

KIRSTEN ELISA PETERSEN
AND LARS LADEFOGED

YOUTH IN GANGS

WHAT DO WE
KNOW - AND
WHAT DON'T WE
KNOW?



Kirsten Elisa Petersen and Lars Ladefoged

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A Research Review of National and
International Knowledge about Youth in Gangs

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A Research Review of National and International Knowledge about Youth in Gangs

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Preface

This research and knowledge gathering project presents international, Nordic, and Danish research and knowledge regarding youth in gangs.

This research and knowledge gathering constitutes part II of a combined research project focused on young men in gangs, which has been running since January of 2013. Earlier in the course of the project, report number 1 was published with the title “Voices from a Gang – Young Gang Members Own Stories as told by themselves about Growing Up, Daily Life, and Their Future” (Petersen, 2015).

The research project also encompassed a temporal and economic opportunity to develop research and knowledge gathering specifically with a focus on pinning down existing research-based knowledge on the subject of youth in gangs, both in a Danish and international context – and this is what is now being presented in this report. The third and last report (Report Part III) presents the results of that part of the research project that focused on the social programs and efforts that are being implemented across the country in various forms to prevent gang affiliation, as well as focusing on efforts that help young people leave gangs. Here, the professional workers are included, meaning those who work with young people in gangs in various ways, their knowledge and experience, and the social and social-pedagogical efforts, theories, and methods, on which the professionals base their work. The third and last report in the complete research project about young men in gangs is expected published in December of 2018.

In the period 2013- 2016, research, articles, books, and reports from both Danish and international reports in both Danish and international search bases were collected, and a large number of cross searches were completed for the purpose of capturing more research.

Many people have been of assistance throughout this period in various ways. Therefore, we first want to thank FAOS - Employment Relations Research Center (SL), which has contributed financially to getting searches done in international and Danish search bases via the research library at Aarhus University (DPU).

Also, a very special thank you for a number of international and Nordic researchers in the so-called gang research field who have assisted with their knowledge on the subject and with recommended research, articles, and books, which they consider central to precisely this field of study. Therefore, the following researchers deserve a special thank you here for their time and contributions:

<p>Scott Decker, PhD</p> <p>Foundation Professor and Director of the Center for Public Criminology. School of Criminology & Criminal Justice Arizona State University</p>	<p>David Pyrooz, PhD</p> <p>Assistant Professor. Faculty Associate, Problem Behavior & Positive Youth Development Institute of Behavioral Science University of Colorado Boulder</p>
<p>Finn-Aage Esbensen, PhD</p> <p>E. Desmond Lee Professor of Youth Crime and Violence. Chair, Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice. University of Missouri-St. Louis.</p>	<p>Beth Bjerregaard, PhD</p> <p>Professor & Chair, Department of Criminal Justice & Criminology. University of North Carolina at Charlotte</p>
<p>Cheryl C. Maxson, PhD</p> <p>Professor and Chair. Department of Criminology, Law and Society. University of California, Irvine.</p>	<p>Ross Deuchar, PhD</p> <p>Professor. Assistant Dean, Research, Enterprise and International. School of Education. University of the West of Scotland.</p>
<p>Inger-Lise Lien, dr. polit.</p> <p>Researcher. Nasjonalt Kunnskapssenter om violence and traumatisk stress. Oslo, Norway</p>	<p>Hilde Lidén, dr. polit.</p> <p>Researcher. Institutt for samfunnsforskning, Oslo, Norway</p>
<p>Line Lerche Mørck, PhD</p> <p>Professor MSO The Danish School of Education (DPU), Aarhus University, Denmark.</p>	<p>Amir Mohammad Rostami, Dr.</p> <p>Postdoctoral researcher in Sociology, Stockholm University, Sweden.</p>

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literature searches. Finally, also a thank to Knud Holt Nielsen, who did the layout for the actual report.

Copenhagen, October 2018

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Summary

This report presents research and knowledge related to young people involved in gangs from a national and international perspective. The purpose of this research and knowledge gathering is to present existing knowledge about young people's gang involvement through the search for and collection of Danish, Nordic, and international studies. This research and knowledge gathering is based on the exploration of a number of key and related issues that focus on existing research and knowledge to identify the young people actually involved in a gang – and to identify the efforts that prevent youth from either becoming involved in gangs or help them leave gangs.

In the research and knowledge development related to young people involved in gangs there has been much debate over defining the term gang, who the gang members are, explanations for their participation, and how and in what ways gang membership take place as well as prevention efforts targeted at counteracting gang involvement.

During the period from November 2013 to June 2016, searches were made in Danish as well as international databases. In addition, all reference lists from the submitted literature have been crosschecked by using the so-called snowball method, and for that reason studies that were not obtained through the electronic search may be included. The total search resulted in **1097** hits, which were considered relevant the first time around. Further sorting resulted in a reduction to a total number of **417** relevant studies. The **417** studies were selected as representative of the entire field of study and help to show theoretical, empirical, as well as analytical aspects in a Danish and international context. 111 studies were selected and included in this presentation. The reviewed literature is written in English, Swedish, Norwegian and Danish. The reviewed publications include books, anthologies, scientific articles and research reports illuminating explicit theoretical and methodological approaches and PhD dissertations from universities. The Nordic countries also include reports, evaluations and surveys from governmental research institutions and departmental offices.

This research and knowledge gathering does not present all the obtained studies, but it should be regarded as a representative composition of a number of studies that present the most frequently used intervention studies and reflect the general focuses in research involving young people in gangs. The purpose is to identify the young people's motivation for joining gangs, which efforts to be important when leaving the gang and actions that are important in preventing children and adolescents from engaging in gangs. There has thus been a selection among the obtained studies in order to include studies that illustrate a wide range of existing research and knowledge in relation to

theoretical perspectives, the use of different types of research design and diversity in results and conclusions in the field of research. With the US as the leading front in the field of research, the following themes are identified in the obtained research related to young people in gangs:

- Theme no. I Danish and Nordic gang research
- Theme no. II Gangs, crime, violence, and victimization
- Theme no. III Socialization, education, and gang membership
- Theme no. IV Risk factors connected to gang membership
- Theme no. V Characteristics of gangs and ways in and out
- Theme no. VI Gangs, school, and education
- Theme no. VII Prevention and intervention
- Theme no. VIII Gangs and their influence on local neighborhoods
- Theme no. IX Gangs, race, and ethnicity
- Theme no. X Gender and gang membership

Theme no. I – Danish and Nordic gang research

The first theme identifies 29 studies of Danish and Nordic research and knowledge in the area of gang membership. The studies are equally divided between quantitative and qualitative methods as well as two reviews.

These studies aim to explore the gang members' own experiences of their gang affiliation, education, and general conditions of life as well as possible ways in and out of the gangs. This theme also includes different recommendations for gang exit strategies, prevention, data collection and analysis methods. The theme describes alternatives to gang exit in terms of access to new opinions, belongings and change in life orientation. It is also pointed out that intervention efforts must necessarily be based on triangulation of multiple datasets and thus facts with high impact that can be used for a given intervention. It is also suggested that young male gang members of a different ethnic origin than Danish potentially be rehabilitated by, for example, participating in a boxing rehabilitation program, which may be an alternative to the construction of masculine identity created in the gangs. The theme also explores the membership experiences of the gang members and the membership's impact on their lives. Five related themes are presented exploring topics like education and family relationships, schooling and leisure activities, joining a gang, living a life with stress and turmoil and finally efforts for gang members.

Furthermore, a so-called moment-movement methodology is used to analyze movements in the co-researcher's social self-understanding and changed way of life, just as police exit programs are analyzed on dual forms in relation to the co-researcher's main issues. As in the international studies, this theme also points out the fact that gang members often engage in anti-social behaviors, and that gang membership is associated with both violence and crime. The theme further presents six studies produced by the Research Office of the Ministry of Justice, which in various ways identifies knowledge about exit intervention strategies in the Nordic countries, gang affiliation and recruitment as well as ways in and out of gangs. In addition, the careers and networks of bikers and gang members during adolescence are described, just as conditions of their education are a theme and whether young criminals are potential recruitment material for the gangs.

Theme no. II – Gangs, crime, violence, and victimization

Theme no. II has included a number of studies that focus on violence associated with young people in gangs. Theme no. II consists of 18 studies, which are divided between primarily quantitative methods and two qualitative. This theme explores whether gang-affiliated young people are more violent compared to young people who are involved in crime but are not affiliated with a gang, but also the types of violence the gangs commit. This also features a focus on the so-called victimization. Victimization is the process of becoming a victim of a crime and can be termed as gang member's risk of violent incidents as the consequence of gang membership.

Gang involvement in crime, violence, and victimization thus seems to be the international research's favored field of research. It also appears from this theme that there is a strong association between gang membership, crime and offending behavior, but such behavior does not necessarily impede the self-image of the gang members. The concept of moral disengagement is thus pointed out as a strategy that makes these offenders capable of maintaining a positive self-image despite their participation in violence. Despite the great interest in gang members' involvement in crime and violence, surprisingly many studies focus on the consequences of such involvement; that is the so-called victimization. A number of studies thus emphasize that gang members are highly at risk of being exposed to serious violence, such as being shot. This may seem contradictory as gang members often join the gang for protection. This protection is described as being more subjective than objective and, most of all represents an emotional protection, which lead to reducing fear of violence among gang members. A single study suggests that the risk of victimization is not particularly higher among gang members, but their often generally offending behavior is the real reason for this.

Theme no. III – Socialization, education, and gang membership

Theme no. 3 includes different types of studies that focus on the role and importance of parents and the family in relation to young people who are expressing gang involvement. The theme includes 13 studies, of which 11 are quantitative. Based on different theoretical perspectives, the theme presents a number of studies that examine how gang members' family relations, for instance parental method of education, seems to have an impact on the adolescents' gang involvement, just as the role of society related to gang affiliation is examined. The theme describes that the risk of young people joining a gang is increased when residing in neighborhoods with existing gangs. Weakened social bonds seem to be a significant factor, especially since the young people seek for acceptance and identity, which they find in gang membership. Strict methods of education, neglectful parents and peer pressure are also social factors, which predispose the young people to gang membership, which provide them with the sense of community and belonging. So-called societal issues such as stigmatization and discrimination are stressed as the reason why young people seek alternative communities. However, these communities are most often closely associated to crime. The majority of young people are thus engaged in more criminal activities during gang membership than before and after, and the criminal activities may even have a socializing effect. Social factors that can prevent gang membership are among the findings in the G.R.E.A.T. program, in which parenting, education and interaction with prosocial peers promote the young people's social bonds and are stated to reduce gang joining.

Theme no. IV – Risk factors connected to gang membership

Theme no. 4 comprises a total number of 11 selected quantitative studies, which in various ways identify so-called risk factors for gang involvement and retention in a gang with a view of long-term consequences of gang membership and motivation for gang membership. The overall theme identifies the risk factors for gang membership to dominate among men, especially among minority ethnic groups. Dysfunctional families with lack of parental supervision are also identified as a potential risk factor, just as current familial gang involvement is. Individual factors such as depression, low self-esteem or substance abuse seem to have an impact on gang involvement. The latter, however, appears a bit ambiguous, as a study shows that drug abuse is facilitated in the gangs more than it is the reason for joining. The motivation factors for being involved in a gang are described as a need for protection, being rejected by socially well-functioning peers and a craving for fulfilling a void in life by creating affiliation to a gang, which for some best

can be accomplished in gangs. The potential consequences of gang membership are numerous, and in particular, alcohol and substance abuse, anti-social and delinquent behavior as well as negative contact with the police. Long-term consequences are also stressed out, especially difficulties in adulthood such as persistent criminal behavior, low educational level, unhealthy living and low income potentially supplemented with illegal activities. These circumstances can also be associated with general social and family difficulties. Protective factors are mentioned as the importance of security in the local area as well as parents and other adults, in school for instance, who not only support the young people, but also care about their whereabouts. Signs of distinct negative spirals are thus seen, in which anti-social behavior, marginalization and personal difficulties call for gang membership, while pro-social behavior, inclusion and adult support are pointed out as gang preventive factors.

Theme no. V – Characteristics of gangs and ways in and out

Theme no. 5 involves research and knowledge about characteristics and organization of gangs – who are the young people and where they are. This theme includes 10 studies that examine the characteristics of gang members and how and in what ways the gang affiliation can be terminated. The studies are predominantly quantitative, although two are qualitative, and a single one uses both quantitative and qualitative methods. A large part of the studies is based on the so-called life course and describe, among other things, an average period of membership of two years. Contrary to expectations, a single study points out that the long-standing gang members are more peripheral in their gangs, unlike the transient members. It is also seen, however, that members who are deeply rooted in the gang remain members for a longer period. This may be tied to the difficulties associated with leaving the gangs. These difficulties are primarily associated with connections to former and current gang members on one hand, and on the other hand the motivating role of family in terms of exiting. In this context, it is described as surprising that exiting from gangs is relatively unproblematic, meaning the members can freely leave the gangs or even switch from one to the other without the oft-assumed violent sanctions between gangs and members, wherefore the gang network is described as being relatively fluid.

Theme no. VI – Gangs, school, and education

Theme no. 6 illustrates through two qualitative and six quantitative studies a number of examinations that explore how school and education has an impact on affiliation to a gang, e.g. bullying and other school-related problems, and contribute to identify that

young people in gangs often are the group of adolescence who has the most negative experiences of school. Generally, the studies draw a picture that positive relations between adults and children are conducive to schooling as well as ordinary well-being, and that this has a preventive effect for joining a gang. In addition, it is described that positive relationships between teachers and students has implications for students' academic and social development. Despite the fact that relationships between parents, teachers and students are emphasized, we also find examples of young people as potentially gang members, even though they grow up in supportive home environments and not adversely effected by class stratification or family dynamics. The attention that the gang membership seems to offer may be enough to put their educational ambitions on standby. The relationship between the students is also affected and it is pointed out that bullying in early childhood potentially can have major consequences on the person's later life, for example violent behaviors, drug abuse and gang membership. Gang membership also has an impact on young people's educational opportunities. It is thus pointed out that gang members are less likely to graduate, which increases the risk of poorer living conditions.

Theme no. VII – Prevention and intervention

Theme no. 7 focuses on research and knowledge that explores different types of interventions to prevent gang affiliation. The studies included show different types of intervention measures aimed at preventing movements into gangs as well as opportunities for leaving the gang. The studies are divided between a single mixed methods study, two qualitative and five quantitative studies. Aside from those in theme no. four mentioned preventive factors, it is pointed out in theme no. 7 that intervention aimed at dysfunctional families has an impact on young people's gang affiliation, and that former gang members can help young people away from the gang environment. However, a potential risk by this type of intervention is the fact that these former members simply facilitate gang membership by inspiring the young people with their stories. Prospective risk assessments may also be potentially preventive, as interventions subsequently can be targeted directly at the young people most at risk of becoming gang involved. However, it should be mentioned that the identification of future gang members cannot be taken for granted why continued research in this area is recommended. This theme also indicates that correctly implemented interventions at best strengthen the pro-social behavior of young potential gang members and their attitudes towards the police, but also an ongoing need for research on targeted interventions against gang prevention and efforts aimed at young people's gang exit.

Theme no. VIII – Gangs and their influence on local neighborhoods

Theme no. 8 is comprised of six studies, of which one qualitative study in different ways has explored gangs and their influence and impact on local neighborhoods, for example, fear of gang behavior among other residents in the local area, or the prevalence of crime and marijuana sale in neighborhoods with gangs. Several studies describe that areas with gang activity are more afflicted by crime than areas without gangs. This applies especially to violence and property crime. The gangs seem to be more prolific in areas of social and economic deprivation, just as it calls for a certain stability in residential composition. Thus, the presence of gangs is less in areas affected by frequent resident changes, as this creates social instability and changing structural conditions. The presence of the gangs also has an impact on the opportunities for expression of the other young people, as they are afraid of moving around in the areas controlled by the gangs.

Theme no. IX – Gangs, race, and ethnicity

Theme no. 9 focuses on studies that have identified correlations between gang membership and young men's ethnic minority background. Several studies have shown a correlation between gang membership and ethnicity. A single study is qualitative, while the remaining four are quantitative. It is pointed out that ethnic marginalization and the level of integration are strongly associated with self-reported gang membership, and that areas characterized by ethnic heterogeneity correspond with increases in gang activity. The concept of marginalization serves, among other things, as the understanding of young people's need of belonging, and the more young people experience being marginalized, the more they are receptive to gang recruitment.

Theme no. X – Gender and gang membership

The 10th and last theme includes two quantitative, one qualitative and one mixed methods study, which focus on gender in relation to gang affiliation, and help to identify differences between girls' and boys' affiliation with – and exit from gangs. However, only a few studies have been submitted directly focusing on girls/women with gang connections compared to the number of studies focusing on boys/men. The primary findings in the studies are differences in gang exit and gang-related victimization, which indicate very few differences regarding both. The most significant gender-related difference between male and female gang members is described as women's greater exposure to sexual victimization. This victimization is explained through the male members' understanding of masculinity, and that potentially may be reduced by encouraging the male members to redefine this masculinity.

