

National Conference on Australian Prison Issues

**A National Perspective on the Use
(or Abuse)
of Imprisonment in Australia**

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**Their Inter-relationship
and Impact of
Various Social Disadvantage Factors**



Social Disadvantage

- Measures social disadvantage by postcode area in Vic and New South Wales
- Poverty concentrated and entrenched in certain areas
- Strong correlations between disadvantage factors
- Positive impact of social cohesion

Social Disadvantage Factors

- Unemployment
- Long Term Unemployment
- Low Family Income
- Early School Leaving
- Year 12 Incomplete
- Low Work Skills
- Low Birth Weight
- Child Neglect
- Psychiatric Hosp. Admissions
- Disability/Sickness Allowance
- Mortality
- Court Convictions
- Imprisonment

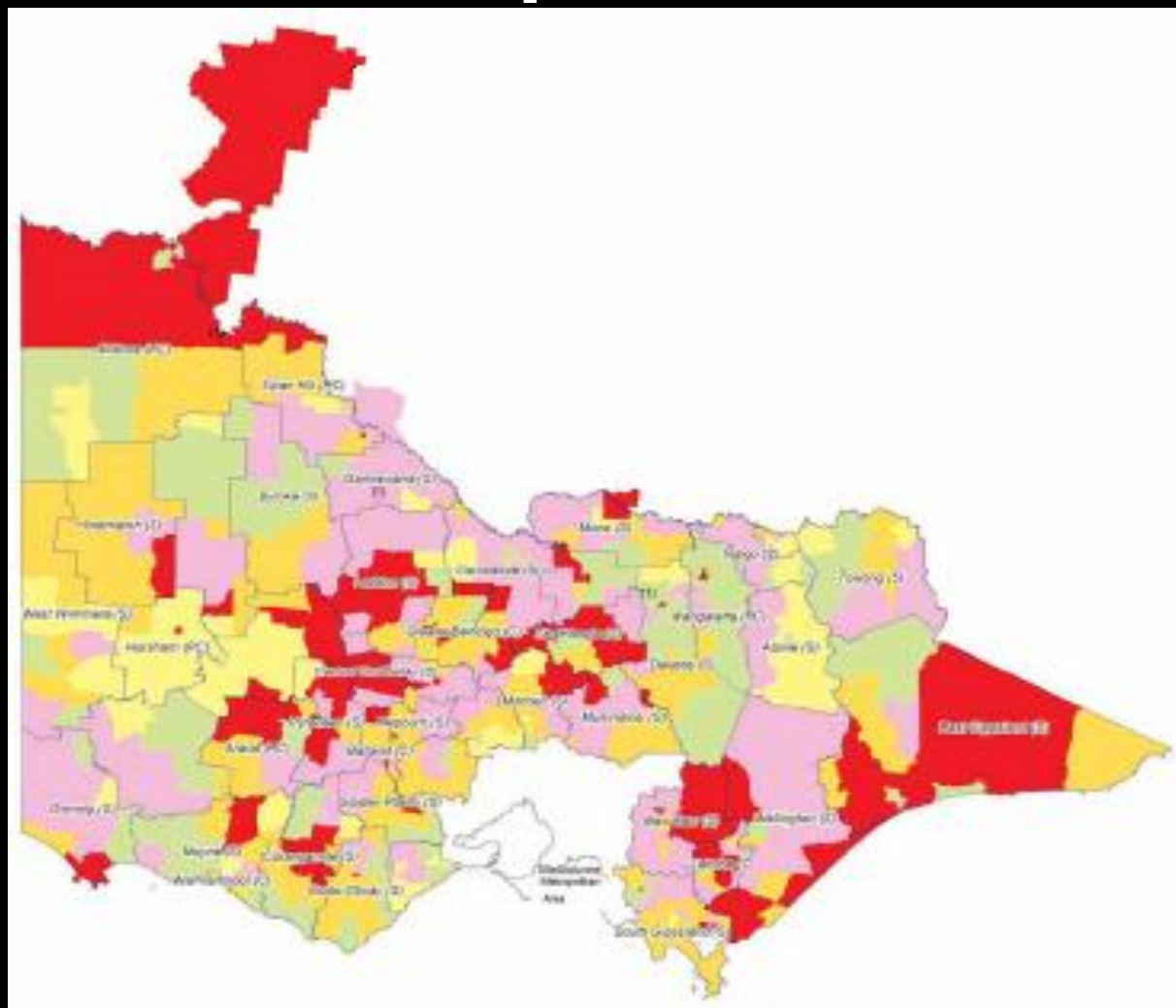
Correlations with Convictions

- Child abuse/neglect: .481
- Disability pension: .369
- Early School Leaving: .317
- Psych. Admissions: .359
- Unemployment: .596
- Long Term Unempl: .433
- Imprisonment: .359

