 | 3,894 | 180 | 134 | 316 | 17 | 24 | 48 |
| 2010 | 2,635 | 1,644 | 3,891 | 313 | 156 | 626 | 29 | 22 | 109 |
| 2005-10* | 14,339 | 7,015 | 19,989 | 764 | 466 | 1,478 | 147 | 81 | 433 |

* 2005-10 data for cases w/charges and total charges are column sums. The number of unique persons over the 6-year period differs from the sum of unique persons each year because persons who offend in multiple years are “unique” within those multiple years.

Source: POLSAS

comprising lambda for mixed groups. This explains why the number of residents and tourists in Table 3.9 do not correspond with pure residents, pure tourists and mixed groups in Table 3.13. In the current discussion, I refer to characteristics of pure residents, pure tourists and mixed groups which is technically incorrect, since it is actually characteristics of *persons charged in connection with cases committed by* pure residents, pure tourists and mixed groups.

²⁹ Methodological note regarding mean rates of lambda in Table 3.14: Lambda and rates of co-offending for the total six year period (Mean) are averages based on corresponding figures from the six individual years. Means are used because lambda can only be calculated on the basis of yearly data. This is because the definition of lambda is the average number of offenses *per active offender per year*. At first thought, one might think it possible to add the number of crimes committed over six years and simply divided by six to get the average number per year. But this doesn't work as the following scenario makes clear: Imagine a person who committed a single crime in 2005 and a single crime in 2007. His lambda for 2005 is 1 as is his lambda for 2007. His lambdas for 2006, 2008, 2009 and 2010 are all zeros. If we simply added his data for all years up and divided by six we would get an average lambda of $2/6 = 0.33$, which makes no sense within the criminological meaning of the lambda concept (Blumstein et al. 1986).

Table 3.14. Lambda and rates of co-offending , 2005-2010

| Year | Lambda Avg charges pr person * | | | | Co-offending Avg. persons per case ** | | | |
|------|-----------------------------------|----------|------------|-------|--|----------|------------|-------|
| | All | Pure Res | Pure Tours | Mixed | All | Pure Res | Pure Tours | Mixed |
| 2005 | 2.1 | 2.1 | 3.5 | 3.9 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 2.1 | 2.1 |
| 2006 | 2.2 | 2.1 | 2.2 | 6.8 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.5 | 2.7 |
| 2007 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 7.1 | 1.4 | 1.3 | 1.8 | 2.8 |
| 2008 | 2.3 | 2.2 | 2.6 | 4.8 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 2.2 | 3.3 |
| 2009 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.4 | 2.0 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.8 | 2.8 |
| 2010 | 2.5 | 2.4 | 4.0 | 5.0 | 1.6 | 1.5 | 2.0 | 3.8 |
| Mean | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.8 | 4.9 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.9 | 2.9 |

* Total charges/unique persons

** Total charges/cases with charges. Note that co-offending rates for mixed groups are higher by definition, since these groups contain no solo offenders.

Source: POLSAS

Year by year lambda among pure tourists and especially mixed groups do not show a consistent trend – presumably due to the known tendency for less stability in statistics based on smaller numbers. It may also be due to the fact that crime tourists from different countries have been particularly active in Denmark in different years (see Table 3.10) and these different groups may well have very different average lambdas. A look at the overall lambdas averaged across the full six-year period, however, indicates persons charged with crimes committed by pure tourists have a significantly higher lambda (2.8) than that for pure residents (2.2). The overall mean lambda for mixed groups (4.9) is, however, almost double that of pure tourists. Thus, while crimes by mixed groups are far less common than those by pure tourists, the persons involved in mixed groups are extremely active. Given the fact that persons involved in crimes by pure tourists do not live in Denmark (and are presumably only in Denmark for limited periods, some of them only a single time) it is striking that they can amass more charges per person than residents of Denmark who live here all year round. The same can be said for mixed groups – the rate for which is extremely high, though in this case there is at least one person per crime who can and may well live year round in Denmark.