In general, through the included studies, a number of key findings are pointed out and presented here:

That gang members are typically identified as including young men. Several studies indicate that these young men are of ethnic minority origin, and, for the American studies, often young men of African-American, Hispanic or Latin American, or Asian background. In addition, it is pointed out that it is young men, who grow up in exposed neighborhoods (the so-called ghettos), who are at risk of joining a gang – especially if gangs are already present in the neighborhood. Girls also participate in gangs, however, to a lesser degree than boys do, and the risk factors and consequences of gang membership are the same as for boys, except that studies indicate an increased risk of sexual abuse of girls in gangs.

Reasons for children and young people's movements into gangs are identified through the studies to be multifaceted and complex. A large number of the studies also point to several and simultaneous factors associated to reasons related to gang affiliation. Poverty, education in exposed neighborhoods, cognitive difficulties associated to school and education as well as poor parenting skills / or strict methods of education have been identified in a wide range of studies. However, relatively identical factors are seen – also across borders – such as a poverty, ethnic minority background, young men's need for group affiliation as part of adolescence, search for masculinity and identity, early crime activities and social, emotional and cognitive difficulties – even before joining a gang – which appears to be relatively consistent causal explanations. Several studies indicate that children between 10-13 years are involved in gangs, and several studies point to the fact that young people typically stay in these gangs for about 2 years, some for a longer time, if they feel a deeply rooted bond to the gang. Another factor, also referred to as one of the reasons for joining a gang, is pressure from deviant peers as well as familial gang members.

The above descriptions recur in the studies that in different ways identify the young people affiliated with gangs. Several studies show that these young people have often committed crime before joining a gang, have poor school experiences and associated with various types of behavioral difficulties, e.g. aggressive behavior, low self-control, and so on. The studies with descriptions of children and adolescents' behavioral difficulties also point out that young people affiliated to gangs more often show social and emotional difficulties compared to young people who are not affiliated with a gang, but who have committed crimes. The young people in gangs are also the group who commits the most violent crime such as violence, robbery, shooting and assault compared to young people who are criminals but not affiliated with gangs. Some studies

have also identified that the young people who are or have been associated with a gang do badly – over their life course – i.e. the gang affiliation in their youth will have an impact on their adulthood. This is identified as persistent crime behavior in adulthood, lack of education, less stable attachment to the labor market, as well as unhealthy living and poverty in adulthood.

A number of key findings associated with studies focusing on prevention efforts for children and young people joining gangs or efforts that helps young people leaving the gangs are identified:

In several studies, positive relations to adults have been identified as a potential reduction in the risk of gang membership, just as the opposite tends to increase the risk. Parents thus play an important role in young people's gang affiliation, as positive family environments in several studies are reported to create more prosocial young people. Contrary to this, young people in lack of attachment to significant adults or growing up in families dealing with abuse or in poverty seek communities in the gangs in which they potentially achieve the acceptance and identity they seem to crave for. A typical consequence of gang membership is the increased risk of victimization, i.e. becoming a victim of violence of some kind. In addition, educational commitment with related inequalities in life is presented as a dominant risk factor for gang membership, and in reverse that the importance of good and stable schooling and good cognitive abilities prevent gang involvement.

In spite of a considerable amount of international gang research, however, interventions and prevention studies are relatively limited, although scattered estimations of prevention efforts are presented such as proactive risk assessments, family treatment programs and alternatives to the so-called masculinity, which is outlined as part of gang membership. This may be explained by the fact that the process including interventions and exit strategies is a major task, which requires a mutual understanding of the gangs as well as the organization of exit programs for everyone to receive the same exit opportunity. For those who participate in such programs, it is typically the most committed gang members, who benefit from this. This can also be attributable to the fact that the definition of gangs is difficult, and most of all is defined differently from different perspectives such as theorists, researchers and politicians.

Several studies suggest that the future research in gangs and gang members should bring perspectives that address the applicability of theoretical concepts and the extent to which economy, law enforcement and timeframes affect the gangs. The importance of understanding contexts and their significance for gang affiliation or gang resistance is also pointed out. The development of interventions targeted the known risk factors is also recommended, and the achievement of better understanding of gang

membership potentially leads to important knowledge that can be used in preventive efforts.

The studies in particular related to the Nordic and Danish research show that the gang field of study, compared to the United States and the rest of Europe, is still a relatively new field of study. A distinctive feature of this research is the fact that ministerial institutions, e.g. police authorities and the Research Office of the Ministry of Justice in the nature of evaluations, reviews and mapping of various interventions and initiatives have conducted relatively many studies. In particular, it should be pointed out that no studies in the search process have had a systematically focus on prevention to identify in a research perspective which interventions prevent children and young people from gang involvement. A few studies have explored the importance of various intervention efforts in gangs; however, the spreading out on the Nordic countries is too wide for the possibility to infer distinct conclusions about the types of interventions that may be considered to be of particular relevance. Concluding for theme 1 bound to the Nordic countries, the studies thus indicate a further need to develop research-based knowledge about prevention, intervention, as well as the living conditions of children and young people, especially when they grow up in so-called exposed neighborhoods, also inflicted by gangs in the local area.

Abstract

This report presents research and knowledge on the subject of young people in gangs, both nationally and internationally. The purpose of this research and knowledge gathering is to present existing knowledge about young people in gangs by searching for and collecting not only Danish, but also Nordic and international studies. This research and knowledge gathering is based on research pertaining to a number of central and related issues, which based in existing research and knowledge on the subject is focused on narrowing down which types of young people are actually in gangs – and which preventive efforts that counteract and/or help young people to leave gangs again.

In research and knowledge development about young people in gangs there are generally major discussions about how the concept of the gang should be defined, who is in a gang, explanations for why they are there, and how and in which ways the movement into a gang has happened, as well as efforts indicated as preventive or counteracting gang affiliation.

In the period between November 2013 and June 2016 searches were made in the Danish as well as in the international search databases. Furthermore, all reference lists from the obtained literature were cross-checked using the so-called snowball method, for which reason studies may be included that did not appear in the electronic search. The total search resulted in **1097** hits, which were considered relevant the first time around. Further sorting resulted in a reduction to a total number of **417** relevant studies. The **417** studies were selected as representative of the entire field of study and help to show theoretical, empirical, as well as analytical aspects in a Danish and international context. 111 studies were selected and included in this presentation. The reviewed literature is written in English, Swedish, Norwegian and Danish. The reviewed publications include books, anthologies, scientific articles and research reports illuminating explicit theoretical and methodological approaches and PhD dissertations from universities. The Nordic countries also include reports, evaluations and surveys from governmental research institutions and departmental offices.

This research and knowledge gathering does not present all the obtained studies, but it should be regarded as a representative composition of a number of studies that present the most frequently used intervention studies and reflect the general focuses in research involving young people in gangs, for the purpose of identifying knowledge about, which young people join gangs, which efforts are important for exiting gangs, and efforts that are meaningful for prevention of children and adolescents joining gangs. There has thus been a selection among the obtained studies in order to include studies

that illustrate a wide range of existing research and knowledge in relation to theoretical perspectives, the use of various types of research designs, and diverse results and conclusions in the research field. With the US as the clear leader in the field of research, the following themes were identified in the obtained research related to young people in gangs:

- Theme no. I Danish and Nordic gang research
- Theme no. II Gangs, crime, violence, and victimization
- Theme no. III Socialization, education, and gang membership
- Theme no. IV Risk factors connected to gang membership
- Theme no. V Characteristics of gangs and ways in and out
- Theme no. VI Gangs, school, and education
- Theme no. VII Prevention and intervention
- Theme no. VIII Gangs and their influence on local neighborhoods
- Theme no. IX Gangs, race, and ethnicity
- Theme no. X Gender and gang membership

Theme no. I – Danish and Nordic gang research

The first theme identifies 29 studies of Danish and Nordic research and knowledge in the area of gang membership. The studies are equally divided between quantitative and qualitative methods as well as two reviews.

These studies include a focus on the gang members' own experiences of their gang affiliation, education, and general conditions of life, as well as possible ways in and out of the gangs. Furthermore, this theme includes different recommendations for gang exit strategies, prevention, data collection and analysis methods. The theme describes alternatives to gang exit in terms of access to new opinions, belongings and change in life orientation. Furthermore, it is emphasized that gang intervention efforts must necessarily be based on the triangulation of multiple data sets and thus higher-impact facts that can form the basis for a given intervention. Furthermore, it is suggested that young male gang members of a different ethnic origin than Danish may potentially be rehabilitated by things like boxing rehabilitation programs, which may be an alternative to the construction of masculine identity created in the gangs. There is also a focus on the membership experiences of the gang members and the membership's impact on their lives. Among others, five related themes are presented that explore topics like education and family relationships, schooling and leisure activities, joining a gang, living a life of stress and turmoil, and finally efforts for gang members. **Further, they describe the use of a**

un. As in the international studies, this theme also points out the fact that gang members often engage in anti-social behaviors, and that gang membership is associated with both violence and crime. The theme further presents six studies from the Research Office of the Ministry of Justice, which in various ways identify knowledge about exit intervention strategies in the Nordic countries, gang affiliation and recruitment, as well as ways in and out of gangs. In addition, the careers and networks of bikers and gang members during adolescence are described, and conditions of their education are another theme, along with whether young criminals are potential recruitment material for the gangs.

Theme no. II – Gangs, crime, violence, and victimization

Theme no. II includes a number of studies that focus on the violence associated with young people in gangs. Theme no. II consists of a total of 18 studies, which are divided between primarily quantitative methods and just two that are qualitative. Among other things, this theme explores whether gang-affiliated young people are more violent than young people who are involved in crime but are not affiliated with a gang, as well as the types of violence the gangs commit. This also features a focus on the so-called victimization. Victimization is understood as the process of becoming a victim of a crime and can be termed as gang members' risk of violent incidents as a consequence of gang membership.

Thus, the involvement of gangs in crime, violence, and victimization appears to be the favored field of study by international researchers. Under this theme, it appears that there is a strong association between gang membership, crime, and delinquent behavior, but also that such behavior does not necessarily impede the self-image of the gang members. Thus, the concept of moral disengagement is pointed out as a strategy that enables these offenders to maintain a positive self-image despite their participation in acts of violence. Despite the great interest in the involvement of gang members in crime and violence, there are surprisingly many studies that focus on the consequences of such involvement, i.e. so-called victimization. Consequently, a number of studies emphasize that gang members are very much at risk of being exposed to serious violence, such as being shot. This may seem contradictory, as gang members often join the gang to obtain some level of protection. This protection is described as being more subjective than objective and more than anything it represents an emotional protection, which leads to a reduced fear of violence among gang members. A single study suggests that the risk of victimization is not particularly higher for gang members, but that their frequent generally delinquent behavior is the real reason for this.

Theme no. III – Socialization, education, and gang membership

Theme no. 3 includes various types of studies that focus on the role and importance of parents and the family in relation to young people who gravitating toward gang involvement. The theme consists of 13 studies, of which 11 are quantitative. Based on different theoretical perspectives, the theme presents a number of studies that examine how gang members' family relations, for instance parental method of education, are indicated as having an impact on the gang involvement of young people, just as the role of society in terms of gang affiliation is examined. The theme describes that young people are at greater risk for joining a gang when residing in neighborhoods with existing gangs. Weakened social bonds seem to be a significant factor, especially since young people tend to search out acceptance and identity, which they find in gang affiliation. Strict child-rearing methods, neglectful parents, and peer pressure are also social factors that predispose young people to gang affiliation, which provides them precisely with the sense of community and belonging they seek. So-called societal issues, such as stigmatization and discrimination, are stressed as the reason why young people seek alternative communities. However, these communities are most often closely associated with crime. Thus, the majority of young people are engaged in more criminal activity while affiliated with a gang than before and after, and these criminal activities may even have a socializing effect. Social factors that can prevent gang membership are found in places like the G.R.E.A.T. program, in which parenting, education and interaction with prosocial peers promote the social bonds of the young people and are said to reduce gang affiliation.

Theme no. IV – Risk factors connected to gang membership

Theme no. 4 comprises a total of 11 selected quantitative studies, which identify in various ways so-called risk factors for gang involvement and gang member retention with a view to long-term consequences of gang affiliation and motivation for gang membership. The overall theme identifies the risk factors for gang affiliation as dominant among men, especially among minority ethnic groups. Dysfunctional families with lack of parental supervision are also identified as a potential risk factor, as is current familial gang involvement. Individual factors, such as depression, low self-esteem, or substance abuse seem to have an impact on gang involvement as well. The latter, however, appears a bit ambiguous, as one study shows that drug abuse is facilitated in the gangs more so than being the reason for joining. The motivating factors for gang involvement are described as a need for protection, being rejected by socially well-functioning peers, and a yearning to fulfill a void in life by belonging somewhere, something which for some is most easily accomplished in gangs. The potential consequences of gang membership are numerous,

and particular mention is made of alcohol and substance abuse, anti-social and delinquent behavior, as well as negative contact with the police. Long-term consequences are also stressed, especially difficulties in adulthood, such as persistent criminal behavior, a low level of education, an unhealthy lifestyle and low income, potentially supplemented with income from illegal activities. These circumstances can also be associated with general social and family difficulties. Protective factors mentioned are things like the importance of security in the local area, as well as parents and other adults, in school for instance, who not only support the young people, but also care about their whereabouts. Thus, signs of distinct negative spirals are evident, in which anti-social behavior, marginalization, and personal difficulties urge gang affiliation, while pro-social behavior, inclusion, and adult support are pointed out as gang preventive factors.

Theme no. V – Characteristics of gangs and ways in and out

Theme no. 5 includes research and knowledge about characteristics and organization of gangs – who the young people are, and where they are. This theme includes 10 studies that examine the characteristics of gang members and how and in what ways the gang affiliation can be terminated. The studies are predominantly quantitative, although two are qualitative, and a single one uses both quantitative and qualitative methods. A large number of the studies is based on the so-called life course and describes, among other things, an average affiliation period of two years. Contrary to expectation, a single study points out that long-standing gang members are more peripheral in their gangs, unlike the transient members. However, members with strong attachment to a gang are also observed as staying for longer periods. This could possibly be associated with the difficulties of leaving the gang. These difficulties are primarily associated with attachment to former or current gang members on one hand, and on the other the motivational role of the family in relation to the exit. In this regard, it is described as surprising that exiting gangs is relatively unproblematic, i.e. members can leave the gangs freely and even transfer from one gang to another without being exposed to the presumed violent sanctions between gangs and their members, for which reason the gang network is described as being relatively fluent.

Theme no. VI – Gangs, school, and education

Theme no. 6 illustrates through two qualitative and six quantitative studies a number of studies that explore how school and education impacts gang affiliation, e.g. due to bullying and other school-related problems, and they contribute to identify that young peo-

ple in gangs are often the group of adolescents with the most negative school experiences. Generally, studies depict positive relations between adults and children as conducive to both schooling and general well-adjustment, which would be preventive of joining a gang. In addition, it is discussed that positive relationships between teachers and students have implications for students' academic and social development. Despite the fact that relationships between parents, teachers, and students are emphasized, we also find examples of young people as potential gang members, even when growing up in supportive home environments and are not adversely affected by class stratification or family dynamics. The attention gang membership seems to offer may be enough to put their educational ambitions on the back burner. The relationship between the students is mentioned as well, and it is pointed out that bullying in early childhood potentially can have major consequences on the person later in life, for instance manifested in violent behaviors, drug abuse, and gang membership. Gang affiliation also influences the educational opportunities of young people. Thus, it is mentioned that gang members are less likely to pass their exams, increasing their risk of poorer living conditions later in life.

Theme no. VII – Prevention and intervention

Theme no. 7 focuses on research and knowledge that explores various types of intervention to prevent gang affiliation. The studies included show different types of intervention measures aimed at preventing movements into gangs, as well as providing opportunities to leave the gang again. The studies are divided between a single mixed methods study, two qualitative, and five quantitative studies. Aside from the preventive factors mentioned peripherally in theme no. four, it is pointed out in theme no. 7 that intervention targeted to dysfunctional families has an impact on young gang affiliation, and that former gang members can help young people away from the gang environment. However, a potential risk in this type of intervention is the fact that these former members may simply facilitate gang membership by inspiring the young people with their stories. Prospective risk assessments may also have preventive potential, as subsequent interventions can be targeted directly at the young people most at risk of becoming gang involved. It should be noted, however that the identification of future gang members cannot be taken for granted, which is why continued research in this area is recommended. This theme also indicates that correctly implemented interventions at best strengthen the pro-social behavior of young potential gang members and their attitudes towards the police, as well as an ongoing need for research on interventions targeted at gang prevention and efforts to encourage young gang exit.

Theme no. VIII – Gangs and their influence on local neighborhoods

Theme no. 8 is comprised of six studies, of which one is qualitative, which explore in various ways gangs and their influence and impact on local neighborhoods, e.g. fear of gang behavior among other residents in the local area or wide-spread crime and marijuana sales in neighborhoods with gangs. Several studies describe areas with gang activity as more afflicted by crime than areas without gangs. This applies particularly to violence and property crime. The gangs seem to be more prolific in areas of social and economic deprivation, just as it a certain stability in residential composition is required. Thus, gangs are less present in areas with frequent resident changes, as this creates social instability and changing structural conditions. The presence of gangs also limits opportunities for free expression for other young people, e.g. because they are afraid of roaming in and around areas controlled by gangs.