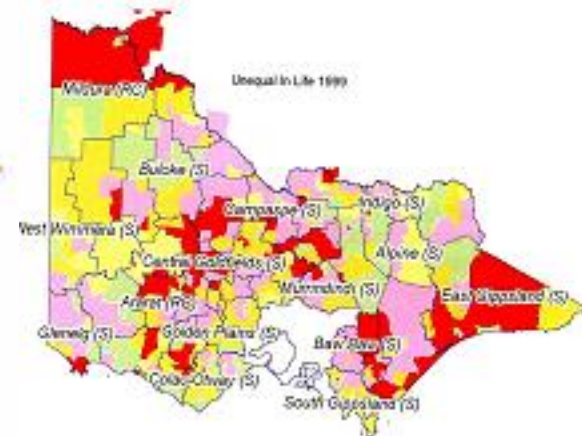
Correlations with Imprisonment

- Child abuse/neglect: .306
- Childhood accidents: .621
- Low skilled workers: .216
- Psych. Admissions: .438
- Unemployment: .404
- Long Term Unempl: .341
- Court Convictions: .359

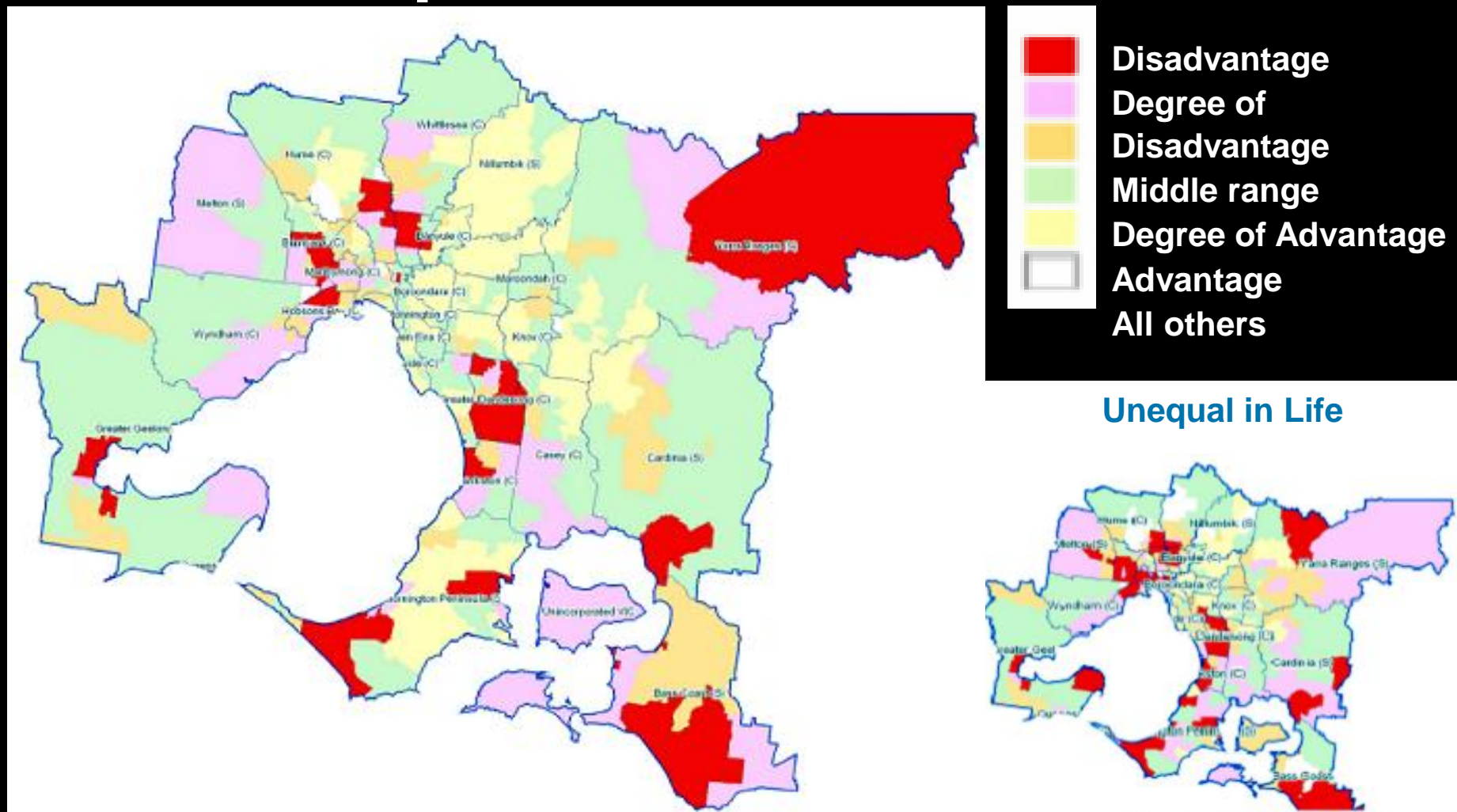
Social Comparison – Vic



Unequal in Life



Social Comparison – Melbourne



Spatial Compression of Disadvantage

Percentage of Victorian Postcode areas needed to account for 25% and 50% of instances of each form of disadvantage

