

What Sweden's Gun Control Doesn't Prevent

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We're often told that we should embrace gun control because Europe's rates of gun violence are so much lower than ours. Now, there are problems with that argument, including the fact that our non-gun homicide rate is typically [higher than those nations' total homicide rates](#).

There are cultural factors at play here that are often missing from any discussion about so-called gun violence.

In fact, for evidence of this, we can look elsewhere in Europe.

Sweden, for example, has much stricter gun control laws than would ever fly in the United States. Among the many popular anti-gun laws on the books is a requirement to have a good reason to have a gun. While sports and hunting are acceptable, self-defense rarely is and then only with a specific threat against the individual.

In short, there's almost nothing on the books that wouldn't make American anti-gunners squeal with delight.

And yet, they have a problem. They [have a very high murder rate](#) for a European nation.

But these days it also has another distinction: by far the highest per capita rate of gun violence in the EU. **Last year 55 people were shot dead in 363 separate shootings in a country of just 10 million people. By comparison, there were just six fatal shootings in the three other Nordic countries - Norway, Finland and Denmark - combined.**

In an increasing number of cases, courts have found the epidemic of violence emerging from Sweden's archipelago of youth homes, built to serve the dual purpose of looking after children in state care and punishing youth offenders.

According to accounts for this story from eight sources including a former gang member, several youth home workers, prosecutors and criminologists, the homes have turned into recruiting grounds for gangs, who use them to enlist killers too young to be jailed.

But they've got strict gun control. That should take care of their problems, yet it doesn't. Why?

The answer is that when you have a subculture that celebrates violence, they'll find a way to bring people up into a world where there is violence.

They'll find a way to get guns as well.

Sweden doesn't exactly have a thriving gun culture like the United States. They have guns, sure, but nowhere like we do. In fact, **they have fewer guns per capita than many other European nations, including other Nordic nations like Iceland, Finland, and Norway.**

And yet, Sweden's gun homicide rate is significantly higher than all the others.

Sweden has developed a subculture that glorifies violence, recruits children because they can't be jailed, and then uses them for what amounts to contract hits knowing they'll walk. These youth homes, originally intended to provide a safe place for the children to live, have put them in the crosshairs of violent gangs.

They don't need a lack of gun laws, just a lack of respect for the law.

For all the talk of how gun availability drives violent crime, we need to understand that it's never that simple. Sweden is a prime example of just how it's not anywhere near as simple.

Crime is a problem and will likely always be a problem, but the harsh reality here is that this is another bit of evidence that gun control isn't the answer to it.