



# Penal Exceptionalism?: Nordic Prison Policy and Practice

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In the growing field of comparative criminal justice, the Nordic countries are regularly used as exceptions to the global move towards growing rates of imprisonment and tougher, less welfare-oriented crime-control policies.

Why are the Nordic penal institutions viewed as so 'different' from a non-Nordic vantage point? Are Nordic prisons and penal policies in fact positive exceptions to the general rule? If they are, what exactly are the exceptional qualities, and why are the Nordic societies lucky enough to have them? Are there important overlooked examples of Nordic 'bad practice' in the penal area? Could there be a specifically Nordic way of doing prison research, contributing to the gap between internal and external perspectives?

In considering – among others – the above questions, this book explores and discusses the Nordic jurisdictions as contexts for the specific penal policies and practices that may or may not be described as exceptional.

Written by leading prison scholars from the Nordic countries as well as selected researchers from the English-speaking world 'looking in', this book will be particularly useful for students of criminology and practitioners across the Nordic countries, but also of relevance in a wider geographical context.

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