	TO REACH 25%	TO REACH 50%
Imprisonment	2.1	7.3
Child Neglect	2.7	8.3
Long Term Unemployment	2.9	8.9
Psychiatric Hospital Admissions	3.5	10.6
Disability/Sickness Allowance	3.6	11.2
Court Convictions	3.9	11.1

N = 647

Spatial Compression of Disadvantage (cont'd)

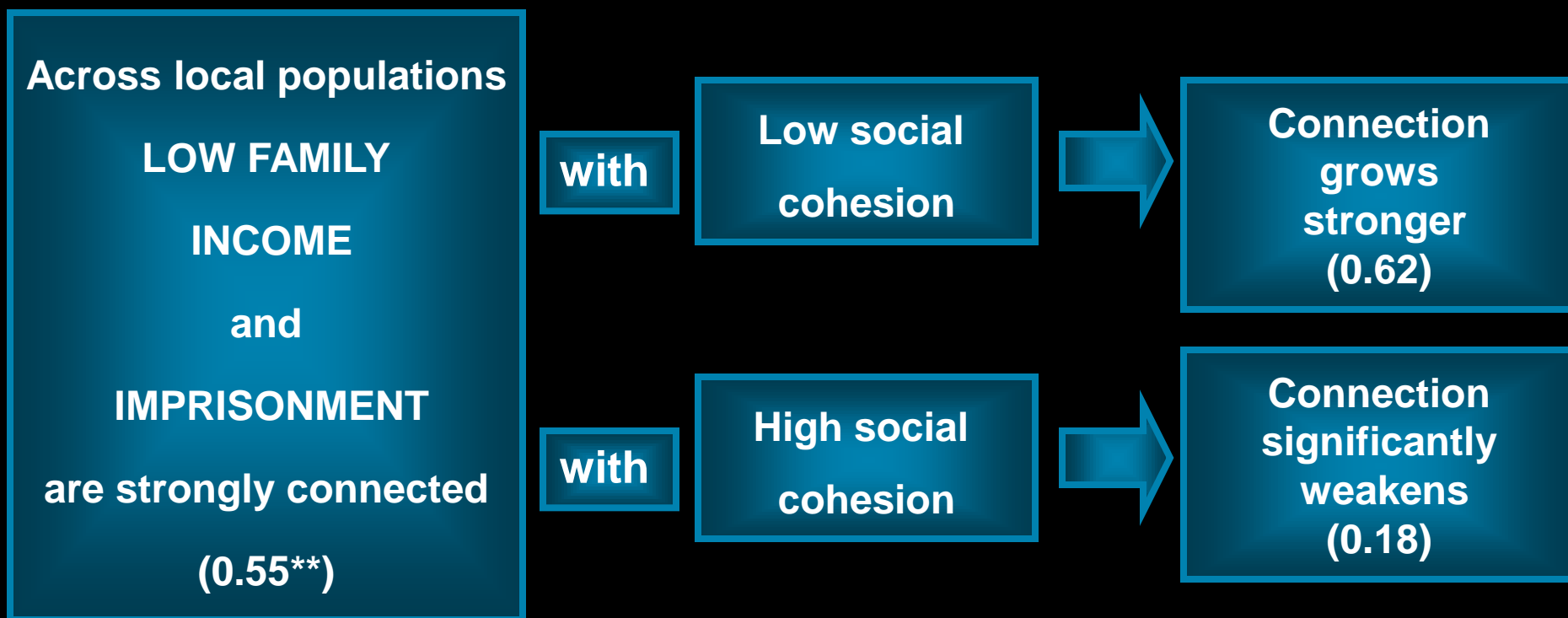
	TO REACH 25%	TO REACH 50%
Low Birth Weight	3.9	11.6
Year 12 Incomplete	3.9	11.8
Unemployment	4.1	11.3
Low Work Skills	4.2	11.6
Early School Leaving	4.4	12.4
Low Family Income	4.5	12.9
Mortality	4.8	13.3

Social Cohesion Factors

- *How to measure community strengths*

- Participation in organised recreation/sports groups
- Volunteering
- Availability of informal help