Data for co-offending are quite stable at 1.4 persons per case until 2010, when it rises to 1.6. Without having data for 2011, it is difficult to judge whether this increase is meaningful or not. As with year to year lambdas, the co-offending data for pure tourists fluctuates over time, though their overall mean value is significantly higher than that for pure residents (1.9 versus 1.4 persons per case). This supports the official perception that crime tourists are more likely than domestic burglars to work in groups. Somewhat surprisingly, given their small numbers, co-offending data for mixed groups show a consistent rise over time. Readers should note that co-offending data for mixed groups is artificially inflated by the fact that all crimes committed by these groups involve more than one offender by definition. Subtracting one from each value makes them comparable to values from other groups, and shows that they closely follow those for pure tourists.

In summary, overall lambda is increasing, which can be viewed as a sign of rising professionalism. It is increasing both because of an increase in levels of activity amongst domestic resident burglars and because of an influx of high rate crime tourists. It is less clear whether levels of co-offending are increasing among domestic burglars. Crime tourists – whether working with other tourists or in mixed groups - are more likely to work in groups, so the influx of these groups makes for an overall increase in levels of co-offending.

The Police Reform of 2007

Section 2 documented Scandinavian increases in burglary both in Sweden and, to a far lesser extent, Norway. Yet increases there have been minor compared to those seen in Denmark. It therefore seems likely that there are additional causes *within* Denmark that have aggravated, or otherwise failed to contain, the broader causes affecting Scandinavia more generally. Given the timing of the increase in burglary, the Police Reform of 2007 is an obvious suspect.³⁰

Some day in the future, the Police Reform may be looked back on as a great success. In the short run, however, it has been a disorienting process. It is no secret that the Police reform got off to a rocky start. Regardless of whether one consults government or university reports, or simply talks to police officers themselves, the initial years of the Police Reform are described as problematic.

A 2009 report by the Auditor General's Office (*Rigsrevisionen*) described the effects of the Reform on important criminal justice indicators during the period 2006-2008 as follows: A 9% rise in overall reported crime (excluding traffic) coupled with an 11% decline in the number of charges filed and a 14% decline in the number of reported crimes resulting in a convictions (*Rigsrevisionen* 2009: 26-32).³¹

These results are no surprise to police officers, many of whom feel that the police's ability to investigate and solve crimes was seriously hampered by the centralization process. For one, they say it took officer out of local areas where they had worked for years and were well familiar with the "usual suspects." Furthermore, the Reform broke up smooth-running investigation teams since personnel were reallocated, or chose to be reallocated, to different districts where they had to establish new partners and workplace rhythms. Some especially experienced officers who didn't feel like moving were simply lost to early retirement. These issues, coupled with the massive preparations that surround a workplace change of this magnitude, seem likely to have had a negative effect on the

³⁰ A major reform of the National Police, effective January 1, 2007, reduced the number of police districts from 54 to 12, centralizing police activity and taking manpower out of less urban areas.

³¹ On the positive side, there was a significant decrease in average response time (*Rigsrevisionen* 2009: 30-31). Note, however, that while quick response time has its merits, it does not always correlate with the best means by which to catch burglars. Laying quietly in wait on known exit roads may sometimes be a better strategy than flying in with sirens flashing. Of course, when it comes to violence, reaching the victim takes precedence over catching the offender, in which case response time is of utmost importance.

police's ability to solve crime not only after, but also during the year leading up to the January 1, 2007 implementation of the Reform.

The clearance rate for residential burglary and overall crime are shown in Table 3.15. In general, clearance rates for burglary tend to be about half of those for overall crime.³²

Table 3.15. Clearance rates for residential burglary and overall crime, 2000-2010

| | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|-----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Burglary | 9.4% | 8.9% | 8.4% | 8.5% | 8.6% | 8.1% | 6.8% | 6.5% | 6.4% | 6.3% | 7.5% |
| All crime | 18.9% | 18.5% | 17.7% | 18.1% | 18.7% | 18.6% | 17.7% | 16.4% | 14.7% | 14.6% | 16.6% |

Source: Statistics Denmark

The data in Table 3.15 are shown in visual, indexed form in Figure 3.7. The indexed format allows one to directly compare clearance trends in both categories. Here one can see that clearance rates for overall crime had begun to decline in 2006, the year prior to the official implementation of the Reform. This makes sense, since the year leading up to the official implementation may, in fact, have been the most disorienting for those maneuvering towards a new system. These rates continued to decline through 2008, stabilized, and then rose in 2010. Clearance rates for burglary had already begun to drop somewhat in 2005, and plunged severely in 2006. The drop in clearance for burglary in 2006 was far more severe than that for overall crime. This may be due to the fact that clearance rates for crimes like burglary, robbery and motor vehicle theft – which are heavily investigated – are likely to be more affected by a disruption in police work than clearance rates for bicycle and general thefts – which comprise a large proportion of overall property crime. After a fall of 19% between 2004 and 2006, clearance rates for burglary nearly stabilized from 2007 through 2009, and ultimately rose with clearance for overall crime in 2010.