Theme no. IX – Gangs, race and ethnicity

Theme no. 9 focuses on studies that have identified correlations between gang membership and the ethnic minority backgrounds of young men. Several studies have shown a correlation between gang membership and ethnicity. A single study is qualitative, while the remaining four are quantitative. It is indicated that ethnic marginalization and the level of integration are strongly associated with self-reported gang membership, and that areas characterized by ethnic heterogeneity correspond to increased gang activity. The concept of marginalization is emphasized and used, for instance, to clarify that young people need to belong, and the more young people experience being marginalized, the more receptive they are to be recruited into the gang environment.

Theme no. X – Gender and gang membership

The 10th and last theme includes two quantitative, one qualitative, and one mixed methods study, all focusing on gender in relation to gang affiliation, and endeavoring to identify differences between girls' and boys' affiliation with – and in some cases exit from gangs. However, only a few studies have been submitted that directly focus on girls/women with gang connections compared to the number of studies focusing on boys/men. The primary findings in the studies concern differences in gang exits and gang-related victimization, which indicate very few differences for both. The most significant gender-related difference between male and female gang members is described as women's greater exposure to sexual victimization. This victimization is explained through the male members' understanding of masculinity, and the issue may potentially be reduced by encouraging male members to redefine this masculinity.

In general, through the included studies, a number of key findings are pointed out throughout the ten themes, which are presented here in form of a compilation:

That gang members are typically identified as including young men. Several studies indicate that these young men are of ethnic minority origin, and in American studies often young men of African-American, Hispanic or Latin American, or Asian origin. In addition, it is noted that young men growing up in socially marginalized neighborhoods (so-called ghettos), are the ones at risk of gang affiliation – especially if gangs are already present in the neighborhood. To a lesser degree than boys, girls also participate in gangs, however, and the risk factors and consequences of gang membership for them are the same as for boys, except that studies indicate an increased risk of sexual abuse of girls in gangs.

The studies identify reasons for children and adolescents gravitating into gangs as multifaceted and complex. A large number of the studies also point to several and simultaneous conditions and factors associated with reasons related to gang affiliation. Poverty, being raised in exposed neighborhoods, cognitive difficulties in terms of school and education, as well as neglectful or harsh child-rearing methods on part of the parents have been identified in a wide range of studies. By and large, relatively identical factors are observed – even across borders – such as poverty, ethnic minority background, young men's need for group affiliation as part of adolescence, search for masculinity and identity, early crime activities, and social, emotional and cognitive difficulties – even before joining a gang – as relatively consistent causal explanations. Several studies indicate that children as young as 10-13 years can become involved in gangs, and several studies point to the fact that young people typically stay in these gangs for about 2 years, some longer if they feel deeply rooted in the gang. Another factor, also referred to as a reason for gang affiliation, is pressure from deviant peers as well as familial gang members.

The above descriptions are largely recurrent in the studies, which in various ways identify the young people affiliated with gangs. Several studies show that many of these young people have committed crime before joining a gang, have negative school experiences and are described as having various types of behavioral difficulties, e.g. aggressive behavior, poor self-control, etc. The studies describing the behavioral difficulties of children and adolescents also point out that young people affiliated with gangs show social and emotional difficulties more frequently than young people who are not affiliated with a gang, but who have committed crimes. Young people in gangs are also the group who commits the most violent crime, including aggression, robbery, shootings, and assault, compared to young people who are criminals but not affiliated with gangs.

Some studies have also identified that the young people who are or have been associated with a gang do poorly over the course of their lives, which is to say that young gang affiliation impacts the youths in adulthood. This is identified as persistent criminal behavior in adulthood, lack of education, a less stable attachment to the labor market, as well as unhealthy lifestyles and poverty in adulthood.

A number of key findings associated with studies focusing on prevention efforts for children and adolescents joining gangs, or efforts helping young people leave the gangs are identified:

In several studies, positive relationships with adults have been identified as a potentially reducing risk of gang membership, just as the opposite tends to increase the risk. Thus, parents play an important role in young people's gang affiliation, as several studies identify positive family environments as creating more pro-social young people. Contrary to this, young people lacking attachment to significant adults or growing up in families that deal with abuse or poverty seek community in the gangs, where they potentially achieve the acceptance and identity they seem to crave. A typical consequence of gang membership is the increased risk of victimization, i.e. becoming a victim of violence of some kind. In addition, lack of educational commitment and the associated inequalities in life is presented as a dominant risk factor for gang membership, and conversely, the importance of good and stable schooling and good cognitive abilities prevent gang involvement.

In spite of a considerable amount of international gang research, however, intervention and prevention studies are relatively few and far between, although scattered suggestions in terms of preventive efforts are presented in the form of proactive risk assessments, family treatment programs and alternatives to the so-called masculinity, which gang membership is frequently said to supplement or supply. This may be explained by the fact that the development of intervention and exit strategies constitutes a major endeavor that requires a more unambiguous understanding of the gangs as well as of the organization of the exit programs, so everyone receives the same exit opportunity. For those who participate in such programs, it is typically the most committed gang members, who benefit. This can also be attributable to the fact that the defining the gangs continues to be difficult in as much as everything is defined differently according to different perspectives, such as those of theorists, researchers, and politicians.

Several studies suggest that the future research into and about gangs and gang members should bring perspectives that address the applicability of theoretical concepts and the extent to which economy, law enforcement, and timeframes affect the gangs. The importance of understanding contexts and their significance for young gang affilia-

tion or gang resistance is also pointed out. Furthermore, the development of interventions targeting the known risk factors is recommended, as well as reaching a better understanding of gang membership, which potentially will lead to important knowledge that can be used in preventive efforts.

The studies obtained from Nordic and Danish research show in particular that the gang research is still a relatively new field of study compared to the United States and the rest of Europe. A distinctive feature of this research is the fact that a significant number of studies were conducted by governmental institutions such as law enforcement and the Research Office of the Ministry of Justice, such as evaluations, reviews and mapping of various interventions and initiatives on the topic. It should be pointed out that no studies obtained from the search process had a systematic focus on prevention, enabling the identification from a research perspective the interventions that prevent children and young people from gang involvement. A few studies have explored the importance of various intervention efforts in response to gangs, but the Nordic countries are too spread out to infer distinct conclusions about the types of interventions that may be considered particularly relevant to implement. Thus, in concluding theme 1 with a particular view to the Nordic countries, the studies indicate a need to develop further our research-based knowledge about prevention, intervention, and the living conditions of children and young people, especially when they grow up in so-called socially marginal neighborhoods, which are also infested by gangs.

Chapter 1

Introduction

This report presents research and knowledge on the subject of young people in gangs, both nationally and internationally. The purpose of this research and knowledge gathering is to present existing knowledge about young people in gangs. This research and knowledge gathering is based on research pertaining to a number of central and related issues, which based in existing research and knowledge on the subject is focused on narrowing down which types of young people are actually in gangs – and which preventive efforts that counteract and/or help young people to leave gangs again.

It is no simple task, however to identify what the field of research has to say about young people in gangs and efforts that prevent movement into gangs, as both the research and knowledge fields are characterized by a multitude of approaches to and understandings of the gang concept which generally tends to cause confusion about which groups of young people are actually in question. Thus, a wide range of descriptions are indicated, such as young men in criminal groups, street gangs, youth groups, so-called immigrant gangs, young people in gang-like groups, and often also a combination of so-called bikers and gangs (especially in a Danish context). This mixture and vagueness associated with using the term gang contributes to creating significant theoretical and empirical challenges for the research field, since it is very difficult to create transparency in key questions about which young people are moving into a gang, how many, and why – and certainly also which efforts help young people leave gangs again, or in general how efforts can prevent children and adolescents from gravitating toward gangs (see also Petersen, 2015, 2017 for this discussion).

Based on the above thesis, there should be an initial separate focus on capturing a number of the existing interpretations and definitions in the field of study that are associated with the concept of the gang, while clarifying how the various understandings are focused on different elements in the definition of the term gang.

Many different ways to understand the gang concept

In research and knowledge development about young people in gangs, there are generally major discussions about the way the concept of gang can be defined, who is in a gang, explanations of why they are there, and how and by which means the movements into a gang took place, along with efforts indicated as preventing or counteracting gang affiliation. Thus, it is a matter of a term characterized by significant vagueness and with

a multitude of interpretations and theoretical perspectives. The main consensus in the research and knowledge field appears to be that we are talking about young people in a very diffuse age group between the ages of about 12 and 30 years, and that they are often young men.¹ In addition, both the international and the Nordic field of study also indicates that young people of an ethnic minority background are usually the ones moving into gangs (Esbensen & Carson, 2012).

From there, however, the research and knowledge field quickly takes off into many different directions, definitions, and perspectives. The basis for this multiplicity in directions, definitions, and perspectives is obviously complex. First and foremost, many different scientific disciplines are variously engaged in studying young people in gangs. And certainly, a large share of the obtained studies in this research and knowledge gathering are based in the criminological field of study, but also the social, sociological, and psychological field of study contribute with interpretations and approaches to the gang concept. Furthermore, a great number of studies can be identified that are based in or inspired by the anthropological field, where a particular overarching interest in youth culture and studies regarding the lives and subcultures of young people moves in and becomes significant for the gang field of study. The various scientific disciplines are precisely interested in different things, although the subject matter may appear at first glance to be the same. While the criminological field of study is focused on researching crime, sociology has its own focus on societal issues, structures, and conditions affecting people's living conditions. Psychology, on the other hand, is engaged in researching what happens inside people, so to speak – socially, emotionally, and educationally, while anthropology is based in researching culture and cultural communities and forms of expression. Thus, the varied areas of focus for each scientific discipline are the reason for the understanding of young people in gangs and their (criminal) behavior as approached from several different perspectives, and that these different perspectives also influence how the gang concept is defined (Fraser, 2017; Densley, 2015; Curry, 2015; Py-rooz & Mitchell, 2015; Petersen, 2015, 2017).

With basis in the studies obtained in this research and knowledge gathering, it is also seen how the gang concept is defined and understood based on several different levels. There is a level based in the individual, i.e. the individual young person who is affiliated with a gang, a level based in the group, i.e. gangs in the form of groupings, what groups mean to each other and their mutual relationships and kinships, or a societal level based on structural issues in society – e.g. urban and residential conditions,

¹ A few studies include girls/women in gangs, either as partners of the young men or as independent actors, although only to a limited extent. A selection of these studies is included under theme no. 10.

race, ethnicity, and poverty. Decker & Pyrooz (2015) point out precisely that these different levels are often mixed in the research field, and that there is still insufficient research-based knowledge, to be able to both clarify this mixture, and to move analytically at the different levels.

Fraser (2017) also argues in favor of a historical perspective in understanding and approaching the gang concept. Three discrete historical events are identified in terms of the gang concept. The first period, during the 1920's and 1930's, was advanced by the so-called classical Chicago school. The second period includes post-war gang research, while the third period is associated with gang research in the 20. century (Fraser, 2017). The first period includes the early gang studies, particularly in the sociological field of study in an international context. When the international research dominates in this exact area, it can really be ascribed primarily to the United States, which has a very long research tradition in terms of gangs and theses related to them (Maxson et al., 2014). In fact, we have to go fairly far back in time, when Thrasher (1927) as one of the first brought the gang concept into a research context from a standpoint of sociological studies, mapping out and exploring 1313 different gangs in Chicago. The sociological perspective placed a particular focus both on growing up in socially poor circumstances and conditions as some of the key explanatory framework for the formation and movements of gangs.

In addition, Fraser (2017) points out that these early sociological studies of gangs were very preoccupied with urban and residential conditions and focused very little on crime, which is also seen in Thrasher's early definition of the gang concept:

The gang is an interstitial group originally formed spontaneously, and then integrated through conflict. It is characterized by the following types of behavior: meeting face to face, milling, moving through space as a unit, conflict and planning. The result of this collective behavior is the development of tradition, unreflective internal structure, esprit de corps, solidarity, morale, group awareness, and attachment to a local territory. (Thrasher, 1927/1936, p. 2)

As is indicated by Thrasher's definition of the concept, crime and criminal behavior is not part of the early definition of the gang concept. The focus on crime does not appear until the post-war research of young people in gangs that stretches historically over a broad period from the 1950's and up to the 1990's. In precisely this period, there is a marked increase in research on the subject in both the sociological and criminological

areas in the United States and Europe. Adding the criminological field of study also implicates other definitions of the gang concept. Thus, Klein's (1971) early definition includes:

Any denotable adolescent group of youngsters who: (a) are generally perceived as a distinct aggregation by others in their neighborhood (b) recognize themselves as a denotable group and (c) have been involved in a sufficient number of delinquent incidents to call forth a consistent negative response from neighborhood residents and/or enforcement agencies. (Klein, 1971, p. 13)

In extension of the criminological field of study entering into gang research, there is also a marked increase in the number of studies on the subject internationally, and an increase in the number of quantitative methodical approaches to the field, bringing in extensive questionnaires, databases and statistical studies, exploring things like the connections between deficient education and gang affiliation. This increase in gang research continues into the third historical period of the research field, here in the 21. century, which is characterized both by the so-called large quantitative studies of children and adolescents in schools, correctional facilities, and urban and neighborhoods, as well as being characterized by more narrow qualitative studies focusing on things like the daily life inside the gangs (Maxon et al., 2014; Fraser, 2017; Pyrooz & Mitchell, 2015; Curry, 2015). At the same time, the research field becomes increasingly connected to governmental organizations, e.g. law enforcement authorities and sector research institutions in criminology and law, a development reflected also in Danish (and Nordic) research and knowledge on the subject, where in a Danish context the Research Office of the Ministry of Justice, for instance, has produced an extensive amount of knowledge in the so-called biker and gang areas (see for instance elaboration under theme no. 1). Here in the 21. century, however, the definition of the gang concept has still not been defined unambiguously, very much reflecting the many different research traditions and their overarching interest in young people, youth, cultures and subcultures, deviant behavior, and crime and criminal behavior. Likewise, discussions can be identified, for example, in which gender, masculinity, and ethnicity appear and contribute to increasing the understanding of gang joining among young (men) people (in a Danish context, see, for example, discussions in Jensen, 2007; Jacobsen, 2012). However, also criticism of the gang concept, for example, as pointed out by Jacobsen (2012) who advocates for giving nuances to knowledge in the gang field of study based on more than crime and crime behavior. The purpose of turning the research and the knowledge development away from preoccupation with crime behavior and instead focusing on culture, gang culture, and youth

culture, plays a central role in constituting a more nuanced understanding of young people and youth culture in relation to the gang concept. At the same time, Jacobsen (2012) points out that using the gang concept can also be instrumental in stigmatizing groups of young people who do not consider themselves part of a gang, or attracting young people when considered and met as part of a gang, and thus risking ending up in a criminal career.

In recent years, international research has also pointed out different types of gangs. Prowse (2012), for instance, points out one definition of the gang concept, the so-called "new-age" gangs, which include young people in gangs that are characterized by moving across geographical areas, meaning they are not tied to a particular place of residence, and their so-called gang membership can keep changing. Prowse (2012) in particular argues that this type of gang is different from the traditional gangs, since new-age gangs mobilize around relationships, are fluid and mobile across geographical areas and as such not necessarily bound to a specific area of residence. Prowse (2012) emphasizes how social relationships dissolve spatial boundaries. We are, to a larger extent, talking about loose-knit networks that move across urban and neighborhoods while apparently neutralizing age, language, and ethnicity. And the members are no longer members, but rather described as players.

Klein et al. (2001) and Klein and Maxson (2006) have also developed a so-called typology over various types of gangs, which is widely used, especially in the United States. The definition is based on six so-called structural characteristics: the size of the group, subgroups, age span, duration, territoriality, and multiplicity in violations of the law, which contributes to pinpointing five types of street gangs. The first type is termed the traditional gang, the second is termed the neo-traditional, while the third is termed compressed. The fourth group type is termed collective, and the fifth specialty. Klein et al. (2001) clarify that the so-called traditional gang is often characterized by having existed for a long time and continuing to exist – it is often a very big group with subgroups, e.g. divided according to age, and it is very territorial. The so-called neo-traditional gang is similar to the traditional gang, but it has not been in existence for as long and is often smaller, but it also has subgroups and it is very territorial. The compressed gang is characterized by being a smaller group – perhaps up to 50 members, not yet territorial, and with no subgroups. The collective gang has characteristics similar to those of the compressed gang, but it is larger, and it also has a broader age range, but no territory. The specialty gang is the type of the described gangs that is usually involved in few and specialized forms of crime, contrary to the other gang types. The specific purpose of this type of gang is the focus of crime rather than being territorial and social. Klein and Maxson (2006) argue that the most dominating type of gang that exists in both the United

States and Europe is the so-called compressed gang, which means a group of young people that has existed for about 5 years with a size of between 10 and 50 members, and with varied criminality. Second is the so-called specialty gang, which is smaller and more specialized in terms of the types of crimes committed. This is said to be the second-largest gang type in Europe, and it also includes so-called skinheads and groups gathered for involvement in robberies, muggings, and the sale of marijuana and other drugs (see Klein & Maxson, 2006, pp. 420-421 for this discussion). Klein and Maxson (2006) also point out that the so-called traditional and neo-traditional gangs are very common in the United States, but as of yet are rarely identified in a European context.