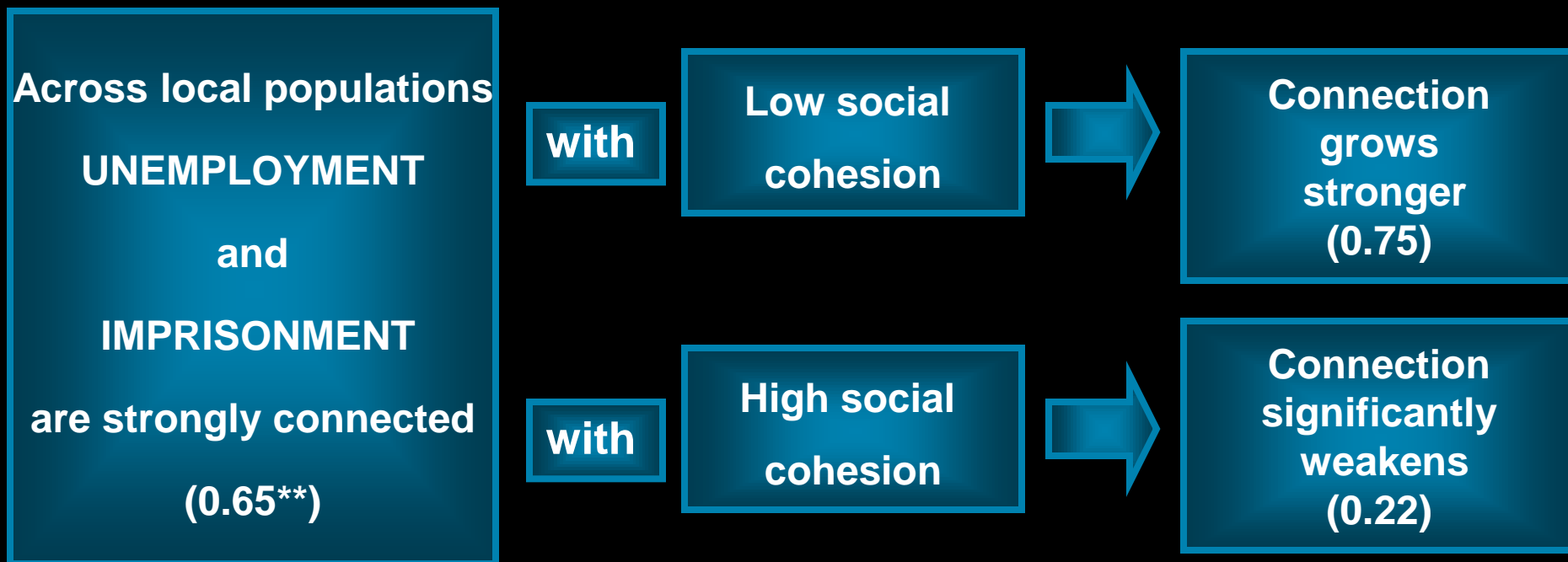
Community Development Interventions Drives a Wedge in the Cycle of Disadvantage



N = 277

**Significant at .01 level

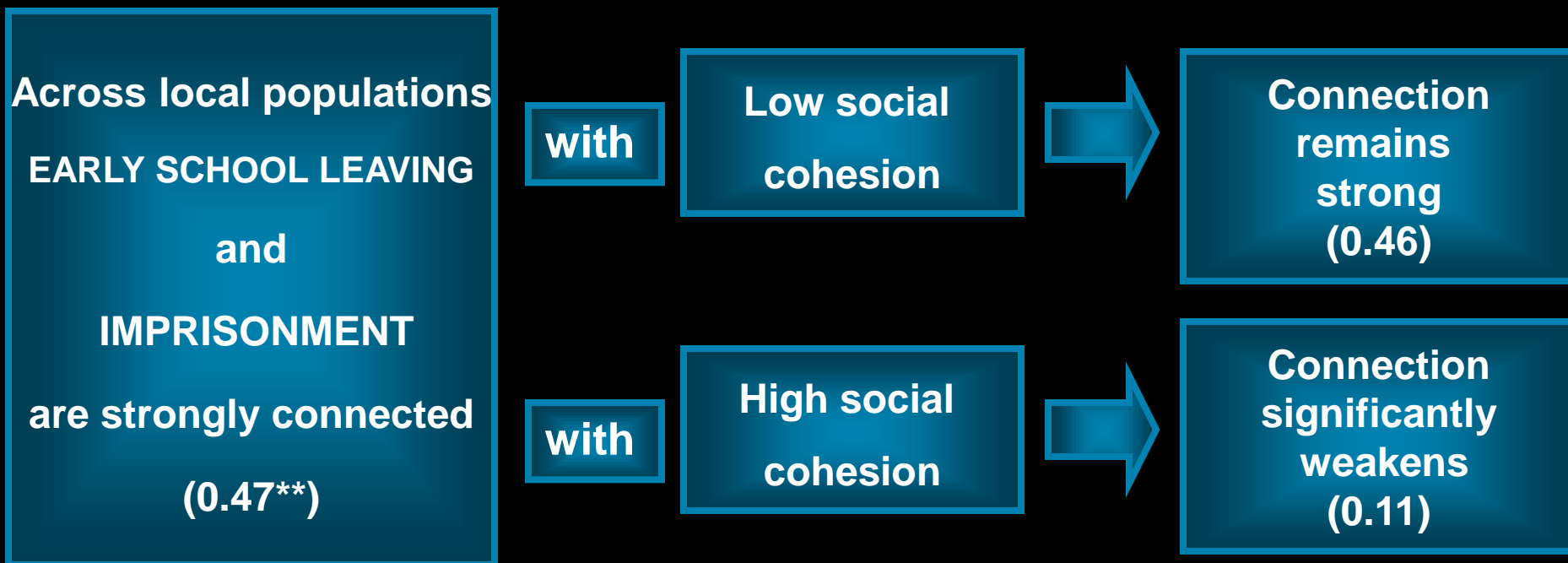
Impact of Community Development Interventions (contd)