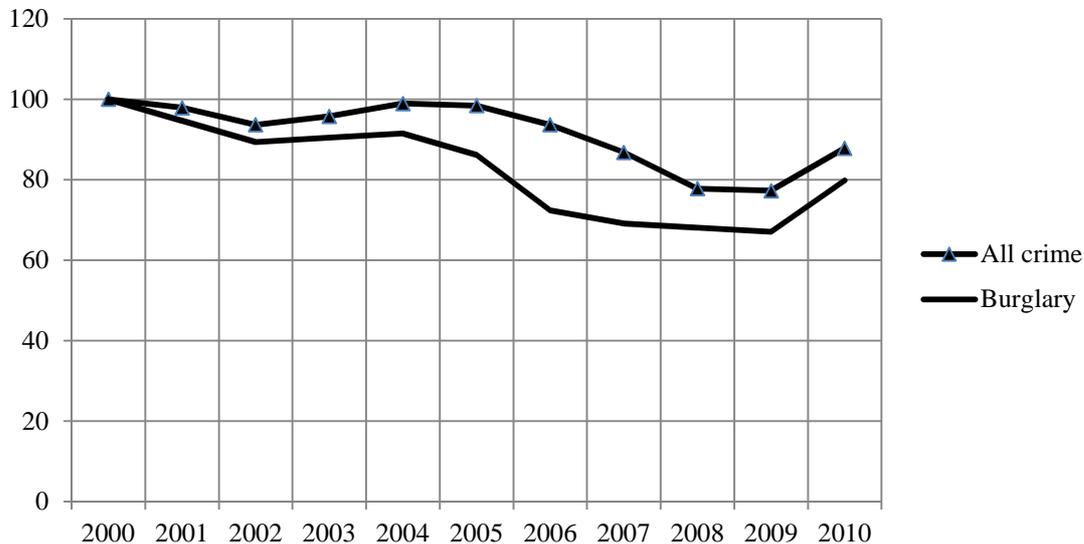
It is somewhat surprising that clearance rates for burglary leveled off so fast after the initial 2006 decline. This is especially true when one considers that it was at exactly this time (2007 on) that burglary by crime tourists really started to increase. One would expect these burglaries to bring clearance rates even further down, since the offenders are unknown to police and often leave the area, if not the country, soon after their burglaries. One can only assume that burglary investigators saw the problem they faced early and did what they could to overcome it – or at least, not let it worsen.

In theory, the decline in clearance rates could lead to an increase in burglary via its effects on deterrence (*afskrækkelse*) or incapacitation. Deterrence, however, seems an unlikely candidate. This is because burglars would have to actually notice that the chance of being caught had significantly decreased and on that basis actively choose to engage in crimes they otherwise would have avoided. While the decline in clearance was significant from a

³² Clearance rates for burglary shown here come from Statistics Denmark and differ very slightly from those based on POLSAS data described in earlier sections. Data are used from Statistics Denmark here for two reasons: First, they go back to 2000, while POLSAS data only go back to 2005. Second, no POLSAS data are available for this analysis on clearance rates for all crime.

statistical standpoint, i.e., 19% between 2004 and 2006, the risk of apprehension was already so low before the drop that burglars would be unlikely to notice, let alone respond to, the additional decline.

Figure 3.7. Clearance rates for overall crime and residential burglary, 2000-2010



Source: Statistics Denmark

While on the subject of deterrence, it is worth noting that survey data collected by Balvig and colleagues indicate that the proportion of citizens who report seeing police on patrol in their local neighborhoods dropped by 42% between 2002 and 2006 (see Table 3.16). Unfortunately, Balvig et al. did not collect data in 2004, which makes it difficult to evaluate the significance of the Reform for this development. In any case, the overall importance of this for the rise in burglary may be questionable anyway, since research indicates that levels of police visibility generally have little if any effect on crime rates (Kelling et al. 1974).

