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

Granville 2142

Footscray 3011

Maltland 2320

Ballarat 3350

Blacktown 2148

Traralgon 3844

Parramatta 2150

Dandenong 3175

Tamworth 2340

Mildura 3500

Wordbee 3030

Moollahra 2025

Box HIII 3128

Kinas Cross 2011

Wangaratta 3676

Chatswood 2067

Horsham 3400

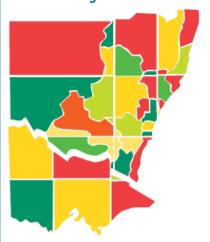
Bathurst 2795

Frankston 3199

Parkas 2870

Community adversity and resilience:

the distribution of social disadvantage in Victoria and New South Wales and the mediating role of social cohesion



Tony Vinson

The Ignatius Centre for social policy and research

March 2004



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

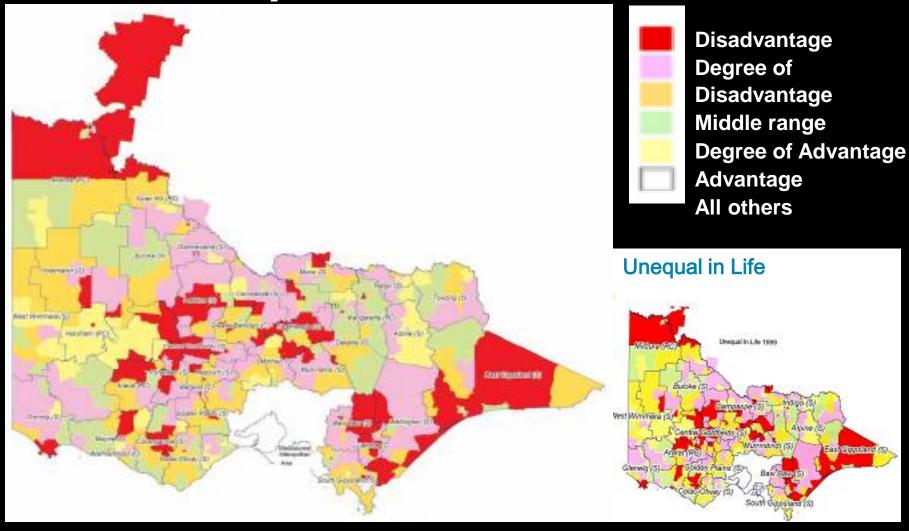
Correlations with Convictions

- 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

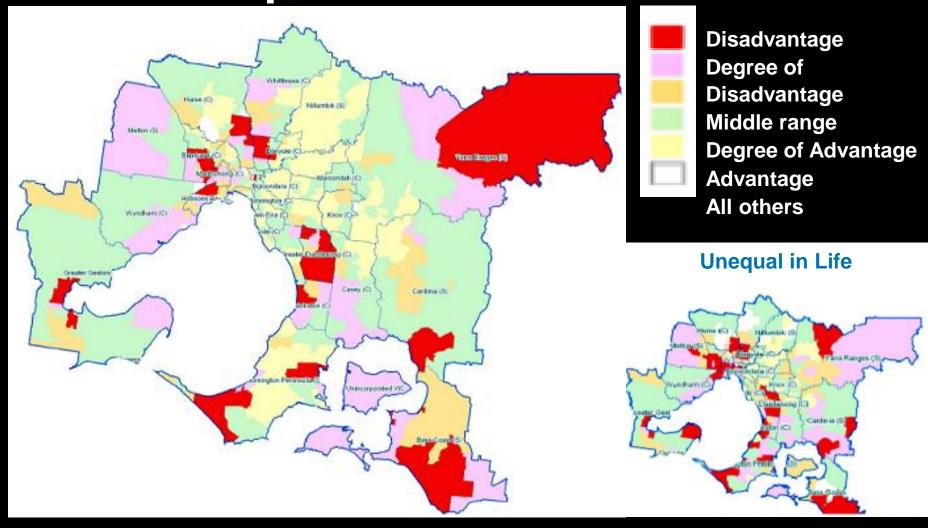
- Child abuse/neglect: .306
- Childhood accidents: .621
- Low skilled workers: .216
- Psych. Admissions: .438
- Unemployment: .404
- Long Term Unempl: .341
- Court Convictions: .359

Social Comparison – Vic



Source: Vinson, T., Community, Adversity & Resilience, Jesuit Social Services, Melbourne, 2004, [Map 4]