N = 277

**Significant at .01 level

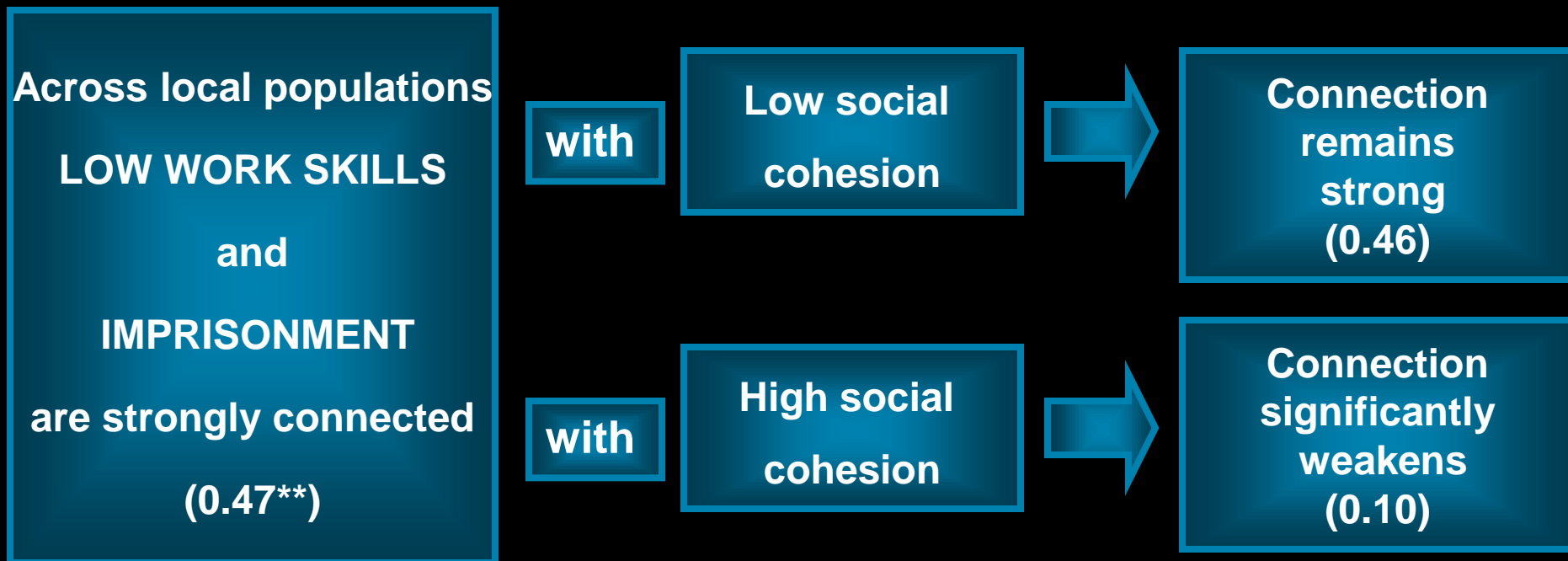
Impact of Community Development Interventions (contd)