Table 3.16. Percent who have seen police patrolling in their local area in cars, on foot or on bicycle during the week before the interview, Denmark 1998-2010

| 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 47% | | 48% | | 50% | | | | 29% | 27% | 25% | | 31% |

N=985

Source: Balvig et al. (2010: 5)

The 19% drop in clearance is, however, likely to have had an effect on burglary via its negative implications for the apprehension and incapacitation of active burglars. Figures on lambda in Table 3.14 indicate that the average apprehended burglar is charged with 2.2 burglaries per year. This figure is, however considerably higher for crime tourists (2.8 for pure tourists; 4.9 for mixed groups), and crime tourists account for a seemingly small (based on cleared cases), but increasing proportion of all burglaries in Denmark. The average number of charges filed per burglar is without doubt a gross underestimate of the

average number of burglaries *actually committed* per burglar. Some burglars can be extremely prolific. Therefore, the 19% drop in clearance – which was sustained until clearance began to rise again in 2010 – is likely to have contributed to the increase in burglary during its peak in 2008 and 2009.

Conclusion

This section of the report examined five sets of possible explanations for the rise in burglary

Reporting/Recording: The report finds no evidence of increased reporting tendencies other than the fact that victim loss per burglary has increased, which all else equal should increase the likelihood of reporting. There have been no changes in police recording practices or in the ease with which burglary can be reported to police. There is, therefore, no reason to believe that the increase in reported burglary stems from a simple change in the way in which it is reported or recorded by police.

Age/Drugs/Economy: There has been a small increase in the proportion of the Danish population in the peak crime ages (16-25), as well as increases in the use of cocaine and amphetamines. The economic crisis of 2008/9 increased unemployment, which created financial hardship especially for young adults. All of these factors may have contributed to the increase in burglary, but none are likely to have caused it on their own.

Professionalism: Increased professionalism is likely to manifest itself in greater efficiency and greater productivity, i.e., more burglaries. There is evidence that burglars are becoming more professional in Denmark. This evidence includes an increase in the theft of expensive designer furniture (which requires trucks to transport), an increase in repeat victimization at the same households, and an increase in the average number of charged crimes per offender.

Crime Tourism: While there has been a significant increase in crime tourism, i.e., burglaries committed by persons who have their legal residence outside of Denmark, it seems unlikely to explain the increase in burglary on its own. This is because the overall raw number of burglaries estimated as attributable to crime tourists is simply too low. Furthermore, part of the apparent increase in crime tourism may reflect an increased focus on the part of the police. This said, crime tourism does seem to be growing, and crime tourists have a higher crime frequency per person (as measured via average number of charges) than Danish residents and tend to operate in larger co-offending groups. The average number of charged crimes per offender is also increasing among Danish residents. Only 6.5% of all cases result in charges against one or more offenders. The figures on crime tourism are based on this minority of apprehended offenders and therefore must be interpreted with caution.

Police Reform: Distractions caused by the Police Reform of 2007 are likely to have temporarily reduced police performance resulting in decreases in clearance rates (*sigtelsesrater*). Decreased clearance may have contributed to the rise in burglary via its negative effects on incapacitation.

The influx of crime tourism and distractions caused by the Police Reform are likely to have had the most influence amongst the factors listed above. The evidence for their involvement is, however, not especially compelling. It is certainly unlikely that either of them can explain the rise in burglary on their own.

Section 4. Conclusion

After considering both domestic and international patterns, the Trends section of this report concludes that the increase in Danish burglary probably had causes both inside and outside Denmark. The Explanations section of this report identifies the Police Reform as the most likely internal cause and the influx of crime tourism as the most likely external cause – though neither of these factors are likely to explain the rise in burglary on their own. There has also been a growth in professionalism as evidenced by an increase in the theft of expensive designer furniture, an increase in repeat victimization at the same households, and an increase in the average number of charged crimes per offender. Meanwhile, increases in the size of the young adult population and in the use of cocaine and amphetamines, plus the financial crisis, are thought to have provided fertile grounds for property crime to flourish.