Over the last decades, several initiatives have been made for the purpose of creating unambiguity and clarity when using the gang term, e.g. as formalized through the research network Eurogang, which is a combined group of both American and European researchers that has collaborated on a shared research program and has also endeavored to present a common definition of the gang concept. In part, this is done for the purpose of including knowledge developed in one country into the research of other countries, contributing to the ability to make comparisons across national borders. Eurogang uses a definition of the term gang where the concept covers a gang or a group whose involvement in illegal activity is part of its group identity (Weerman et al., 2009 and Alleyne & Wood, 2010). This particular definition has opened up the possibility for gang research to move across national borders, so to speak, allowing comparisons to be made between countries and knowledge to be gathered for prevention of young people entering gangs.

This research and knowledge gathering is based in Eurogang's definition of the gang concept, as this particular definition is considered sufficiently broad to obtain relevant studies through the search process. Pyrooz & Michell (2015) support this argument, pointing out that this definition is sufficiently open to encompass various approaches to and definitions of the term, both historically and across national borders, but still sufficiently specific to exclude other types of groups that may present deviant behavior, such as biker gangs, terrorist organizations, religious groups, and the so-called hate groups (Pyrooz & Mitchell, 2015, p. 32).

Purpose and theses

The purpose of this research and knowledge gathering is primarily to pinpoint existing national and international knowledge about young people in gangs. The purpose is also to create an overview of national, as well as Nordic and international knowledge on the subject, which can contribute to clarifying which young people move into gangs, what causes the young people to be in these gangs, and which types of efforts are targeted at

preventing young people moving into gangs, as well as which efforts are made to help young people exit these gangs again.

Preparation of research and knowledge gathering

In the period between November 2013 and June 2016 searches were made in the Danish as well as in the international search databases. Danish literature was searched for at bibliotek.dk and at AU Library. The search terms in Danish databases were as follows:

Kriminelle grupperinger, kriminalitet, etnicitet, religion, bandekonflikter, rockere, bander, unge i bander, unge på vej i bander, exit programs, socialpædagogiske indsatser, forebyggelse af kriminalitet, livshistorier, hverdagsliv, medlemsperspektiver, motiver for bandemedlemskab, alternativer til bandemedlemskab.

The international search was done in the search databases PsycInfo, Scopus, World Cat, Sociological Abstracts, SwePub, and Libris, and the following search terms were used:

Gang or juvenile gang* combined with Adolescence, adulthood, young adulthood, racism*, ethnic*, crime* conflict*, youth*. Furthermore, in addition to literature in English, searches in the Norwegian and Swedish databases were done in the respective language, using the same search terms translated into Swedish and Norwegian, respectively (gäng*, gjeng*, brott*, kriminalitet*). Because of the relatively limited number of publications, the Swedish and Norwegian searches were not narrow down in the same way as the other searches.*

The search was limited to literature published in the period from 2000 to mid-2016. Furthermore, all reference lists from the obtained literature were cross-checked using the so-called snowball method, for which reason studies may be included that did not appear in the electronic search. The purpose of the snowball method is precisely to capture as much literature as possible that may intersect with the search criteria. The reviewed literature is written in English, Swedish, Norwegian and Danish. The reviewed publications include books, anthologies, scientific articles and research reports illuminating explicit theoretical and methodological approaches and PhD dissertations from universities. The collection, reading, and inclusion of studies for this research and knowledge gathering was inspired in particular by Pyrooz & Mitchell's (2015) approach to systematic analyses in the area of gang research, which emphasizes the significance of the included publications developing knowledge about gangs, either from a critical research perspective and/or contributing with empirically rooted analyses. Contrary to Pyrooz & Mitchell

(2015), however, we have made exceptions for the above in terms of research and knowledge connected explicitly to the Nordic countries. Here, we have included a number of reports from the so-called sector research institutions and governmental sectors. These reports are in the nature of mapping, overviews, or evaluations and are included exactly because much of the knowledge now associated with the so-called gang research in the Nordic countries originates precisely with these institutions/sectors and therefore contributes to delineating the so-called gang area. Under theme no. 1, the Nordic research and knowledge on the subject is presented, and here it is indicated clearly which reports are included from these institutional contexts.

The total search resulted in **1097** hits, which were considered relevant the first time around. Further sorting resulted in a reduction to a total number of **417** relevant studies. The **417** studies were selected as representative of the entire field of study and help to show theoretical, empirical, as well as analytical aspects in a Danish and international context. The distribution between the countries is as follows:

Country	Qualitative	Quantitative	Mixed	Other	Total
USA	72	136	24	50	282
Canada	12	5	3	4	24
UK	18	6	2	7	33
Scandinavia	13	10	4	10	37
Other	8	12	3	10	33
Cross-national	0	6		2	8
Total	123	175	36	83	<u>417</u>

The final selection resulted in a total of 111 studies, which, via thematic synthesis were distributed across ten themes that will be presented in detail in chapter 2.

Analytical framework

The obtained literature was sorted with a focus on young people in gangs and was read via an analysis model with a particular focus on the research design of the study, the data used, the theoretical foundation, and the results and foundation of the study.

The described analysis model is developed as follows:

1. Theme of the study
2. Theoretical foundation of the study
3. Research design and data used for the study
4. Results and conclusions of the study

There are two particular issues characteristic for the obtained literature that should be noted up front. One circumstance that should be noted is the fact that especially internationally, research about youth in gangs is a huge field of study, which also has a very long historical tradition (Klein et al., 2001; Maxson et al., 2014; Pyrooz & Mitchell, 2015). The fact that the research field is immense also means that the research literature is immense, and a wide overview of the field indicates that over time, quite a few research and knowledge gatherings have been performed on the existing knowledge on the subject. A great many of them present so-called general knowledge in the area of gangs, while others focus on special themes, such as gangs and violence (Klein & Maxson, 2006), gangs and psychological risk factors (Alleyne & Wood, 2010), and gangs from an international perspective (Klein et al., 2001). In addition, there is comprehensive historical elucidation of things like the way gangs (and research associated with them) has changed in step with societal development, as well as social, cultural, and political changes (Pyrooz & Mitchell, 2015; Fraser, 2017). It is key, however, to emphasize that the many research and knowledge gatherings belong primarily in an international context, particular with basis in the research field in the United States. Only two research and knowledge gatherings from the Nordic countries were obtained through the search process, both from Norway (Lidén & Sandbæk, 2009; Johansen et al., 2014). Both of the Nordic research and knowledge gatherings are included here under theme no. 1, presenting in detail the Danish and Nordic research on the topic of gangs. The fact that only these two gatherings were obtained contributes in identifying that research about youth in gangs, both in a Danish and in a Nordic context, is still a relatively new field of study, especially when compared to Europe and the United States. Research and knowledge gathering from Norway (Lidén & Sandbæk, 2009) identifies this as well, pointing to the significance of establishing a Nordic research environment with a broad theoretical and empirical approach to the topic of youth in gangs.

The other circumstance that should be noted characterizes a great deal of the research and knowledge development on this subject in terms of the obtained studies in connection with some research methodological observations. When looking broadly at the comprehensive field of study, most of the obtained international studies are found, in terms of methodology, in the tradition of quantitative research, often using large groups of young people, typically students from several different schools in different urban and neighborhoods and using questionnaires to identify whether the young people feel they are affiliated with a gang (see also Petersen, 2015 for this discussion). Similarly, these same types of studies are done with a focus on young people in correctional facilities, implementing a similar use of questionnaires to identify whether incarcerated young people feel that they are affiliated with a or that they are “just” criminals without gang affiliation (see e.g. Bendixen et al., 2006; Alleyne & Wood, 2010, 2012 for further information about using these methods). Through these, the young people that consider themselves as belonging to a gang can be identified, still anonymously, along with those who for instance may be gravitating to a gang, as well as the young people that are not approaching gang affiliation. This also opens up the possibility of making comparisons between those who indicate being in a gang and incarcerated and those who are incarcerated but indicate no gang affiliation. This type of study in particular allows for the identification of both differences and similarities in criminal behavior between the two respective groups. This provides some interesting options in terms of making comparisons across those young people who report being in a gang and those who indicate merely having committed crime without being affiliated with a gang, thereby discovering differences and similarities among various groups of young people, but also in terms of identifying some of the factors that can indicate why young people enter gangs.

Another significant point connected to this particular type of research is the option of using relatively large groups of informants and thereby also extensive data material. On the other hand, smaller qualitative studies close to the youth, regardless of theoretical perspectives, are relatively limited, even in the international field of study, in comparison with the extensive number of quantitative studies. This refers in particular to qualitative research, which can be said to dig deeper, e.g. through field studies in schools, youth clubs, in families or in other places where young people live their daily lives, and there is an even greater limitation – if not an absence – of studies that follow the young people over a longer timeframe using a longitudinal research design. Very limited among the obtained studies is also research that has followed the young people into a gang, so to speak, regardless if for a shorter or longer timeframe. This is noted here, especially because the missing or limited empirical approaches can also result in limitations in the types of knowledge that can be gathered in the comprehensive coverage of

this research field. This means that in spite of a systematic review of the obtained knowledge, there still appears – especially in a Danish and Nordic context – to be a lack of knowledge that so to speak follows the young people in their lives from their specific stance and in connection with the many different contexts in which young people live their lives – be it in the family, school, recreational activities, youth clubs, and also the gangs with which they are affiliated. It is important to note, however, that there may well be studies that could have been relevant for inclusion, but which were not obtained through the search process, which explore the life of young people in various ways – without necessarily focusing on the term gang – but which still hold significant theoretical and empirical analyses of things like youth culture, youth crime, recreational activities of young people, young people in precarious, marginalized, and excluding life circumstances, etc. that could have contributed further knowledge to the particular area of gang research. Unfortunately, it is beyond the scope of this research and knowledge gathering to search for and include this type of studies, however, collecting and analyzing studies that so to speak revolve around children and adolescents *before* entering gangs, e.g. through leisure, schooling, and friendship groups could contribute with relevant knowledge, especially in the area of prevention in the area of gang research as a whole (see also Petersen, 2015, where this discussion is introduced). The third circumstance that should be mentioned briefly before presenting the obtained and selected studies is the fact that research and knowledge development in the so-called gang field of research is very much dominated by knowledge from the United States and Europe and is by comparison even more limited in a Danish and Nordic context. When this is emphasized here, it is because it is obviously important to consider differences between the various countries, both historically, socially, politically, culturally, and economically, when studies are included from across national borders and combined into one research and knowledge gathering.

Naturally, this research and knowledge gathering does not present all the obtained studies, but rather it should be considered a representative collection of a number of studies that present the most frequently used intervention studies and general focal points in research concerning young people in gangs for the purpose of identifying knowledge about which young people enter gangs, which efforts are significant in terms of exiting gangs, and which efforts are significant for preventing children and adolescents entering gangs. Thus, we are talking about selecting from the obtained studies, such that the included studies illustrate a wide variety of the existing research and knowledge on the subject, both in terms of theoretical perspectives, the use of various types of research designs, and differences in results and conclusions in the field of research.

Specifically excluded were materials like more or less autobiographical accounts from former gang members, journalistic articles and accounts, and research/studies focusing on things like biker gangs,² so as to avoid confusing different groups and studies that focus on groups that indicate having a political foundation and motivation, as well as studies that focus strictly on young people and crime but not from the point of view of gang involvement. In addition, studies of a more summarizing and theoretical character without real empirical analyses were omitted. To the extent that articles were obtained that present parts of a research project, a search was made for the actual presentation of the original research project and any combined theoretical, methodical, and analytical results from the individual research project. On this basis, with the United States as the clear leader in this field of study, the following themes were identified in the obtained research concerning young people in gangs:

- Theme no. I Danish and Nordic gang research
- Theme no. II Gangs, crime, violence, and victimization
- Theme no. III Socialization, education, and gang membership
- Theme no. IV Risk factors connected to gang membership
- Theme no. V Characteristics of gangs and ways in and out
- Theme no. VI Gangs, school, and education
- Theme no. VII Prevention and intervention
- Theme no. VIII Gangs and their influence on local neighborhoods
- Theme no. IX Gangs, race and ethnicity
- Theme no. X Gender and gang membership

² In a Danish context, there is often a conflation between bikers and gangs, causing these two types of groups to be examined in the same study. The purpose of this may be to identify differences between the two gang types, e.g. the respective individuals that enter into biker groups and into gangs (see e.g. studies from the Research Office of the Ministry of Justice under theme no. 1).

Chapter 2

The 10 themes

In the following chapter, the 10 themes will be presented in detail with short presentations of each study, presented chronologically starting with the most recent studies under each theme. The 10 themes go through significant number of often interwoven topic, such as about movement into a gang or intervention efforts and studies that explore how it is possible for young men to leave the gang again. Some studies have a specific and singular focus, whereas several studies contain more and cross-disciplinary focal points. In the review of all the studies, however, it has been possible to divide them into some overarching themes that are here used to create an overview of the types of research, research design, theoretical perspectives, and results. Therefore, the thematic divisions are primarily used to create an overview of a varied field of study, rather than using them as a basis for an understanding that this large field of study can be regarded in some simple and clear way. The 10 themes present a significant number of short abstracts about each of the studies that have been selected and included with reference to further information in the original publications. In the same way, a final synopsis is carried out after the presentation of the 10 themes.

Theme no. 1 – Danish and Nordic gang research

With 28 studies, the first theme identifies Danish and Nordic research and knowledge in the area of gangs. The studies are divided evenly between quantitative and qualitative methods, as well as two reviews.

Among these studies, one focus is on the experiences of the individual gang members' in terms of gang membership, education, and general life circumstances, as well as possible ways in and out of the gangs. Furthermore, this theme also covers various suggestions for exit strategies, prevention, and data collection and analysis methods. The studies under this theme are not similarly focused on any particular topic as is the case with the other themes, but rather serves exclusively to present a selection of the Danish and Nordic research on the subject.

Title	Country
Mørck, L.L. (2016) Alternativer til bande-exit. I: H. Dorf, & N. Rosendal Jensen (red.), <i>Studier i pædagogisk sociologi</i> (pp. 325-354). Aarhus: Aarhus University Press.	DK
Rostami, A., Melde, C., & Holgersson, S. (2015) <i>The myth of success: the emergence and maintenance of a specialized gang unit in Stockholm, Sweden</i> . Article from PhD dissertation.	SVE
Rostami, A., & Mondani, H. (2015) The Complexity of Crime Network Data: A Case Study of Its Consequences for Crime Control and the Study of Networks. <i>PloS ONE</i> , 10(3). Article from PhD dissertation.	SVE
Bjørgero, T. (2015) <i>Forebygging av kriminalitet</i> . Oslo: The University Press.	NOR
Deuchar, R. Søgaard, T. F., Kolind, T., Thylstrup, B., & Wells, L. (2015) 'When you're boxing you don't think so much': pugilism, transitional masculinities and criminal desistance among young Danish gang members. <i>Journal of Youth Studies</i> , 19(6), 725-742.	DK
Petersen, K.E. (2015) <i>Stemmer fra en bande – Unge bandemedlemmers egne fortællinger om opvækst, hverdagsliv og fremtid</i> . Copenhagen: DPU, Aarhus University.	DK
Mørck, L.L., & Hansen, P. (2015) Fra rocker til akademiker. <i>Psyke & Logos</i> , 36(1), 347 – 348.	DK
Lien, I.-L. (2014) <i>Pathways to Gang involvement and Drug Distribution</i> . Cham Heidelberg: Springer.	NOR
Johansen, S., Blaasvær, N., & Wollscheid, S. (2014) Forebygging av gjengtilknytning blant unge under soning – et systematisk litteratursøk. Notat 2014. Oslo: Norwegian Institute of Public Health, 2014.	NOR