N = 277

**Significant at .01 level

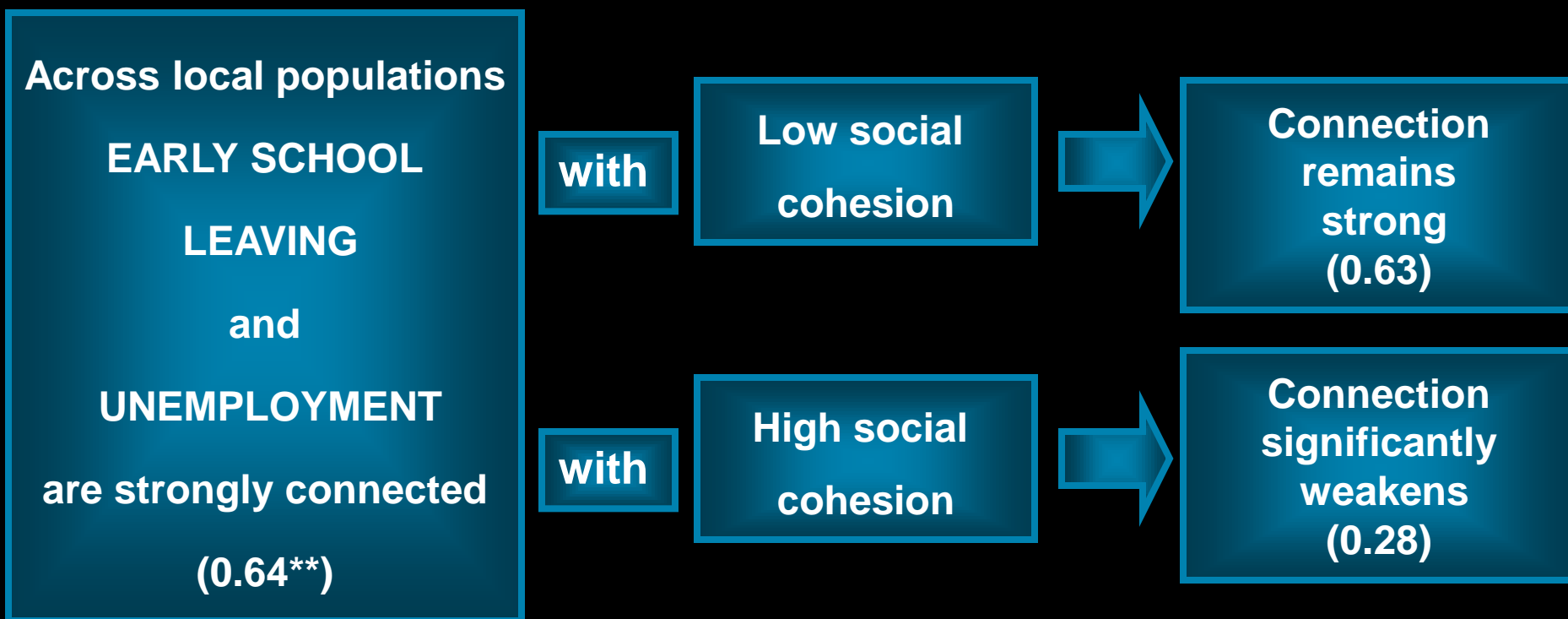
Impact of Community Development Interventions (contd)



N = 277

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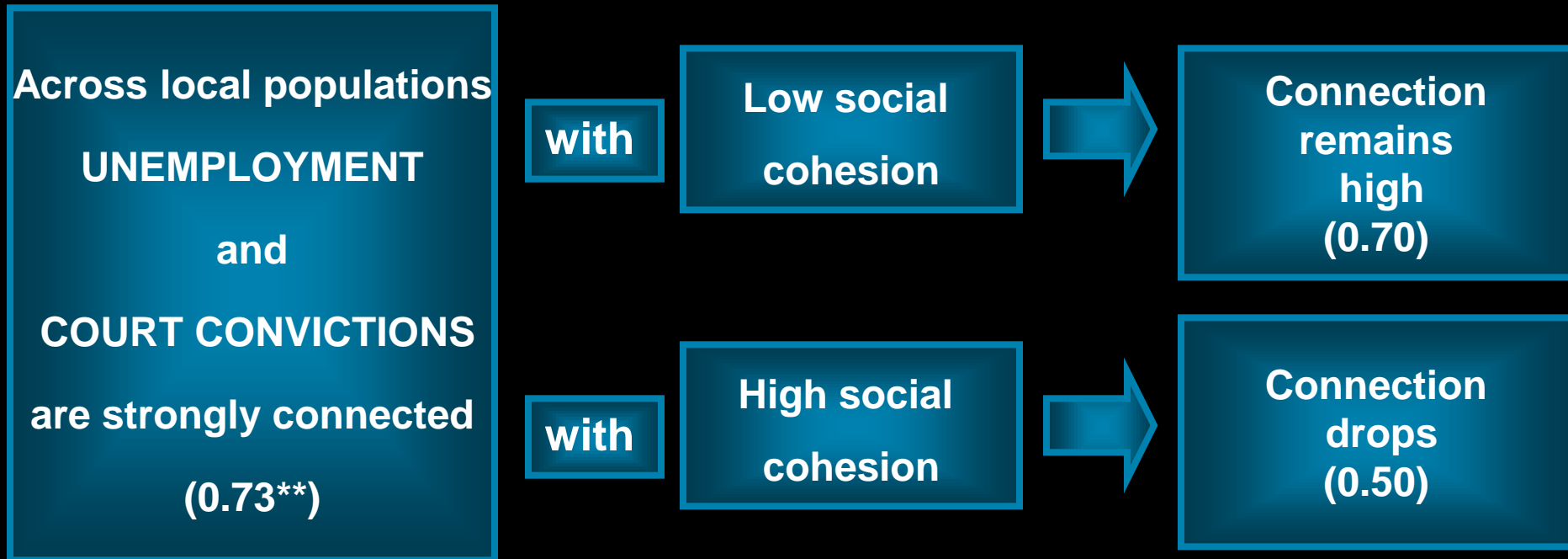
Impact of Community Development Interventions (contd)