The current report suffers four problems in regard to results. First, the evidence presented says more about what *didn't* cause the increase than what *did*. It is a diagnosis of exclusion in that it takes a long list of “suspects” and whittles it down to a short list. Whether the factors that survive this process are the primary causes of the increase is unclear. They are simply those that fit in terms of temporal overlap and direction, and therefore lack any “alibi” to exonerate them. There is no obvious single suspect and no smoking gun. The true causes of the increase may still be undetected.

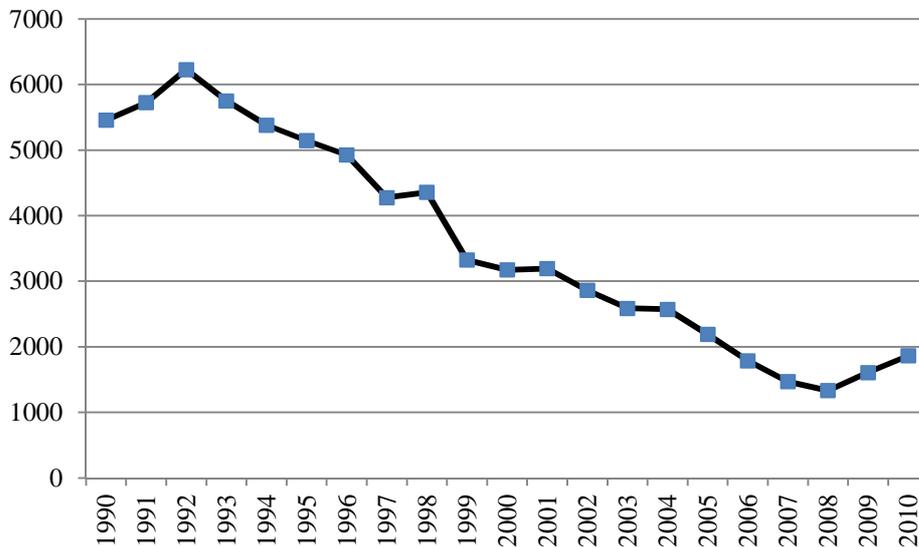
The second problem concerns the issue of generalizability. As mentioned previously, evidence for the increase in crime tourism is based on a tiny subsample of all burglars. This raises the question as to whether those who get caught are representative of those who do not. On the one hand, crime tourists might seem to be at increased risk of apprehension due to their foreign looks, foreign license plates, and lack of local knowledge, including language. On the other hand, resident Danes are often well known to police. Furthermore, unlike crime tourists, they stick around after their crimes and are therefore subject to DNA and other investigations. There is also anecdotal evidence that Danish residents are more likely to confess to crimes than crime tourists. The number of charges against crime tourists doubled between 2009 and 2010. Is this evidence that the crime tourism problem is worsening? Or is it evidence that the police's ability to identify and apprehend crime tourists is improving? If you buy and use special equipment designed for flatfishing you will catch more flatfish. This, of course, does not imply an increase in the flatfish population.

The third problem has to do with logic. If crime tourism and distractions caused by the Police Reform have had so much influence on burglary, then why haven't they affected other forms of crime? Why haven't other forms of property crime increased more?

Finally, the current study has been rich in statistical data, but poor in its examination of actual police procedure. It is very possible that changes in police policies or practices played a major role in the burglary increase – and later in its decline. Here I refer to Top

10 lists, DNA investigations, and proactive actions against buyers of stolen goods – just to name some examples. Figure 4.1 shows long term trends in cases of receiving stolen property (*hæleri*). The increase at the end of the series may go some way towards explaining the decline in burglary that finally came in 2010.

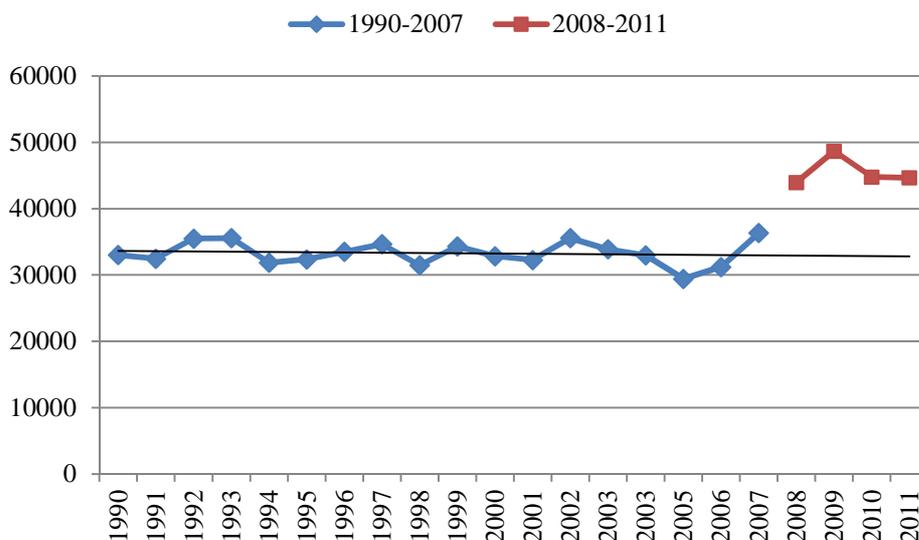
Figure 4.1. Receiving stolen property, police-recorded cases 1990-2010