<p>Pedersen, M.L., & Ribe, M. Ø. (2016) <i>Flowet i rocker/bandemiljøerne</i>. Copenhagen: Research Office of the Ministry of Justice.</p> <p>Se også: Ribe, M. Ø. (2017) <i>Flowet i rocker-/bandemiljøerne</i>. Copenhagen: Research Office of the Ministry of Justice.</p>	DK
<p>Pedersen, M.L. (2016) <i>Exit-forløb med rockere og bandemedlemmer. Aftaler om exit under rammemodellen. 2. delrapport</i>. Copenhagen: Research Office of the Ministry of Justice.</p>	DK
<p>Pedersen, M.L. (2015) <i>Exit-forløb med rockere og bandemedlemmer. Aftaler om exit under rammemodellen. 1. delrapport</i>. Copenhagen: Research Office of the Ministry of Justice.</p>	DK
<p>Pedersen, M.L. (2014a) <i>Exit-indsatser for rockere og bandemedlemmer – En kortlægning af tiltag under rammemodellen</i>. Copenhagen: Research Office of the Ministry of Justice.</p>	DK
<p>Pedersen, M.L. (2014b) Gang joining in Denmark – Prevalence and correlates of street gang membership. <i>Journal of Scandinavian Studies in Criminology and Crime Prevention</i>, 15(1), 55 – 72.</p>	DK
<p>Pedersen, M.L. (2014c) <i>Veje ind og ud af rocker- og bandemiljøer</i>. Copenhagen: Research Office of the Ministry of Justice.</p>	DK
<p>Klement, C., & Pedersen, M.L. (2013) <i>Rockere og bandemedlemmers kriminelle karrierer og netværk i ungdommen. 3. rapport fra banderekutteringsprojektet</i>. Copenhagen: Research Office of the Ministry of Justice.</p>	DK
<p>Lindstad, J. K. (2012) <i>Undersøgelse af rockere og bandemedlemmers opvækstforhold. 2. Rapport om banderekutteringsprojektet</i>. Copenhagen: Research Office of the Ministry of Justice.</p>	DK
<p>Pedersen, M. L., & Lindstad, J. M. (2011) <i>Første led i fødekæden? En undersøgelse af børn og unge i kriminelle grupper</i>. Copenhagen: Research Office of the Ministry of Justice.</p>	DK

Torfing, J., & Krogh, A.H. (2013) <i>Samarbejdsdrevet innovation i bandeindsatsen</i> . Copenhagen: Djøf Publishing.	DK
Faldet, A.-C. (2013) <i>Jenter som utøver vold. En empirisk studie av jenters erfaring med gjengaktivitet, familie og skolegang</i> . PhD dissertation, Faculty of Educational Sciences, University of Oslo.	NOR
Leinfelt, F., & Rostami, A. (2012) The Stockholm Gang Model - PANTHER. Stockholm Gang Intervention & Prevention Project, 2009-2012. Stockholm: Stockholm Police Authority.	SVE
Rostami, A., Leinfelt, F., & Holgersson, S. (2012) An Exploratory Analysis of Swedish Street Gangs: Applying the Maxson and Klein Typology to a Swedish Gang Dataset. <i>Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice</i> , 28(4), 426-445. Article from PhD dissertation.	SVE
Rostami, A., Leinfelt, F., & Brotherton, D. C. (2012) Understanding gang leaders: Characteristics and driving forces of street gang leaders in Sweden. <i>Free Inquiry in Creative Sociology</i> , 40(2), 1-20. Article from PhD dissertation.	SVE
Basic, G., Thelander, J., & Åkerström, M. (2009) <i>Vårdkedja för ungdomar eller professionella? En processutvärdering av projektet "Motverka våld och gäng"</i> . Stockholm: The National Board of Institutional Care, FOU.	SVE
Lidén, H., & Sandbæk, M.K. (2009) <i>Ungdomsgjenger – en kunnskapsstatus</i> . Oslo: Institute for Social Research.	NOR
Roxell, L. (2007) <i>Fångar i et nätverk? Fängelser, interaktioner och medbrottlingsskap</i> . PhD dissertation, Department of Criminology, Stockholm University.	SVE
Bendixen, M., Endresen, I. M., & Olweus, D. (2006) Joining and Leaving Gangs: Selection and Facilitation Effects on Self-Reported Anti-Social Behavior in Early Adolescence. <i>Journal of Criminology</i> , 3(1), 85-114.	NOR

Carlsson, Y. (2005) <i>Tett på gjengen – En evaluering av gjengintervensjonsprosjektet "Tett på" i Oslo</i> . Oslo: Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research.	NOR
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In this study, Mørck (2016) focuses on alternatives for gang exit, addressing processes, dilemmas, barriers, and possibilities when young people leave biker groups. It is noteworthy that Mørck distinguishes less sharply between biker and gang research, since she believes that the two are increasingly intermeshed in a Danish context, in part because bikers and gangs are in conflict with each other, and in part because the change in and across groupings, just as several street gangs have become biker gangs as more international biker groups have come to the country. Thus, it is possible in Denmark to identify several common interests among criminal and/or extreme groupings (see e.g. Christensen & Mørck, 2017). Data is collected through, among others, observations, interviews, film dialogues, and conversations with co-researches, and the analysis is rooted in e.g. social practice theory about learning and about learning as a way to go beyond marginalization (Mørck, 2006), as well as the so-called learning by expanding (Mørck, 2014). As a challenge to established ideologies of gang exit, which are primarily focused on the motivation of the members to exit, alternative interpretations of these are suggested, e.g. by focusing the exit on access to new meaning, new affiliations, and new life orientations for the members, and opportunities for the young men to do something in which both they and their surroundings will take pride. It is recommended that future exit programs be developed as NGO alternatives to programs through correctional services or the police, and that they be kept completely separate from police investigations.

In this study by Rostami et al. (2015), the focus is on the effectiveness of the Swedish gang abatement program NOVA. NOVA is a Swedish initiative against organized crime in Stockholm. The purpose of NOVA is, among other things, to use interventions, information gathering, and mapping of criminal constellations in an effort to prosecute so-called priority persons. The effectiveness is examined by comparing official statements about the effectiveness of the program with statistics for prosecution and internal documents related to the program. The study includes both quantitative and qualitative data consisting of police reports, work plans, governmental reports, newsletters, memorandums, evaluations, news articles, and webpages. Among these documents, both public and internal materials are included. In addition, qualitative interviews were completed by police officers associated with the NOVA program. The purpose of using both quantitative and qualitative studies was to use the so-called method triangulation. The

study shows that official statements about the effectiveness of the program are not consistent with internal documents. Furthermore, the authors emphasize that the statistics for prosecutions do not differentiate whether the prosecuted individuals are registered under the NOVA program before or after their prosecutions. Thus, the NOVA program is described officially as being effective in terms of the number of prosecutions, despite internal documents indicating the opposite. The authors also emphasize that the police are in a difficult situation in terms of public statements about their own initiative. If they are too critical, it can influence the public perception of police efforts. And since public confidence in the police is very important, critical announcements from the police themselves can contribute to breaking down the mechanisms of social control that are necessary to maintain law and order. Furthermore, positive announcements about police efforts could potentially have the effect of criminal gangs perceiving the police as being in control and dissolving in response to police rhetoric. One disadvantage of calling a given initiative effective, when in reality it is not, is that this initiative is spread to other areas in the country, mostly on the basis of a myth about its effectiveness. Thus, the authors recommend that if a given initiative is presented as effective, this must be based in fact and in thorough analysis that specifically supports the effectiveness.

In this study, Rostami and Mondani (2015) focus on the use of Social Networks Analysis (SNA) in gang research. The purpose of the study is to examine whether various network data pertaining to the same phenomenon influences the results of network studies. The authors argue that SNA is an important component in studies of criminal networks and consequently in the fight against organized crime. In this study, the focus is on a particular Swedish street gang via three different data sets, namely data about intelligence, surveillance, and common crime. The data sets are used in development of networks that are compared via distance calculations, centralization, and cluster formation. The study shows the complexity in terms of the way different data have different significance for the research topic and therefore for the result. Thus, the same individuals have different statuses in a social environment depending on the data sets and measurements used. This can be particularly problematic if the desire is to pinpoint individual targets for intervention or surveillance, as it can be difficult to identify relevant individuals because of this. Furthermore, there is an emphasis on the use of multiple data sources as playing a critical role in comprehending the complexity in the studied phenomenon. On this basis, the authors recommend that researchers, politicians, and practitioners be more aware of research bias and that they be careful with conclusions based on intelligence analysis of limited data material. Thus, future gang research should be based on multiple data sources.

Bjørgero (2015) has developed an extensive model for prevention of crime. The model consists of nine mechanisms and can, according to the authors, be applied to several types of crime, including youth gangs, which is described in a separate chapter. The nine mechanisms are not subject to any fixed order, and they are also parallel in part. Even so, the mechanisms are listed point by point by the author under the headings of: mechanisms to prevent a criminal act, which involves the erection of moral barriers; reducing recruitment, deterrents, prevention and protecting soft targets. Further mechanisms are about what happens when a criminal act has taken place. These are: incapacitation which is typically incarceration, but which could also be things like reduced access to weapons or explosives or arrest for preventive purposes. Furthermore, it is about reducing any damage connected to a criminal episode that has taken place. The third section focuses on mechanisms to prevent a criminal act from reoccurring. These mechanisms are about reducing potential rewards and strengthening rehabilitation of former criminals. When these mechanisms are associated with youth gangs, this is particularly focused on recruiting into gangs, normative barriers against violence and crime, deterrence via increased costs and reduced rewards of gang membership. This also concerns preventing gang violence and about reducing the capacity of the gangs. Finally, there is an emphasis on the reduction of deleterious effects due to gangs and on exit programs that can contribute to shutting down existing gangs. The book has also been published in English (Bjørgero, 2016).

In this ethnographic study, Deuchar et al. (2015) focus on the significance of boxing in terms of masculinity and refraining from criminal acts among young gang members from ethnic minority groups in Denmark. The study is based on young people who have participated in a boxing rehabilitation program. The study examines whether the program can support the young men in finding alternative ways to masculine identity construction that don't involve gang membership. The study consists of ethnographic data collected via observation and qualitative interviews with 22 young men, which is analyzed from the standpoint of masculinity (see e.g. Conell, 2005; Wacquant, 2004; Flannigan, 1994). The study shows that the masculine context in the rehabilitation program provides the young men with a broader perspective of masculinity, enabling them to reflect on their immediate life situation with any concomitant dilemmas. Furthermore, the authors emphasize that even though the boxing environment and the associated metaphors are significant for the rehabilitation of young men, such environments also risk excluding young men who end up appearing less masculine. Further research is recommended into the link between social constructs of masculinity, violent offences, and the significance of intervention programs such as those in boxing and other sports milieus.

In this study, Petersen (2015) places the focus on the way gang members experience gang membership, as well as the impact this has in terms of their lives growing up, life in the gang environment, their way into gangs, and their wishes for the future. Data was collected via qualitative interviews with ten gang members aged 18-29 years. Theoretically, the study is rooted in a critical psychological understanding, also described as the subject scientific paradigm (Højholt, 2005; Dreier, 2004; Christensen, 2005; Holzkamp, 1998), which is especially concerned with the importance of involving contexts for how children and adolescents live their lives, which potentially contributes to developing knowledge about the young people in gangs from a so-called first-person perspective. The purpose of the study was to convey the experiences of the young gang members in terms of things like which social-educational and schooling efforts they have experienced, as well as their descriptions of what can be changed. Among other things, the study contributes a new way of understanding the subject of gangs, which is associated with both the (social) educational field of study and the perspectives and standpoints of the young people. The study extracts five related themes from the narrations of the gang members. Themes that concern childhood and family circumstances, schooling and leisure activities, ways into the gang, living a life of stress and anxiety, and finally efforts for gang members. The study shows things like differences in family circumstances, especially between young Danes and young people of other ethnic origin. Common to the gang members is the fact that they were not particularly academically successful in school, as well as the fact that they all started participating in criminal activities around the ages of 12-13. Life in gangs is described as marked by stress, anxiety, and nervousness, which may be caused by psychological difficulties in early childhood or because of life in the gang itself. Finally, three points are described in terms of educational efforts, e.g. being “kicked out” in educational contexts, the significance of the timing of a given initiative, and what has been successful in terms of helping and supporting gang members, e.g. in form of specific social-educational efforts targeted to the need for support experienced by the individual.

Inn this study, Mørck and Hansen (2015) describe a former biker’s way of life over a span of ten months, during which the biker is also participating in the exit program of the police. The study consists of a collaboration between a researcher and a former biker and describes the significance of this subject-subject-research, where those who are marginalized are invited in as co-researchers and co-writers. The study uses a so-called moment-movement methodology to analyze things like movements in the co-researcher’s social self-understanding and changed way of life, as well as analysis around dichotomies in the exit programs of the police in relation to the main issues of the co-researcher. The

data takes various forms, such as interviews, audio and video logs, e-mail correspondence, and joint educational presentations between researcher and co-researcher. The approach in this study is primarily an interdisciplinary social practice theory (Mørck, 2006), which is described as a further development of critical psychology and situated learning theory. Among other things, the article describes issues around existing exit programs, possibly transgressive actions on part of the co-researcher, and learning by expanding.

Roads leading to gang involvement and drug sales in Norway are the focus of this book by Lien (2014). In the study, Lien interviewed 50 young men between the ages of 16 and 32, spread across five Norwegian correctional facilities, with primarily African, Pakistani, or Norwegian backgrounds. Additionally, a number of former inmates were interviewed, as well as 15 parents of Somali and Pakistani backgrounds, respectively. Among the things emphasized in the study, is the fact that gang members often suffer from depression and traumatic stress, and that they are often indebted to people outside the detention facilities. Owing money or favors is exactly what makes leaving the environment difficult, the author points out. The book contributes knowledge about how to understand the lives of young people in the gang environment, and about how they are stuck there, which is described as valuable knowledge for researchers and politicians, especially the ones who are interested in administration of youth justice, youth gangs, and the drug trade, and who would like to understand the logic behind it and also help the young people to find possible ways out of the environment. The book is also available in Norwegian (Lien, 2011).

Johansen et al. (2014), for Norwegian Institute of Public Health in Norway, developed what they described as a systematic review of preventive efforts against gang involvement targeting young people serving their sentences. The study was commissioned by the Norwegian Correctional Service and contains studies found via systematic searches in March of 2014. The synopsis presents as its result the discovery of a total of 12 studies distributed across a single review, in addition to descriptions of preventive initiatives like therapy, employment, organized sport, interdisciplinary collaboration, no mail access, electronic shackles, and separate prison sections for inmates without gang affiliation. It is described explicitly that the full text of the studies was not read, for which reason the synopsis does not present a conclusion *per se*.

The following ten studies are all studies done by the Research Office of the Ministry of Justice in a Danish context. Therefore, the studies are not separated from the rest of the studies chronologically, and there will therefore be newer studies described subsequently.

In this study, Pedersen and Ribe (2016) examined the flow of people in Denmark's biker and gang communities, including the stability in the communities and the number

of new members compared to the number of members that have left. The data for this study consists of information about people with either gang or biker affiliation, collected via the Danish police's investigation support database (PED). The study is based on 3332 of these registered persons. Registration of people with gang or biker affiliation has been done since 2009, and people registered at least once between 2009 and April 2016 are the once included in this study. The study shows, among other things, that in spite of a general notion that membership of either biker or gang environments is a membership for life, there is a steady flow of members coming and going in these groups. Thus, the number of repeat registrations from 2009 who continues to be registered in 2016 is under a third, namely 14% registered as gang members and 41% registered as bikers. Furthermore, the study shows that the number of people registered as either bikers or gangs during the entire period 2009-2016 is 324 persons. It is also emphasized that about 1400 individuals are registered in 2016 who are associated with either the gang or biker environment, which is the lowest since January of 2010.

Moreover, this study was followed up by Ribe (2017), who describes these numbers as valid for the following year. Among other things, the study shows that the bikers and gang members registered in 2009 fell from 2016 to 2017. Thus, the repeat appearance of registered bikers and gang members fell to 7% and 38%, respectively, and the number of continuously registered bikers or gang members has fallen to 268. As in Christensen and Mørck (2017), it is emphasized in both reports that there are movements between the groups. Thus, it was registered that in the period from 2009-2017 there are 247 individuals who have changed groups. Typically, gang members switch to biker groups. Furthermore, Ribe emphasizes that at the end of 2016, 1257 individuals were registered as affiliated with one of these groupings, which is the lowest since 2009. Hells Angels and Bandidos continue to be the largest biker gangs, but other biker groups not directly associated with them appear to be growing.

In this partial report #2, Pedersen (2016) focuses on framework agreements entered into regarding exits from gang and biker environments. In the report, which is a follow-up to partial report #1 examines more closely the content of the exit process and the situation of the participants a year after the start of the initiative. Data is collected, in part through information about the collaborative agreements entered into by the authorities and the bikers or gang members, and in part through questionnaires from a small selection of these members. The analysis of the collaborative agreements shows that the exit participants from the Prison and Probation Service facilities (i.e. the inmates) must often be reassigned and have mentor support to be able to leave their environments, just as the need schooling, education, and in some cases therapeutic conversations. Gener-

ally, there appears to be consistency between the participants' needs and initiatives applied in the exit process. Among the exit participants who are not incarcerated, there is a need for financial assistance and for finding housing. These participants also need therapeutic conversations and help to find employment. In contrast to the process for those incarcerated, it has not been possible to discover which initiatives are applied during the process when the young people are not incarcerated. Furthermore, some members need help to remove tattoos, although this need is greater among bikers than among gang members. The analysis of the questionnaires emphasizes, among other things, that 30 out of 35 exit participants in the study have left their biker or gang environment a year after the start of the process, and that their family and the exit initiative were the most important reasons for this. Two thirds of all respondents point to the exit initiative as their reason for staying out of crime, and about half talk about help for employment, schooling, or education. In spite of the respondents in this study constituting only 17% of exit participants, it is assumed that people are satisfied with the initiative.