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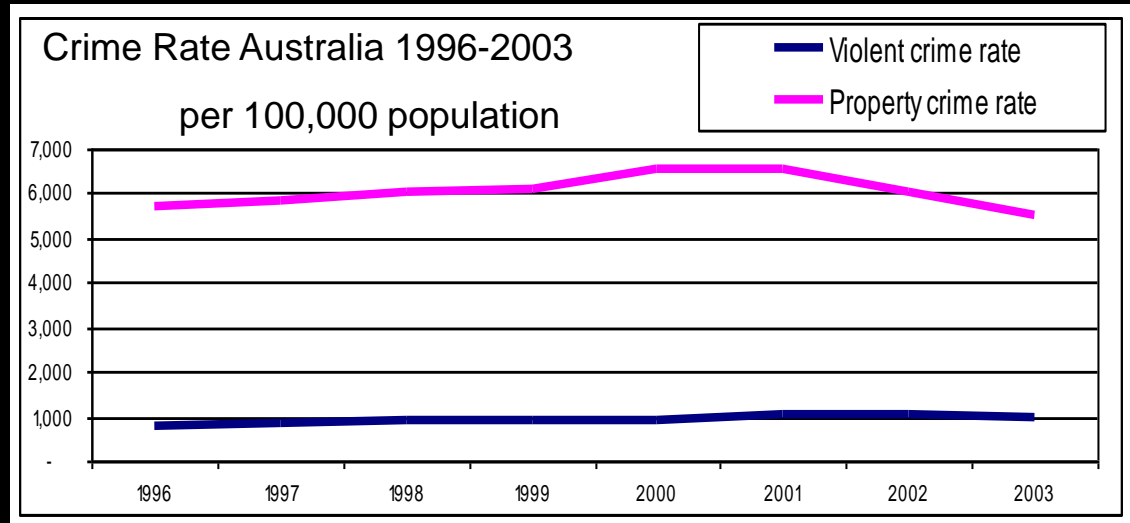
Impact of Community Development Interventions (contd)



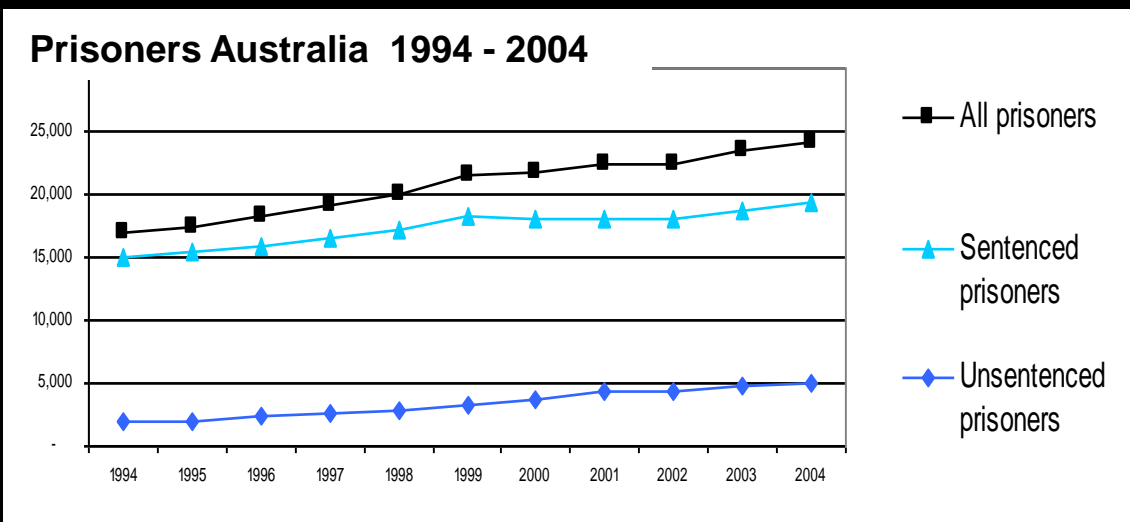
N = 277

**Significant at .01 level

Source: *Crime Statistics*. Australian Institute of Criminology. Australian crime. Facts and figures 2004