Source: Statistics Denmark

Unfortunately, the decline in residential burglary seen in 2010 does not seem to be continuing. Projections for 2011 based on data from the first three quarters suggest a probable decline of only 0.3% (134 burglaries) in 2011 as compared to 2010. In other words, flat stability. The high rate of burglary discussed in this report therefore remains very much a current issue.

Figure 4.2. Number of residential burglaries, Denmark 1990-2011(2011 projected based on first three quarters)



Source: Statistics Denmark (2011 projected)

The explanation of crime trends is a tricky business. This must be clear to anyone who has followed the debate concerning the causes of the tremendous drop in recorded crime seen in the United States from 1991 to 2006. Between those years, police-recorded property and violent crime dropped by 35% and 38%, respectively. This is a drop of historic proportions. And it turns out that the crime drop was not a purely American phenomenon. It was common to many nations, most notably in Europe (Tonry 2005; van Dijk et al. 2008; Rosenfeld and Messner 2009). These declines have now been examined by numerous researchers who have spawned a variety of theories concerning changes in age demographics, drug use, economic patterns, incarceration (Blumstein & Wallman 1998), the legalization of abortion (Donahue and Levitt 2001; Levitt 2004), and a macro move toward increased security/target hardening (Farrell et al 2011). Yet despite these many theories, most criminologists would argue that the explanation for the decline in both Europe and North America remains a mystery.

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Appendix

Data for this report come from two primary sources: Statistics Denmark (1990-2010) and POLSAS (2005-2010). Data from Statistics Denmark span 21 years, but are far less detailed than the data from POLSAS, which span only 6 years, but contain full police report information on all reported crimes. Unlike the archival data from Statistics Denmark, which are static, data from POLSAS are “living” in the sense that they were subject to change right up until the point when they were accessed from the database. The number of burglaries registered in these two datasets therefore differ very slightly. During the six-year period 2005-2010, Statistics Denmark registered 234,417 burglaries while POLSAS registers 234,745 burglaries. This is a difference of 328, or approximately 0.001%. This difference means nothing, of course, to the substantive results of this report, but explains slight differences readers may notice in the number of cases found in tables and figures.

Table A1. Number of residential burglaries and total property crimes, 1990-2010

| | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | |
|----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|
| Burglary | 33,025 | 32,453 | 35,484 | 35,562 | 31,864 | 32,363 | 33,502 | |
| Property crime | 504,009 | 499,659 | 515,179 | 523,835 | 522,964 | 515,954 | 506,461 | |
| | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | |
| Burglary | 34,648 | 31,463 | 34,311 | 32,846 | 32,274 | 35,557 | 33,879 | |
| Property crime | 508,283 | 476,269 | 470,280 | 479,190 | 447,377 | 463,479 | 457,759 | |
| | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | TOTAL |
| Burglary | 32,956 | 29,439 | 31,204 | 36,342 | 43,974 | 48,670 | 44,788 | 736,604 |
| Property crime | 444,696 | 403,407 | 395,528 | 416,478 | 449,429 | 465,082 | 442,678 | 9,907,996 |