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	TO REACH
	25%	50%
Imprisonment	2.1	7.3
Child Neglect	2.7	8.3
Long Term Unemployment	2.9	8.9
Psychiatric Hospital	3.5	10.6
Admissions		
Disability/Sickness Allowance	3.6	11.2
N = 647 Convictions Source: Vinson T. Community Ac	2 Q dversity & Resilience, Jesuit Social S	11 1

Spatial Compression of Disadvantage (cont'd)

	TO REACH	TO REACH
	25%	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

Across local populations Connection Low social LOW FAMILY with grows cohesion stronger **INCOME** (0.62)and Connection **IMPRISONMENT** High social significantly with are strongly connected weakens cohesion (0.18)(0.55**)

Across local populations Connection Low social with grows UNEMPLOYMENT cohesion stronger (0.75)and **IMPRISONMENT** Connection High social significantly are strongly connected with weakens cohesion (0.65**)(0.22)

Across local populations Connection Low social with remains **EARLY SCHOOL LEAVING** cohesion strong (0.46)and **IMPRISONMENT** Connection High social significantly are strongly connected with weakens cohesion (0.47**)(0.11)

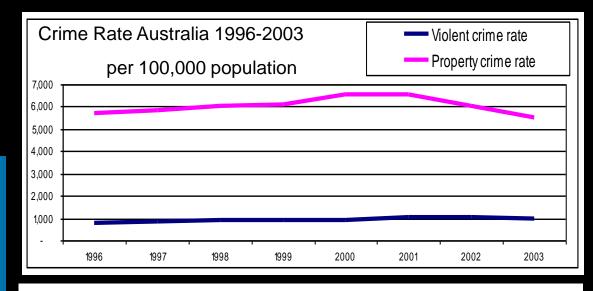
Across local populations Connection Low social with remains **LOW WORK SKILLS** cohesion strong (0.46)and **IMPRISONMENT** Connection High social significantly are strongly connected with weakens cohesion (0.47**)(0.10)

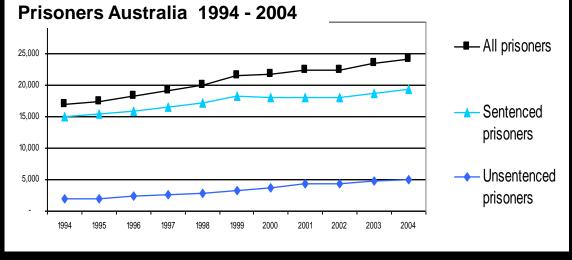
Across local populations Connection Low social **EARLY SCHOOL** with remains cohesion strong **LEAVING** (0.63)and Connection UNEMPLOYMENT High social significantly with are strongly connected weakens cohesion (0.28)(0.64**)

Across local populations Connection Low social with remains UNEMPLOYMENT cohesion high (0.70)and **COURT CONVICTIONS** Connection **High social** are strongly connected with drops cohesion (0.50)(0.73**)

Crime rate down
but
Prison rate up

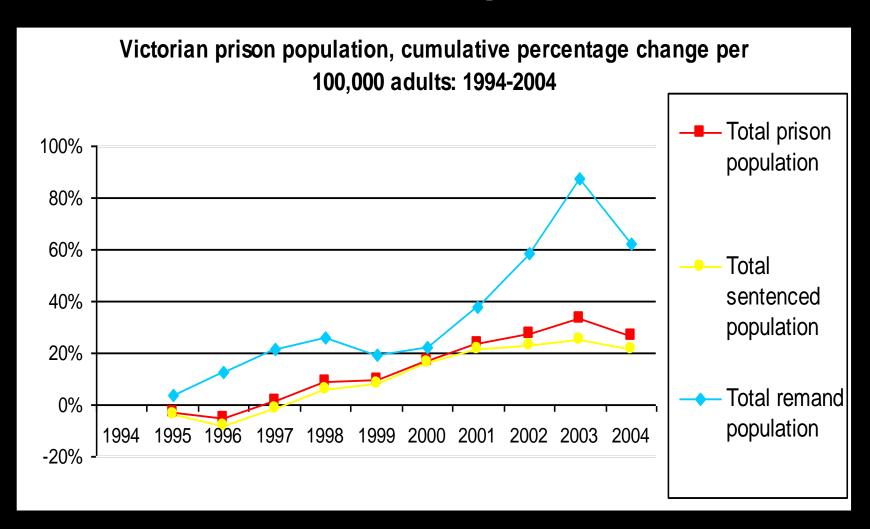
Source: Crime Statistics. Australian Institute of Criminology. Australian crime. Facts and figures 2004





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

Increase in Remand Population - Vic



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