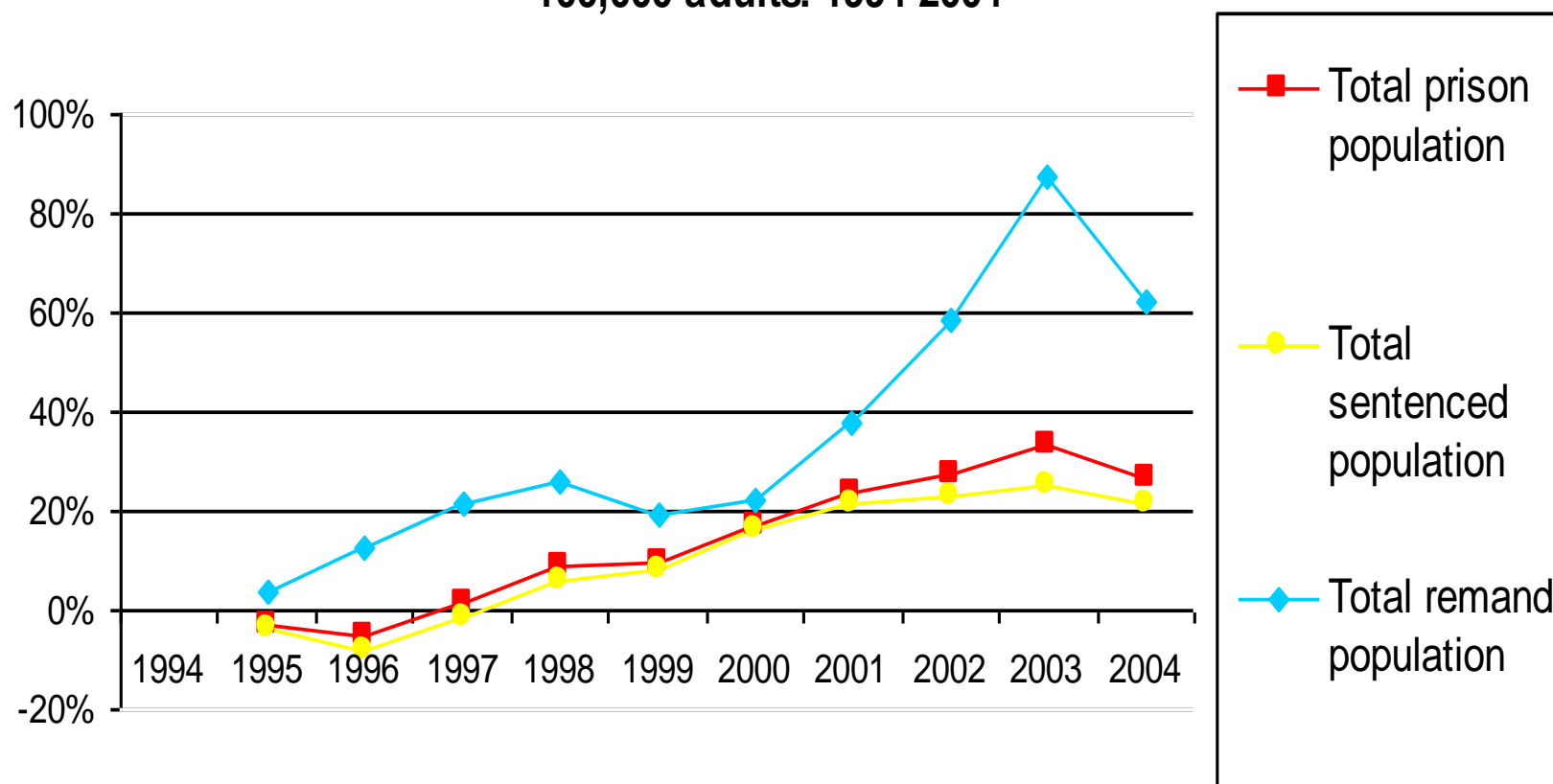
**Crime rate down
but
Prison rate up**



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2004), *Prisoners in Australia*, ABS, Cat No 4517.0, Table 16, p. 31.

Increase in Remand Population - Vic

Victorian prison population, cumulative percentage change per 100,000 adults: 1994-2004





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