Source: Statistics Denmark

Table A2. Police reported residential burglary per 100.000 population, 2003-2007

| | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | % change 2003-7 |
|----------------------|------|------|------|------|------|--------------------|
| Albania | 12 | ... | 21 | 20 | 21 | 69 |
| Armenia | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| Austria | 234 | 338 | 231 | 306 | 335 | 43 |
| Belgium | 684 | 584 | 585 | 641 | ... | ... |
| Bosnia-Herzegovina | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| Bulgaria | 114 | 100 | 93 | 102 | 98 | -14 |
| Croatia | 74 | 64 | 57 | 67 | 69 | -6 |
| Cyprus | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| Czech Republic | 119 | 114 | 101 | 93 | 90 | -25 |
| Denmark | 840 | 806 | 709 | 725 | ... | ... |
| Estonia | 480 | 426 | 354 | 292 | 235 | -51 |
| Finland | 141 | 151 | 139 | 112 | 124 | -13 |
| France | 360 | 334 | 297 | 289 | 268 | -26 |
| Georgia | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| Germany | 261 | 255 | 222 | 215 | 220 | -16 |
| Greece | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| Hungary | 191 | 185 | 176 | 167 | 175 | -9 |
| Iceland | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| Ireland | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| Italy | 300 | 191 | 206 | 241 | ... | ... |
| Latvia | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| Lithuania | 248 | 267 | 207 | 196 | 154 | -38 |
| Luxembourg | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| Malta | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| Moldova | 106 | 90 | 67 | 49 | 29 | -73 |
| Netherlands | 638 | 589 | 569 | 558 | 518 | -19 |
| Norway | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| Poland | 226 | 222 | 195 | 156 | 126 | -44 |
| Portugal | 210 | 215 | 207 | 220 | 210 | 0 |
| Romania | 57 | 46 | 35 | 42 | 49 | -15 |
| Russia | 199 | 176 | 185 | 165 | 149 | -25 |
| Slovakia | 49 | 43 | 52 | 48 | 45 | -9 |
| Slovenia | 119 | 138 | 114 | 111 | 114 | -4 |
| Spain | 210 | 191 | 188 | 184 | 163 | -22 |
| Sweden | 194 | 195 | 184 | 165 | 188 | -3 |
| Switzerland | 389 | 408 | 350 | 307 | 327 | -16 |
| TFYR of Macedonia | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| Turkey | ... | ... | ... | 118 | 98 | ... |
| Ukraine | 138 | 129 | 106 | 76 | 65 | -53 |
| UK: England & Wales | 762 | 606 | 563 | 544 | 519 | -32 |
| UK: Northern Ireland | 525 | 427 | 421 | 392 | 382 | -27 |
| UK: Scotland | 361 | 342 | 297 | 284 | 242 | -33 |
| <i>Mean</i> | 284 | 273 | 239 | 230 | 186 | |
| <i>Median</i> | 210 | 205 | 195 | 176 | 154 | |
| <i>Minimum</i> | 12 | 43 | 21 | 20 | 21 | |
| <i>Maximum</i> | 840 | 806 | 709 | 725 | 519 | |

SOURCE: Reproduced without permission from The European Sourcebook of Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics - 2010, page 52, Table 1.2.1.19.

Table A3. Three primary burglary categories from Statistics Denmark, 1990-2010

| | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 |
|-----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Residential | 33025 | 32453 | 35484 | 35562 | 31864 | 32363 | 33502 | 34648 | 31463 | 34311 |
| Business | 63037 | 60806 | 60983 | 60570 | 51980 | 52013 | 54663 | 54905 | 50501 | 46830 |
| Holiday/storage | 26104 | 27097 | 26442 | 25359 | 22495 | 22157 | 21717 | 21946 | 19969 | 19754 |

| | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|-----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Residential | 32846 | 32274 | 35557 | 33879 | 32956 | 29439 | 31204 | 36342 | 43974 | 48670 | 44788 |
| Business | 48007 | 46115 | 49443 | 49178 | 40695 | 32600 | 27152 | 28625 | 33310 | 38778 | 33149 |
| Holiday/storage | 18715 | 16622 | 18215 | 17934 | 16992 | 14826 | 13227 | 13820 | 16294 | 19524 | 18746 |

Residential =Burglaries in houses, apartments, rooms and farms (*Indbrud i villaer, lejligheder m.v.*);
 Business= Burglaries in banks, stores, etc. (*Indbrud i bank, forret. m.v.*); Holiday/storage= Burglaries in
 summer houses, garages, sheds, cellars, etc (*Indbrud i fritidshuse, garager m.v.*)