In this partial report #1, Pedersen (2015) also focuses on the exit agreements Danish municipalities, the police, and the Prison and Probation Service have entered into with members of the gang and biker environments as a trial period starting in 2012 continuing through all of 2013 and 2014. The background is the government's national framework model 'A way out'. A way out is a Danish framework model for exit programs for gang members and bikers. The model lays the groundwork for strengthening the collaboration between authorities around precisely the gang members and bikers wanting to leave their respective environments. The model is short-term with a focus on quick and consistent responses toward the target group, as well as long-term where the focus is on preventive and precautionary initiatives that may potentially interrupt the so-called food chain of the gangs and biker groups. The report describes the reasons bikers and gang members have for leaving their gangs. The report shows that 134 members entered into agreement to exit under the framework model, of which 54% are connected to the biker milieu, while 46% are gang affiliated. Data are based on questionnaires on 90 of these members. As to leaving the biker or gang milieus, the report shows that a third of the bikers and about a fifth of the gang members had to pay to leave, primarily in form of some amount of money. The main concern of leaving the biker or gang milieus are described as a fear of the former gang exacting revenge on the former members or their families, that they be pushed into crime by former friends from the group, and that the police may continue to treat them as members. As to the wishes and needs of the exit participants, it is emphasized that 8 out of 10, who are in the exit program outside of a detention facility is assigned a contact person to help them with the process. Among the most important wishes are assistance in finding employment, assistance in staying out

of crime, assistance with financial problems, and help to protect themselves against the biker or gang milieus. As a whole, the author emphasizes that the study indicates that before the exit agreement, bikers and gang members have distanced themselves considerably from their groups, and that they appear very motivated to change their lifestyle, but also that they need help to complete their, especially in the context of being accepted outside their familiar environment.

In this study, Pedersen (2014a) has mapped out exit initiatives for bikers and gang members in Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Iceland, who wish to leave criminal environments. Data is collected through written material regarding exit initiatives and through qualitative interviews with local exit units in Danish police departments, the Directorate for the Prison and Probation Service, and with five municipalities that either have experienced a lot of cases or have special exit initiatives. Among other things, the study shows that working with exiting is difficult and demanding, and that things like a change in case manager make the process difficult, just as there are significant local differences in the organization of the exit process, wherefore not everyone has the same opportunity to participate in such programs. It is recommended that a common understanding be developed as to what exit programs should involve, and who should be part of them. This will make exit programs into more open systems, potentially affording everyone the same opportunity to participate, as well as uniform quality throughout the process.

In the sixth study, Pedersen (2014b) focuses on joining gangs and gang recruitment in Denmark, as well as prevalence of the same. The study examines the joining of gangs by young people in socially marginalized neighborhoods with gang presence. Data was collected via questionnaires to 1886 students between the ages of 12 and 17 in Copenhagen. The study indicates that 13% of young people between the ages of 13 and 17 are members of street gangs. Street gang members are characterized by poor parental supervision, weak pro-social values, and high-risk lifestyles compared to other groups involved in crime. Similarly, the study indicates that the accessibility and proximity of criminal gangs at a higher organizational level than street gangs increases the willingness to join such gangs, in particular for the street gang members, since they have more frequently been in contact with the more well-established gangs, e.g. as look-outs or couriers.

Ways in and out of biker and gang milieus is the subject of this study by Pedersen (2014c). The data material consists of interviews with 15 former bikers or gang members from nine different groups. The purpose is to provide insight into the reason why some choose to join biker groups and gangs, and how the membership is arranged. The report shows that the majority of the members become familiar with such groups during their

teen years, and the experience of security and community are among the most frequent reasons for joining the groups. Joining is usually done via self-recruiting, and personal relationships seem to be critical for the result of this, along with an evaluation of what the individual can provide to the group. According to the author, those who become members are subject to a probationary period, especially for the biker groups, which is different from the gangs, where it is important to show your loyalty. On the downside for the members it is mentioned that with the bikers you must be available more often, and that you can be forced to perform criminal acts, while the gang members emphasize conflicts with other gangs, which can prevent free movement in particular parts of town. For both groups it is a fact that staying away from crime is difficult. As to leaving the groups, it is described that most want this, so they can focus on family and work instead. Thus, crime or punishment is not mentioned as a factor. The bikers in particular emphasize loss of friendships, identity, and protection when leaving the group, which for the bikers can be extra difficult. The author emphasizes that the things that make joining the groups attractive may be the same that make it hard to leave them again.

In the eighth study, Klement and Pedersen (2013) explore the careers and networks of criminal bikers and gang members during adolescence and early adulthood for the purpose of identifying any patterns that may contribute to the risks of gang membership. The study is founded on registration data for individuals registered as either bikers or gang members in the Danish police's investigation support database, as well crime information from Statistics Denmark. Among other things, the report shows that bikers and gang members do not differ from the control group in terms of criminal debut, but that this debut more commonly involves violent crime. Compared to bikers, the authors report that gang members have their criminal debut earlier, and more frequently than with bikers, the crime of gang members is some form of sexual crime, violent crime and violation of laws against psychedelic drugs. The authors conclude that it can be difficult to draw clear lines between those who are registered as biker or gang affiliated and other offenders.

In this study, which is number nine in the series originating with the Research Office of the Ministry of Justice, Lindstad (2012) examined the childhood circumstances of bikers and gang members. Data was collected via register data from the Prison and Probation Service. Information was collected for 198 randomly selected individuals from the biker and gang communities, as well as a control group consisting of 200 offenders without biker or gang affiliation. The age group was restricted to between 0 and 15 years. The report describes 18 circumstances that are included in the analyses of childhood conditions. The conditions are divided into three main areas: personal circumstances, circumstances in the home, and circumstances in school. These cover things like mental

disorders, homes marked by insufficient care, and problem behaviors in school. A comparison between bikers and gang members and the control group show, among other things, that a greater share of bikers or gang members were in contact with crime growing up, that they grew up in large cities, and that their school careers was problematic. Further, the author points out differences between bikers and gang members compared to the control group. Thus, growing up under stable conditions constitutes a higher risk factor for joining a biker group, while for gang members, there is an increased risk of membership if the individual has previously been involved in crime. For the latter, no family circumstances are noted, which may explain later gang membership.

The tenth study from the Research Office of the Ministry of Justice (Pedersen & Lindstad, 2011) is focused on young people in criminal groups as potential recruitment groups for the gangs. In this report, criminal groups are described as young people characterized by sticking together for an extended period while accepting crime, often of a less serious character, as part of their joint activities. Data was collected via questionnaires from 1886 students in grades 7-10 from socially marginalized areas in and around Copenhagen. The report describes, among other things, that young people in criminal groups commit more crime - and more frequent crime - compared to other young people and are also more accepting of crime. The risk of being part of criminal groups is highest for boys, especially those of other ethnic origin than Danish, although the majority of young people in criminal groups are of Danish origin. Furthermore, it is considered a risk factor to move in criminal circles and have parents that are rarely aware of the whereabouts of the young people. On the other hand, staying away from drugs and alcohol and displaying high levels of self-control are described as so-called preventive factors. According to the authors, the study identifies a group of young people, who display a particularly high level of criminality, which is difficult to prevent, especially due to limited knowledge, both nationally and internationally about what works.

In this book by Torfing and Krogh (2013) the focus is on collaborative innovation into gang initiatives. The data of the book is based on 30 semi-structured interviews with participants in 14 so-called collaborative innovation processes. Innovation is described by the authors as a necessity for developing and implementing new solutions to complex theses when standard solutions are not possible, which, also according to the authors, is the case with gang-related violence and crime. The interviews are supplemented with document reviews and in a single case with a meeting observation. The purpose of the book is to analyze examples of collaborative innovation to contributed to increased knowledge precisely about public innovation, especially as it pertains to gang intervention at Nørrebro and the area around Mjølnerparken, both in Copenhagen. The com-

pleted interviews are presented in the book as 14 narratives about collaborative innovation, spread over various innovative solutions connected to the preventive gang intervention. According to the authors, these are solutions which as a whole constitute a cluster of projects and initiatives, rather than one huge break-through innovation. It is emphasized, however, that although a larger number of gradually growing projects can compensate for the lack of larger ones, there are so many small projects in this case that some informants, among others, consider it a problem, as it can be difficult to keep track of all the projects. Additionally, it is pointed out that the efforts are at risk of becoming too fragmented. In this context, the book offers a very clear chart showing the connection between initiative, problem, and innovative solution (p. 178). One example of this is the exit strategy. Here, the problem is the difficulty in leaving the gang and living a normal life subsequently. The innovative solution in this case is a quick, handheld wrap-around initiative in SSP, where the age limit of 18 years is disregarded, and the focus is expanded to including those between the ages of 18 and 25 - the so-called SSP+ collaboration. The authors conclude that the result of their analyses shows that the main focus is on needs-based service innovation, where a given initiative is improved without necessarily making it cheaper, but also that the pressure to be particularly innovative in the area of less costly service is limited, since there is political will to invest in crime prevention efforts. Finally, it is emphasized that collaborative innovation can be characterized in terms of complex and dynamic processes. For them to succeed, it is necessary to have a solid understanding of the nature of and challenges associated with these processes.

In her PhD dissertation, Faldet (2013) focused on girls committing violence, as well as their experience with gang activity, family, and school. Very specifically, she examines how the girls themselves see their violent behavior, how girls are recruited into gangs, what characterizes such gangs, and what meaning and value gang involvement has for the girls. Data is collected via in-depth qualitative interviews with 13 girls between the ages of 12 and 19. Additionally, interviews are included with four professionals who have all worked with gang-affiliated girls and the girls' families. These individuals were a person from the police department, a social educator, an employee from Norway's child protective services, and an employee of an after-school club. Theoretically, the dissertation is based in Grounded Theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998), where the focus is to develop theory based on issues rooted in practice through empirical research. Among other things, the study shows that the girls have an ambivalent understanding of violence. The girls don't see violence as a good thing, although it is described as necessary in certain situations. The girls explain their own violent episodes as serving to keep control, as something that happens when you lose your patience, as entertainment, and as an expression for sheer habit, i.e. something that just

happens sometimes. The girls' gang affiliation was referred to as friendship among the girls, and they described themselves as being different from the rest of the girls. This also in terms of being more mature and with an expressed desire not to be "school nerds". The study also describes that girls appear to have a loser affiliation with their gangs, and that female gangs do not have the same status as male gangs, which may explain why female gangs do not stick together long-term, and that they have frequent member changes. Furthermore, being a girl committing violent acts is associated with shame. According to the author, it appears that girls who commit violence have been exposed to several risk factors, and that they have experience failure in several areas where other girls have more success, such as family, school and friendship relationships. The girls in the study are noted to be contrast-filled. They are girls who have problems and who create problems. They are tormented and violated girls who torment and violate others. They are girls who become visible through their inappropriate behavior, but who have not been seen for their strengths and vulnerabilities by either their families or their teachers. They are girls who would like to be independent, but who also depend on belonging somewhere and who are lonely despite having many friends.

In this book, Leinfelt and Rostami (2012) present initiatives, which have been implemented by the police in Stockholm in response to a major financial grant. The grant resulted in the gang abatement program PANTHER, a holistic model based on a problem-oriented paradigm around police surveillance and gang abatement consisting of three elements: gang suppression, intervention, and prevention. Suppression is the use of an offensive strategy to dissolve and deter street gangs via increased pressure on selected individuals or gangs, typically in collaboration with legislative authorities. Intervention is described as the use of various social intervention teams that include the participation of social workers and law enforcement in an effort to encourage gang members to change their lifestyle and then their criminal careers. Prevention is the use of methods that frustrates the recruitment of gang members, e.g. through educational initiatives that inform young people of alternatives to gang membership. The PANTHER model employs five steps in the tactical implementation: scanning and analysis, method selection, tactical operations, investigation of crime, and evaluation. Scanning and analysis involves analyzing whether there is a problem in the local area, e.g. a particular part of the city. Subsequently, the extent of any problem can be determined. Method selection and tactical operations depend on the types of problems revealed in the analysis phase. Investigation of crime is primarily focused on being able to prosecute criminal gang members. The last step in the model is evaluation, which is a mandatory element in the PANTHER process, which entails both individual self-evaluation and collective evaluation of the tactical operation. The authors than the book by recommending that holistic police

work be developed further, and that this approach is likely to find application with other social phenomenon, such as hooliganism.

In this article, Rostami, Leinfelt, and Holgersson (2012) describe whether a certain typology (Klein & Maxson, 2006) can be used on Swedish gangs. The typology consists of five gang types: traditional gangs, neo-traditional gangs, the compressed gang, the collective gang, and finally the specialty gang.³ The study is based on an earlier research assumption that gangs, as they are known from places like the United States, do not exist in Sweden. The study data consist of individual data concerning 239 Swedish gang members from seven different gangs, identified via police registers. Data contained the age, gender, ethnicity, place of birth, income, address, and criminal registration of the gang members, with which member profiles could be created. The study shows that among the seven Swedish gangs that were studied, the so-called compressed gang was typical. According to Klein and Maxson (2006), compressed gangs consist of up to 50 gang members that can be described both as territorial and non-territorial. The age range in these gangs is generally narrow, usually with a difference of 5-10 years or less between the youngest and the oldest members. This gang type often has a short lifespan of less than ten years. Thus, the study shows that Swedish gang members are comparable to other European gangs in areas like durability, size, age, crime patterns, and gender composition. The authors conclude that the Swedish welfare system has gangs, which contradicts earlier research, and also gangs that are comparable to a traditional American typology. Furthermore, it is recommended that gang research continue in Europe, and that gangs are not considered a temporary youth culture.

In this qualitative criminological study, Rostami et al. (2012) combine an ethnographic observation field with in-depth interviews with twelve Swedish gang leaders and twelve other gang members. The purpose is to understand which motives and world views characterize gang leaders. Via the collected data, the authors discovered four types of gang leaders, i.e. the entrepreneur, the prophet, the realist, and the victim of society, each possessing their own characteristics. Based on this, the authors conclude that just as there are different types of gangs, there are also different types of gang leaders. Therefore, they also recommend a more holistic approach to understanding the, both from a research perspective and on part of the agencies that control the gangs. Thus, efforts should be made to strengthen the social capital and the societal democratic institutions, which should have a higher focus on prevention. Furthermore, it is emphasized that Sweden has had some success precisely with the holistic approach, which, among other things, has allowed the collection of data, which can be used in in-depth criminological analyses.

³ See Klein og Maxson (2006) for details about the different types.

In this Swedish study, Basic et al. (2009) focus on evaluating a project intended to counteract violence and gangs. The evaluation is based on qualitative research methods, primarily interviews and observations. The objective for the project was for the participating young people to attain positive and lasting changes in their life situations. Among other things, the project was intended to help break off contact with criminal friends, strengthen the opportunities for families and networks to function, and improve the schooling and/or employment opportunities of the young people. Finally, the project and the care for the young people should contribute to creating functional models for collaboration across SiS and Socialtjänsten (social services department) in Sweden. The authors emphasize that the evaluation finds it difficult to point to concrete values of the project, in part because the project only ran for a year despite of being planned for a period of between 2.5 and 3 years. Another reason is that the number of institutional inmates has increased by 46%, making comparisons difficult.

This research gathering about youth gangs was published by Lidén and Sandbæk (2009), who focus especially on recruitment and motivation for gang membership, as well as initiatives to prevent young criminals to commit more serious crimes. Among other things, the study shows that marginalization in form of being poorly rooted in important institutions like family, school, and extracurricular activities is a significant cause for gang involvement. Motivation for gang membership is also found in experiencing lack of recognition and discrimination. According to the authors, the research field is characterized by being action-oriented, and there is a need for a field of study with a more theoretical and empirical character. Thus, the authors point out that research into youth gangs is limited in the Nordic countries, and they recommend the development of research environments with a broad theoretical and methodical approach to the field, potentially providing access to the life situations of young men in risk zones, such as inclusive masculinity forms, counter-cultures, political engagement, barriers to participating in society, and opportunities to realize own life projects.

In her PhD dissertation, Roxell (2007) examined relationships formed during incarceration, as well as the significance of these in committing joint crimes after release. Additionally, there is a focus on the same question in terms of inmates characterized as being gang members. The dissertation consists of two data sets, each with their own research question. Thus, registration data is used to answer questions about joint crime related to incarceration, age, gender, network and gang members. The registration data are from a total of 3930 individuals, of which 3684 were men and 246 were women, all between the ages of 18 to 45. Data collected via semi-structured qualitative interviews focus on formation of relationships and the importance of relationships during and after

incarceration. Interviews were completed with a total of four women and eight men between the ages of 23 to 49. In theory, the dissertation is based in social exchange theory as described by Weerman (2003). Among other things, the study shows that suspected joint crimes between former inmates after serving time together are rare. When they do happen, two types of factors are indicated as significant. The first is structural factors, as inmates suspected of joint crime after their release are usually inmates from correctional facilities with so-called high security classification. Next, individual factors are indicated, such as inmates that desire no contact with other inmates. This can be when other inmates have committed crimes considered unacceptable among the rest of the inmates, inmates referred to as snitches, and inmates speaking a different language. On the other hand, drug abuse can be an element that creates relationship among inmates. Trust is also emphasized as an important element in relationships between inmates. Additionally, there are structural and individual factors, respectively, that influence whether inmates commit joint criminal acts after their release. For instance, the inmates must be release close to the same time and live within the same area for this to take place.

