Project proposal Data Bootcamp – Alexandra Steckmest

**A closer look at recidivism – how effective is it to invest money in rehabilitative forms of justice in prisons to achieve lower rates of recidivism?**

Different countries have vastly different criminal justice systems, ranging from ones that treat inmates as animals to ones that provide TV screens to every cell. Recently, there seems to be a belief that the more rehabilitative justice systems are “better” in the sense that it yields lower recidivism (rearrests), and therefore sees better results for prisoners after they are released. My project will look at Norway, which has one of the world’s lowest recidivism rates, as case study for a rehabilitative justice system and will attempt to determine whether making prisons more focused on rehabilitation actually decreases recidivism rates. Specifically, I will look at recidivism rates for various groups before and after a Storting (supreme legislature of Norway) message from 2008 that planned to make significant changes to bring down recidivism in Norwegian prisons.

All the data I will use comes from Statistics Norway and covers data between 2002 and 2010. I have gathered 3 data sets that I plan to use to analyse how recidivism changes over time:

* The first data set shows 5-year recidivism rates for various types of principal offenses as well as offense at recidivism. For instance, the 2002 column will contain information that says: after 5 years of being released from a specific principal offense, what percentage of released prisoners get arrested again, and for what type of offense do they get arrested the second time?
  + This data set supports my question because from it I will be able to tell which types of offenses are most and least affected by the changes
* The second data set shows people charged in base year by number of years with recidivism (up to 5 years), and also shows recidivism for various age categories as well as sexes for each year. From this I hope to determine how recidivism varies across gender, age groups and, perhaps most interestingly, across years released. For instance, do most of the convicted criminals who reoffend do so in the first year after they are released or later?
  + This supports my question because it will hopefully point to some specific effects of changes that are made, e.g. investments in rehabilitation seem to have a significant impact on women but not on men. This data may even allow me to get some insight into where the biggest need for rehabilitation lies.
* The third data set shows the budget for various aspects of the Norwegian Correctional Service

Include animated plots to show changes over time!

Can also create a regression line on scatter plots to show line of best fit.

http://www.pewresearch.org/

Obviously, there are a number of limitations to the conclusions I will be able to draw from this data. For instance, if there are changes after 2008 they may not be due directly to the message, and also is likely that even if there is a direct effect this may take a few years to see. However, I still hope to be able to convey some interesting facts and perhaps evaluations of a rehabilitative justice system.

In order to best convey my findings, I plan to use the following figures:

EXTRA (out of interest)

* Graph (world map) of countries with various recidivism rates
  + If US has higher rates, would recidivism work? Take a look at polls that ask whether people think too much/little money is being used on prisons or other evaluations

Maybe just for fun include an opinion poll or something extra at the end (showing scraping from websites?) that talks about how maybe rehabilitative justice really works, but can it be implemented in America where people think the justice system is “not tough enough”?

Tankegang:

* Tilbakefall
  + Siden 1992, vis først 5-årig for hvert år, så vis div.
* Lønner det seg å bruke penger på høyere rehabilitering?

Artikler, handlingsplan om rehabilitering – stortingsmelding ”straff som virker” (2008) eller handlingsplan for arbeidsdriften 2005 <http://www.kriminalomsorgen.no/strategi-og-handlingsplan-for-arbeidsdriften.275515-237613.html> - Innholdet i sysselsettingen skal kunne tilføre ferdigheter og kunnskaper, og den skal styrke innsattes mulighet for arbeid etter løslatelse.

* + Varierer det over tid?
  + Varierer det for hvert år som går (for eksempel, er det lavt tilbakefall de første to tre årene og så blir det høyt etter fire/fem år, i så fall lønner det seg å bruke tid på de som kommer rett ut av fengslet
  + Varierer det over grupper (alder)
  + Varierer det over typer lovbrudd?
    - Hvem har høyest tilbakefall? Narkotika brukere? I så fall vil det vel lønne seg å bruke penger på rehabilitering i fengsel
    - Siktede med tilbakefall har en tendens til å bli siktet for samme lovbrudd som tidligere
    - Dette er viktig fordi det betyr at det å komme i fengsel gjør ikke nødvendigvis at man blir mer kriminell
  + Varierer det over innvandrere/etniske nordmenn
  + Kvinner/menn?
    - Menn mer enn kvinner

Data:

* SSB fra 1992
* <https://www.ssb.no/en/forskning/discussion-papers/_attachment/166596?_ts=14496f98d88>
* This data supports my question because…