Source: Statistics Denmark

Table A4. Seven major forms of property crime (which together comprise 84.5% of all property crime), 2005-2010

| | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|-------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Shoplifting | 20,440 | 18,195 | 17,892 | 19,567 | 20,470 | 20,946 |
| Vandalism | 41,434 | 42,963 | 42,895 | 40,910 | 39,201 | 32,446 |
| Burglary in banks stores etc. | 32,600 | 27,152 | 28,625 | 33,310 | 38,778 | 33,149 |
| Theft from cars boats etc. | 40,609 | 45,340 | 46,713 | 41,544 | 40,684 | 39,492 |
| Residential burglary | 29,439 | 31,204 | 36,342 | 43,974 | 48,670 | 44,788 |
| Theft/use theft of bicycle | 65,318 | 66,273 | 67,307 | 71,860 | 79,272 | 71,736 |
| General theft | 107,071 | 102,417 | 110,732 | 127,265 | 124,076 | 129,410 |
| All property crime | 403,407 | 395,528 | 416,478 | 449,429 | 465,082 | 442,678 |

Source: Statistics Denmark

Table A5. Residential burglaries reported to police, by Nordic country (1990-2010)

| | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 |
|---------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Sweden | 22446 | 22056 | 21550 | 20237 | 17670 | 16701 | 16835 | 18359 | 17536 | 16834 |
| Denmark | 33025 | 32453 | 35484 | 35562 | 31864 | 32363 | 33502 | 34648 | 31463 | 34311 |
| Finland | 10616 | 12412 | 12255 | 13194 | 12829 | 11512 | 10311 | 10436 | 10291 | 9763 |
| Norway | NA | NA | NA | 18663 | 17329 | 18382 | 18054 | 15976 | 14128 | 11821 |

| | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|---------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Sweden | 17581 | 15169 | 16562 | 17344 | 17573 | 16654 | 15005 | 16936 | 18176 | 20463 | 19774 |
| Denmark | 32846 | 32274 | 35557 | 33879 | 32956 | 29439 | 31204 | 36342 | 43974 | 48670 | 44788 |
| Finland | 9264 | 7957 | 7406 | 7373 | 7901 | 7281 | 5923 | 6532 | 5978 | 6497 | 6453 |
| Norway | 10402 | 9641 | 10482 | 10475 | 8613 | 8136 | 7268 | 6777 | 8125 | 9035 | 7284 |

Source: Eurostat and individual national statistical archives.

Table A6. Definitions of residential burglaries reported to Eurostat in four Nordic countries

- Denmark (household burglary/indbrud i beboelse): Completed and attempted burglaries in villas, apartments, farmhouses and rooms.
- Sweden (household burglary/inbrottsstöld i bostad): Completed and attempted burglaries in villas and apartments (presumably also including farmhouses and rooms).
- Finland (burglary of dwellings/asunto-murrot): Completed and attempted burglaries in villas, apartments, farmhouses and rooms, plus summer residences.
- Norway (aggravated larceny from a dwelling/grovt tyveri fra leilighet, bolighus og hytte): Completed thefts in villas, apartments, (presumably including farmhouses and rooms), plus summer cottages (hytte). Inclusion requires high monetary loss due to damage during forcible entry, value of stolen items, or both.

Source: National archives

Table A7. Comparative levels of burglary in four Nordic countries, 1990-2009

| | Denmark | Sweden | Norway | Finland |
|------------|---------|--------|--------|---------|
| 1990-2007* | 33,287 | 17,947 | 12,410 | 9,625 |
| 2000-07 | 33,062 | 16,603 | 8,974 | 7,455 |
| 2005 | 29,439 | 16,654 | 8,136 | 7,281 |
| 2005-06 | 30,322 | 15,830 | 7,702 | 6,602 |
| 2005-07 | 32,328 | 16,198 | 7,394 | 6,579 |
| 2008 | 43,974 | 18,176 | 8,125 | 5,978 |
| 2009 | 48,670 | 20,463 | 9,035 | 6,497 |

* Data for Norway based on 1993-2010.

Source: National statistical archives

Table A8. Insurance compensation per burglary claim in Danish kroner, 2004-2010

| 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 18,384 | 19,081 | 19,579 | 21,100 | 23,647 | 22,924 | 23,043 |

Source: Forsikring & Pension (2011)

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