Connection between gang membership and anti-social behavior is the focus of this study by Bendixen et al. (2006), which examines whether this connection is based on selection bias or on facilitation of anti-social behavior in gangs. The study is based on longitudinal data from 1203 young people in Norway, who have answered questions that were evaluated for anti-social and violent behavior. The study builds on three models; the selection model, which maintains that gangs attract young people already involved in anti-social and deviant behavior (see e.g. Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990), the social facilitation model, which considers gang members no different from non-gang members before and after gang membership, maintaining that the gangs are precisely what facilitates any deviant behavior (Akers, 1997), and the enhancement model (Thornberry et al., 1993), which is a mixed model based on the assumption that both selection bias and facilitation processes contribute to the connection between gang membership and criminal behavior. The study shows that gang members are significantly more involved in anti-social behavior than non-members, also in periods when they are not gang members, which supports the theory of selection bias. Similarly, the study shows that active gang involvement very much facilitates anti-social and violent behavior, which provides a comprehensive picture of both selection bias and facilitation processes contributing to the connection between anti-social behavior and gang membership.

In this publication, Carlsson (2005) evaluates the Norwegian intervention project "Tett på". The evaluation describes how intervention was done on the municipal level, geared toward a group of 15 young people from Oslo, primarily of ethnic minority backgrounds, who were increasingly involved in crime. The group was known as the Furuset

Bad Boys, and according to the author they lived up to recognized definitions of a gang. The young people were all between 15 and 19 years of age, and their criminal acts spanned from actions to establish respect with the other youths over threats to more serious violent and exploitative crime, including serious robbery where employees were threatened with handguns and machineguns. Based on this, the intervention “Tett på” was implemented. The intervention was staffed with three fulltime social workers, and the objective was to dissolve the Furuset gang and prevent any undesirable development of other young people in the group, who were not yet considered to be gang members. In the project, there was disagreement about the configuration from the beginning, and the actual initiative was primarily built around apparently contradictory relation-based work, where close relationships between the three social workers and the young people on one side was the supporting element, and where the MST model (multi-systemic therapy) was another element. MST is a family-preserving therapy form where the relationship between parents and young people are of utmost importance. Thus, the relation-based work was a practical mixture of the above-mentioned relationships. The intervention did not succeed in rehabilitating all 15 youths in the group. Eight members were not cooperative with the project, and of the remaining seven, six of them were integrated successfully in important societal institutions, gradually separating them from the criminal environment. Although the design of the intervention makes it difficult to establish concrete results, the project shows that intervention on many parameters was demanding, and that future interventions need to be planned carefully for complete success. Even so, Tett På is described as a useful project for the community, as the young gang members require considerable resources from the police, the justice system, and the insurance companies.

Synopsis for theme I

The first theme encompasses a total of 29 Danish and Nordic studies, making it the largest of the themes. Since the compilation of this theme is based on the country where the study is done, it is indicated in parentheses under the country code in which theme individual studies could be placed if they were distributed among the remaining themes. Again, the studies overlap thematically, which means that they cannot be said to belong under any one topic. Among other things, this theme describes alternatives for gang exit in form of access to new meaning, belonging, and life orientation (Mørck, 2016). Furthermore, it is emphasized that efforts countering gangs must necessarily be based on the triangulation of multiple data sets and thus stronger facts that can support a given intervention (Rostami et al., 2015). Furthermore, it is suggested that young male gang members with a different ethnic background than Danish may potentially be rehabilitated

through things like boxing rehabilitation programs, which can be an alternative the masculine identity construction taking place in the gangs (Deuchar et al., 2015). There is also a focus on the way gang members experience gang membership and the significance it has for their lives. Among other things, five connected themes are presented, pertaining to childhood and family circumstances, schooling and leisure activities, ways into the gang, living a life of stress and anxiety, and finally efforts for gang members (Petersen, 2015). Furthermore, it is described how a so-called moment-movement-to analyze things like movements in the co-researcher's social self-understanding and changed way of life, as well as analysis around dichotomies in the exit programs of the police in relation to the main issues of the co-researcher (Mørck, 2015). As is the case with the international studies, this theme emphasizes that gang members are often anti-social, and that gang membership is closely connected with violence and crime (Bendixen et al., 2006). Furthermore, six studies are presented from the Research Office of the Ministry of Justice, which identify in various ways their knowledge about exit initiatives in the Nordic countries (Pedersen, 2014a), joining and recruitment for gangs, and ways in and out of gangs (Pedersen, 2014b, 2014c). The careers and networks of bikers and gang members in their youth are described as well (Klement & Pedersen, 2013), and the conditions in which they grew up constitute a theme (Lindstad, 2012), along with whether youth crime is a potential basis for gang recruitment (Pedersen & Lindstad, 2011).

Theme no. II – Gangs, crime, violence, and victimization

Theme no. 2 included a number of the studies focusing on violence in relation to young people in gangs. Theme two consists of a total of 18 studies distributed among primarily quantitative methods and just two qualitative ones. This theme examines things like whether young people in gangs are more violent compared to young people who commit crime without being affiliated with a gang, but also which forms of violence gangs commit against others. Hereunder, there is also a focus on so-called victimization. Victimization is understood as being the victim of a crime and can be described as gang members' risk of and experience of violent episodes as a consequence of gang affiliation. The term is also used in Danish research, where Michael Hviid Jacobsen, among others, has introduced the concept (Jacobsen & Sørensen, 2013).

Title	Country
Pyrooz, D. C., Turanovic, J. J., Decker, S. H., & Wu, J. (2016) Taking stock of the relationship between gang membership and offending. <i>Criminal Justice and Behavior</i> , 43(3), 365-397.	USA

<p>Niebieszczanski, R., Harkins, L., Judson, S., Smith, K., & Dixon, L. (2015) The role of moral disengagement in street gang offending. <i>Psychology, Crime & Law</i>, 21(6), 589-605.</p>	<p>UK</p>
<p>Papachristos, A. V., Brage, A. A., Piza, E., & Grossman, L. S. (2015) The company you keep? The spillover effects of gang membership on individual gunshot victimization in a co-offending network. <i>Criminology</i>, 53(4), 624-649.</p>	<p>USA</p>
<p>Alleyne, E., Fernandes, I., & Pritchard, E. (2014) Denying humanness to victims – How gang members justify violent behavior. <i>Group Processes & Intergroup Relations</i>, 17(6), 750-762.</p>	<p>UK</p>
<p>Papachristos, A. V., Hureau, D. M., & Braga, A. A. (2013) The corner and the crew – The influence of geography and social networks on gang violence. <i>American Sociological Review</i>, 78(3), 417-447.</p>	<p>USA</p>
<p>Melde, C., & Esbensen, F-A. (2013) Gangs and violence – Disentangling the impact of gang membership on the level and nature of offending. <i>Journal of Quantitative Criminology</i>, 29(2), 143-166.</p>	<p>USA</p>
<p>Fox, K. A., Rufino, K. A., & Kercher, G. A. (2012) Crime victimization among gang and nongang prison inmates – Examining perceptions of social disorganization. <i>Victims and Offenders</i>, 7(2), 208-225.</p>	<p>USA</p>
<p>Barnes, J. C., Boutwell, B. B., & Fox, K. A. (2012) The effect of gang membership on victimization – A behavioral genetic explanation. <i>Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice</i>, 10(3), 227-244.</p>	<p>USA</p>
<p>Pyrooz, D. C., & Decker, S. H. (2012) Delinquent behavior, Violence, and Gang Involvement in China. <i>Journal of Quantitative Criminology</i>, 29(2), 251-272.</p>	<p>CHN</p>
<p>Pyrooz, D. C. (2012) Structural covariates of gang homicide in large U. S. cities. <i>Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency</i>, 49(4), 489-518.</p>	<p>USA</p>

Drury, A. J., & DeLisi, M. (2011) Gangkill – An exploratory empirical assessment of gang membership, homicide offending, and prison misconduct. <i>Crime & Delinquency</i> , 57(1), 130-146.	USA
Katz, C. M., Webb, V. J., Fox, K., & Shaffer, J. N. (2011) Understanding the relationship between violent victimization and gang membership. <i>Journal of Criminal Justice</i> , 39(1), 48-59.	USA
Papachristos, A. V. (2009) Murder by structure – Dominance relations and the social structure of gang homicide. <i>American Journal of Sociology</i> , 115(1), 74-128.	USA
Melde, C., Taylor, T. J., & Esbensen, F-A. (2009) “I got your back” – An examination of the protective function of gang membership in adolescence. <i>Criminology</i> , 47(2), 565-594.	USA
Spano, R., Freilich, J. D., & Bolland, J. (2008) Gang membership, gun carrying, and employment – Applying routine activities theory to explain violent victimizations among inner city, minority youth living in extreme poverty. <i>Justice Quarterly</i> , 25(2), 381-410.	USA
Taylor, T. J., Freng, A., Esbensen, F-A., & Peterson, D. (2008) Youth gang membership and serious violent victimization – The importance of lifestyles and routine activities. <i>Journal of interpersonal violence</i> , 23(10), 1441-1464.	USA
Stretesky, P. B., & Pogrebin, M. R. (2007) Gang-related gun violence – Socialization, identity, and self. <i>Journal of Contemporary Ethnography</i> , 36(1), 85-114.	USA
Kelly, K., & Caputo, T. (2005) The Linkages Between Street Gangs and Organized Crime: The Canadian Experience. <i>Journal of Gang Research</i> , 13(1), 17-31.	CAN

In this meta-analysis, Pyrooz et al. (2016) focus on the connection between gang membership and so-called offending behavior. Data was obtained from a total of 179 empirical studies with 107 individual data sets. The findings indicate quite a strong connection between gang membership and offending behavior. The analysis shows not just the connection, but also that it is robust across de utilized research methods, and that the link is strongest when researching active gang members, and weaker in prospective designs. The study confirms the necessity of researchers, politicians, and practitioners continuing to work on understanding and responding to gang behavior, and it can be used to identify which research aspects need more attention going forward.

In this quantitative study, Niebieszczanski et al. (2015) focus on so-called moral disengagement, and the role played by this concept in offending behavior by street gangs. Moral disengagement is understood as individuals involved in anti-social or harmful behavior against other people tend to pretend a number of excuses and justifications for their actions. These individuals are often able to maintain both self-confidence and a positive self-image, while avoiding a feeling of shame or social stigmatization. Thus, the theory of moral disengagement (see e.g. Bandura, 1986, 1991) forms the basis for this study. Data are collected via self-reporting questionnaires from 269 male inmates in England. The study shows that offending street gang members were more likely to use so-called moral disengagement than non-gang members. The study also showed that gang members with offending behaviors were more likely to display some form of moral disengagement than individual and gang affiliated offenders, i.e. those who are not members per se. The authors emphasize that special conditions existing in street gangs and other group contexts potentially increase the tendencies of individuals toward this so-called moral disengagement, which improves the conditions for offending behavior in the group.

In this quantitative study, Papachristos et al. (2015) examine how associating socially with gang members in criminal networks influences the likelihood of becoming the victim of a shooting. The study analyzes the social networks of everyone (N=10,531), arrested for a so-called quality-of-life violation which is an offense affecting the life quality of other people. The descriptive network analysis of the study shows an extreme concentration of fatal and non-fatal injuries after shootings within a relatively small social network. Close to a third of all shootings in the city of Newark happen in networks containing less than four percent of the total number of residents in the city. Additionally, it is noted that an individual with direct or indirect connection to a gang member in a criminal network is at greater risk of being exposed to gun violence. In other words, you are more likely to get shot if you move in circles with or even around gangs and gang members.

Alleyne et al. (2014) focus on psychological mechanisms that enable young people to act violently. Like the study by Niebieszczanski et al. (2015), the theoretical basis for this study is based on the increase in so-called moral disengagement (Bandura 1986, 1991). The study is quantitative, and data are collected via questionnaires from 189 young people between the ages of 12 and 25, recruited from four centers and a single school in London. Among the 189 participants, 25 were identified as being gang members. The study shows that gang members, as compared to non-gang members, described the respective groups they are associated with as having recognized leaders, specific rules and codes, initiation rituals, and distinct dress. Gang members were also more likely to participate in violent behavior, use moral disengagement strategies, such as moral justification, euphemistic language, favorable comparisons, failure to take responsibility, and dehumanization than non-gang members. Finally, the dehumanization of victims is emphasized as especially mediating for the relationship between gang membership and violent behavior.

Papachristos et al. (2013) examine whether geography and social networks influence gang violence. The study is quantitative, and data was collected from police reports in Chicago and Boston, primarily reports concerning shootings between gangs. Based on these data, the study explored geographical proximity, organizational memory, and other group processes, such as reciprocity, transitivity, and status seeking. The concept of organizational memory is described variously in different studies (see e.g. Short & Hughes, 2006; Decker & Van Winkle, 1996; Esbensen & Huizinga, 1993). In this study, the concept is understood as a potential reason for past conflicts between gangs reignite through violence, especially through the selection of specific enemies. The study shows that territorial gang areas that are geographically adjacent have the potential of resulting in violent episodes, just as past gang conflicts tend to reignite. Additionally, the authors emphasize that important network processes, such as reciprocity and status seeking, also contribute to patterns of gang-related violence.

In this quantitative study, Melde and Esbensen (2013) focus on whether youth gangs have a reinforcing effect on violence, and whether involvement in violent behavior differs between gang members and other young people, who are also involved in general youth crime. Data were extracted from the G.R.E.A.T. (Gang Resistance Education and Training) program and include data from more than 3700 students distributed across seven American cities. G.R.E.A.T. is an evidence-based program for gang and violence prevention based on things like education by police officers in schools, which offers a continuum of components for children and their families. The program endeavors to prevent youth crime, youth violence, and gang membership, and is offered to

young people aged 9-18 before typical gang affiliation. The G.R.E.A.T. program is further referred to in a number of the following studies under other themes. The study shows that compared to other youth criminals, the likelihood of violent behavior is between 10% and 21% higher for gang members. It is also established that the propensity of gang members toward violent behavior after leaving the gangs was not significantly different from that of other youth criminals. Therefore, the authors conclude that prevention of gang membership, or cutting short young people's active periods in gangs will potentially reduce violent behavior.

In this quantitative study, Fox et al. (2012) explore, whether the relationship between gang membership and criminal victimization exists among inmates, and whether perceived social chaos (Shaw & McKay, 1969) has an impact on this relationship. There is a particular focus on whether gang members are at greater risk for victimization than non-gang members, and whether perceived social chaos is associated with this, and whether violent offenses by inmates mediate the relationship between social disorganization and victimization. Data is collected via structured interviews with 217 male gang members and non-gang members incarcerated in correctional facilities in Texas. The study indicates that gang members are at significantly higher risk for victimization, and that perceived social chaos may explain that the risk is higher among gang members, but not among non-gang members.

In this study, Barnes et al. (2012) explored the effect of gang membership on victimization. According to the authors, the study represents the first attempt to explore how genetic factors and environmental factors impact gang membership, victimization, and the effect of gang membership and experience with victimization. Data was collected quantitatively from 132 schools and more than 90,000 students who filled out self-reporting questionnaires. Additionally, about 15,000 students were interviewed subsequently. In spite of the limitations of the study, in part due to failing to control for current gang membership versus past gang membership, the authors conclude that gang affiliation is significantly influenced by both genetic factors and environmental factors, as they are perceived uniquely by the individual. The study points out that gang membership also increases the risk of victimization.

Pyrooz and Decker (2012) explore the connection between youth criminal behavior and gang membership in China, and whether self-reporting methods and findings about gang involvement, violence, and youth crime from the United States and Europe can be extrapolated to include a Chinese context. Theoretically, the study is based on item response theory (Osgood & Schreck, 2007), self-control theory (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990), and social bonding theory (Hirschi, 1969). Data were collected via questionnaires

from 2245 students across six schools in Changzhi, a city with over three million inhabitants in northern China. Students were asked to answer questions about their involvement in, among other things, their involvement in crime and gangs over the past 12 months. The results show that more than half of the respondents participated in some form of crime over the first year, and 11% reported gang membership. It is emphasized that the self-reporting method is also usable in China, and that the theoretical construction from criminology also finds application in this context. Based on this, it is concluded that the connection between gang involvement and youth crime in China is no different from studies done in western countries. Findings about youth crime, especially violence, are thus consistent with the existing literature and support invariant hypotheses about gang involvement.

In this quantitative study, Pyrooz (2012) focuses on explanatory variables of gang killings, and on whether structural conditions associated with gang killings differ from murders committed by non-gang members. Data concerning structural conditions in the 88 most populated cities in the United States were obtained via several national data sources, such as the U.S. Census Bureau and Law Enforcement Management. Among other things, the study shows that socio-economic deprivation, official numbers of gang members, and population density could explain variability between cities in terms of gang killings. Similarities in coefficient tests also showed that structural covariates for gang killings differed in size from those for murders committed by non-gang members. Cities with higher levels of social and economic deprivation have higher levels of gang-related killings, just as cities with fewer resources have a limited capacity to regulate undesirable behavior, for which reason gangs profit from the weakened social control.

In this quantitative study, Drury and DeLisi (2011) focus on the connection between gang membership, murder, and so-called bad behavior in correctional facilities. Data are based in risk assessments of 1005 inmates. These risk assessments also formed the basis for determining the facility placement of each individual inmate. The risk assessment measures things like the inmate's social background, criminal behavior, and history of drug and alcohol abuse, along with demographical information. Theoretically, the study is based on three theoretical models. First, the importation model (Irwin & Cressey, 1962), which maintains that there are characteristics of inmate behavior before incarceration that can explain their adjustment to confinement while incarcerated. Next, the deprivation model (Clemmer, 1940; Sykes, 1958), which notes that bad behavior in correctional facilities is a result of the pain experienced because of failure to adapt to the prison environment. Finally, the situational model (Steinke, 1991; Jiang & Fisher-Giorlando, 2002), which describes bad behavior as a *where, when* and *with whom* phenomenon.

Among other things, the study shows that inmates with gang history and murder convictions in particular were involved in bad behavior in prison. The study can contribute to increasing security in prisons, since theoretically informed risk assessments of inmate behavior can potentially predict violent episodes.

Katz et al. (2011) has a similar focus on the relationship between victimization and gang membership. This quantitative study explores three hypotheses about: gang involvement and involvement in other high-risk activities being related to violent victimization, involvement in gang crime being related to violent victimization, and the presence of rival gangs being related to violent victimization. Data were collected from 909 newly arrested young people. The study indicates that the risk of violent victimization is highest for gang members, followed by former gang members, those affiliated with gangs, non-gang members. After having controlled for involvement in gang crime, however, gang membership was not associated with significantly higher risk for serious violent victimization of young people. On this basis, the authors conclude that gang membership alone does not constitute an increased risk of victimization, but that the risk is more likely found in general offending behavior.

Papachristos (2009) explores the social structure associated with gang-related killings in terms of who kills whom, and when, where, and why they do so. The study is performed as a mixed methods study, and data were collected from police reports for murders in Chicago and via geographic mapping of gang areas in all police-patrolled areas in the same city. These quantitatively oriented data collections are supplemented with qualitative data collected via interviews with gang members, also in Chicago. The study concludes that gang-related killings in Chicago are not just convergent with individual or organic variables, but also the results of social actions that create relationships in networks and groups, and thus the product of dominance-related disputes among gangs. The social structures for gang-related murder is so defined by the way in which social networks are constructed, and by the placement of individuals therein. Individual murders between gangs create a kind of institutionalized group conflict, where murders spread by a so-called epidemic process.

In this quantitative study, Melde et al. (2009) focus on gang membership as a protective factor and explore objective and subjective dimensions of the victimization of gang members. Data were collected via self-reporting questionnaires to 1450 school children between the ages of 10 and 16 across 15 schools in the United States. The study reveals that gang members report higher levels of actual victimization and perceived risk for this than non-gang members. The study also shows that gang membership is associated with security in form of subjective experiences of reduced fear. Thus, the authors emphasize that gang membership does not mitigate victimization, but rather that

fear of future victimization is reduced through it regardless. The conclusion is that studies exploring the relationship between gang membership and victimization often encounter an important paradox in that young people usually justify their gang membership with protection, while the same young people experience a higher level of victimization than their non-gang member peers. According to the authors, the difference may potentially lie in 'emotional protection', i.e. a reduction in the fear of victimization. Thus, objectively gang members are not any more protected against victimization, although subjectively they experience the opposite.

Based on things like routine activities theory (Cohen & Felson, 1979), Spano et al. (2008) have examined how gang membership, weapons possession, and employment can be categorized as both risk and protection factors in areas marked by high levels of poverty. Routine activities theory can be associated with existing opportunities due to lifestyle. As an example, the absence of protecting factors increases the risk of victimization, since a given perpetrator may be motivated to violence if the victim is more easily accessible in a place suited for the purpose. Data were collected quantitatively via questionnaires from 1295 young people between the ages of 9-19, living in 12 areas marked by high levels of poverty in the United States. The study indicates that gang membership, weapons possession, and employment had significance in terms of risk of violent victimization.

Taylor et al. (2008) also focus on whether the link between gang membership and victimization is mediated by lifestyle and routine activities (Hindelang, Gottfredson & Garofalo, 1978; Cohen & Felson, 1979). This quantitative study consists of data collected via self-administrated questionnaires from 5935 eight-grade students across 42 schools and 315 class rooms in the United States. Among other things, the study shows that gang members are at higher risk for serious violent victimization than non-gang members, while no evidence was found of significant differences in the level of victimization. Among other things, the authors recommend that preventive programs focus on the importance of changing the lifestyles and routine activities of young criminals, especially in terms of their involvement with drugs and alcohol. Thus, they argue that getting a young person out of a gang is not enough by itself. On the contrary, the young person must be removed from high-risk situations, such as involvement in youth crime and spending time in environments with easy access to drugs and alcohol.

Stretesky and Pogrebin (2007) explore gang-related violence with firearms in this qualitative study with a focus on socialization and mechanisms between gang membership and violence. Socialization in this study is described as the process of assuming suitable values and norms for the gang culture of the gang in question. Data were collected via interviews with 22 inmate gang members who had all used firearms during

violent episodes. The study shows that gangs are important social agencies that contribute to forming the sense of self and identity of gang members (Goffman, 1959; Baumeister & Tice, 1984; Holstein & Gubrium, 2003). Additionally, the study showed that firearms also play an important part in precisely this context, and that violence using firearms can also be understood through self-concept and identity. Firearms work both as protection and to build and protect a reputation of being tough. The authors point to their findings as a broader insight into gang socialization and how this leads to violence with firearms.

In this explorative study, Kelly and Caputo (2005) focus on the context between street gangs and organized crime in Canada. Data were collected via in-depth interviews with nine police officers who had solid experience with the theme for the study. The study shows that parallels can be drawn to American research of gang proliferation, gang-related violence, transnational gangs, and gang recruitment. The study also shows that street gangs can be tied to organized crime groups in a number of areas, but that street gangs can also be criminal enterprises in their own right, using sophisticated methods and involving themselves in complex forms of crime. According to the authors, these street gangs should be considered the same way as the more organized groups.

Synopsis for theme II

After theme one, which covers Danish and Nordic research, theme two was the largest theme of this research and knowledge gathering with a total of 18 included studies. As such, gang involvement in crime, violence, and victimization appears to be the favorite research topic of international research. Under this theme, it appears that there is a strong connection between gang membership, crime and offending behavior, but also that such behavior does not necessarily hamper the self-concept of the gang members. Thus, the concept of moral disengagement is emphasized as a strategy enabling these offenders to maintain positive self-images despite their participation in violent acts (Niebyszczanski, 2015). In spite of the huge interest in the involvement in crime and violence by gang members, there is a surprisingly large number of studies focusing on the consequences of such involvement, namely so-called victimization. As such, a number of studies (e.g. Papachristos, 2015; Fox et al., 2012; Taylor et al., 2008) emphasize that gang members are very much part of the risk group for experiencing serious violence, such as being shot. This can seem paradoxical, as gang members often join gangs for the purpose of gaining some form of protection. Melde et al. (2009) describe this protection as being more subjective than objective, which, as such, consists mostly of an emotional protection by which gang members reduce their fear of violence. There is a single suggestion

that victimization is not a discrete risk of gang membership, and that the often generally offending behavior of gang members are the real reason for this (Katz et al., 2011).

Theme no. III – Socialization, education, and gang membership

Theme no. 3 includes various types of studies that focus on the roles and significance of parents and family in relation to young people gravitating to gangs. This theme consists of 13 studies, of which 11 are quantitative. This theme presents a number of studies which explore on the basis of various theoretical perspectives the ways young gang members' family circumstances, e.g. parental child-rearing practices, are said to be significant for movement into a gang, just as there is a focus on the role of society on individual gang affiliation.

Title	Country
Alleyne, E., & Wood, J. L. (2014) Gang involvement – Social and environmental factors. <i>Crime & Delinquency</i> , 60(4), 547-568.	UK
Densley, J. Cai, T., & Hilal, S. (2014) Social dominance orientation and trust propensity in street gangs. <i>Group Process & Intergroup Relations</i> , 17(6), 763-779.	UK
Hughes, L.A. (2013) Group cohesiveness, gang member prestige, and delinquency and violence in Chicago, 1959 – 1962. <i>Criminology</i> , 51(4), 795-832.	USA
Horst, A. V. (2012) <i>On the relationship between bonding theory and youth gang resistance in U. S. 8th graders – Competing structural equation models with latent structure indirect effects</i> . PhD dissertation. Ohio State University.	USA
Urrea, C. (2010) <i>Gangs: Society's problem or a problem caused by society?</i> PhD dissertation. Alliant International University.	USA
Gaines, J. L. (2010) <i>"For red, for blue, for blow": Acquisition of gang membership among early adolescents</i> . PhD dissertation, the faculty at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.	USA

<p>Moutappa, M., Watson, D. W., McCuller, W. J., Sussman, S., Weiss, J. W., Reiber, C., Lewis, D., & Tsai, W. (2010) Links Between Self-identification as a Gangster, Symptoms of Anger, and Alcohol Use Among Minority Juvenile Offenders. <i>Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice</i>, 8(1), 71-82.</p>	<p>USA</p>
<p>Pih, K. K., De La Rosa, M., Rugh, D., & Mao, K. (2008) Different strokes for different gangs? An analysis of capital among Latino and Asian gang members. <i>Sociological Perspectives</i>, 51(3), 473-494.</p>	<p>USA</p>
<p>Madrigal, A. C. (2006) <i>The direct and indirect effects of family environment and community violence exposure on Latino middle-school age youth's psychological distress and risk for gang affiliation</i>. PhD dissertation. University of Nevada, Reno.</p>	<p>USA</p>
<p>Walker-Barnes, C. J., & Mason, C. A. (2004) Delinquency and substance use among gang-involved youth – The moderating role of parenting practices. <i>American Journal of Community Psychology</i>, 34(3/4), 235-250.</p>	<p>USA</p>
<p>Whitlock, M. L. (2004) <i>Family-based risk and protective mechanisms for youth at-risk of gang joining</i>. PhD dissertation. University of Southern California.</p>	<p>USA</p>
<p>Gordon, R. A., Lahey, B. B., Kawai, E., Loeber, R., Stouthamer-Loeber, M., & Farrington, D. (2004) Antisocial behavior and youth gang membership – Selection and socialization. <i>Criminology</i> 42(1), 55-87.</p>	<p>USA</p>
<p>Brownfield, D., Sorenson, A. M., & Thompson, K. M. (2001) Gang membership, race, and social class – A test of the group hazard and master status hypotheses. <i>Deviant Behavior</i>, 22(1), 73-89.</p>	<p>USA</p>

Alleyne and Wood (2014) explore some of the individual, social, and environmental factors that separate gang-involved young people from non-gang-involved young people. Data were collected via questionnaires from 798 school children in London with an av-

erage age of 14. The study is inspired by the theoretical foundation of international studies, which point out, among other things, that gang membership is a reciprocal relationship between individuality, groups of peers, social structures, weak social ties and a social learning environment that requires crime (Thornberry et al., 2003), theory that is primarily informed by social bonding theory (Hirschi, 1969), and social learning theory (Bandura, 1977). The study shows that gang-involved young people were older than young people without gang involvement, and that youth crime and gangs in the local area were significant conditions for young people affiliating with them. Not surprisingly, it is also emphasized that gang members reported higher levels of crime than non-gang members. The study further shows that a lack of parental support and pressure from deviant peers were indirectly related to gang membership. It surprised the authors, however, that there was no apparent difference in school engagement between gang members and non-gang members, which might indicate that both groups feel equally committed to their education. An alternative explanation is that absenteeism is closely tied to gang membership, for which reason the absent gang members did not fill out the questionnaire.

Densley et al. (2014) demonstrate in this study how two theories potentially constitute a valuable framework and a methodological tool, both for evaluating the concept of so-called defiant individuality and to understand social-psychological gang processes. The first theoretical understanding is a so-called social dominance orientation (SDO), which focuses on things like conflict, oppression, and authoritarian domination of people with lower status (Pratto, 1999; Altemeyer, 1998). The other is the theory of defiant individuality, which is described as a social character trait (Sánchez-Jankowski, 1991), and which connects to theories of group dynamics like the tendency to trust other people (Rosenberg, 1956). Data were collected via questionnaires for 95 gang members in London with an average age of just under 20 years. The study shows that gang members with long-term membership and higher rankings in the gang scored higher in terms of tendencies toward social dominance (SDO) than members with short membership histories and lower ranking. High SDO and low propensity for trust in gangs are also positively related. The authors point out, among other things, that gang members appear to exhibit defiant social character, and the high SDO score is an indication that long-term and high-ranking gang members have a desire to maintain the disparity in the social hierarchy of the gang.

In this study, Hughes (2013) uses data from Short and Strodbeck's (1965) study of gangs in Chicago to explore the connection between friendships in gangs and violence and youth crime among 248 boys from 11 different gangs. Hughes posits a positive relationship between the cohesiveness of gangs and both violence and youth crime, where

members of tightly-knit gangs will be fore likely offenders and therefore the most dangerous. The study shows, however, that gangs with a low level of cohesiveness showed significantly increased levels of violent behavior. The study showed no relationship between youth crime and cohesiveness. At an individual level, the popular boys proved to be most at risk for violent behavior. This may be due to a connection between prestigious positions in the structure for gang friendships and conformity with the group processes in the gangs. The author points out that in spite of the limitations of the study, the findings constitute useful knowledge for future interventions.

In his PhD dissertation, Horst (2012) focuses on the importance of social ties for gang membership. This study is also based on quantitative data from the G.R.E.A.T. program and explores the gang involvement of 8th grade students. Data were collected from over 5000 students. The study is theoretically constructed around Social Bonding (Hirschi, 1969) for the purpose of analyzing the significance of the program's effect on increased conventional social ties, such as friendships with peers and educational success, and fewer friendships revolving around drug and alcohol abuse, absenteeism, and breaking the law. The study points out, among other things, that attachment to parents, education, and positive peers is the most consistent construction for increasing the social ties of young people. The study also shows that young people that received the G.R.E.A.T. intervention had reduced gang affiliation compared to those not receiving the intervention.

In this PhD dissertation, Urrea (2010) questions whether gangs are a societal problem, or whether they are a problem created by society. The purpose is to expand individual factors for gang membership to include social factors as well, and thereby a deeper perspective on the individual life experiences of gang members. Data were collected via qualitative interviews with six Mexican or Mexican-American gang members between the ages of 31 and 38, and they were analyzed via Grounded Theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The study shows that gang members point to things like a search for acceptance and identity – a search for community, which they find in the gangs, where stigmatization and discrimination are familiar to the group. According to the author, the study gives voice to young people who need to feel accepted and have the need to see a brighter future where they play a valuable role, rather than being stigmatized minorities.

In this dissertation, Gaines (2010) analyzed risk factors for the effects of both the socio-economic status of the local area, as well as individual risk factors like hopelessness, behavior problems, and harsh child-rearing methods. Quantitative data about children in 5th-grade classes in 17 schools were collected in two rounds from a total of 826 teachers, parents, and students. Theoretically, development ecological interpretations

(Bronfenbrenner, 1979) are among the theories utilized, along with social exclusion theory (Rutter, 1985). The study shows among other things, that there are factors related to normative attitudes toward gangs among students in early youth. Thus, young people that experience hopelessness and young people with behavior problems are more positively inclined toward gangs. The same is true for students that experience harsh and inconsistent child-rearing methods. The author emphasizes that gang membership may be uniquely able to compensate for a lack of parental stability, just as harsh child-rearing methods can contribute to a wider acceptance of violence among these young people.

Moutappa et al. (2010) explore in this study, whether anger and self-identification as a gang member are associated with alcohol abuse. Data were collected via surveys from a total of 91 young delinquents, divided between 49 men and 42 women with an average age of 16 years.

Among the inspirations for this study is research indicating that self-identification as a gang member does not necessarily mean that young people actually *are* gang members (see e.g. Sussman et al., 2007), although these young people take on the same characteristics as the actual gang members. The study shows that both anger and self-identification as gang member was associated with severe alcohol abuse prior to arrest. Gang culture is also described as relevant for many young delinquents, since in more than half the cases these self-identified as gang members, despite there being 16 other groups with which they could have identified.

In this qualitative study, Pih et al. (2008) examined gang membership and gang activity from a Bourdieu theoretical perspective (Bourdieu, 1977, 1986, 2000) with particular focus on two groups of gangs, so-called Latin-American and Asian gangs, respectively, and the economic, cultural, and social capital of the gang members, i.e. Bourdieu's three basic capital forms (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1996). Economic capital is understood as access to means of production and financial power and influence. Social capital is the sum of existing or potential resources, which can be mobilized in a network of stable relationships. Cultural capital is also known as information capital. It consists of the sum of knowledge, education, and good manners. Data were collected via interviews with 76 Latin-American gang members and 22 Asian gang members. The authors emphasize severe contrasts in socioeconomic backgrounds between the two groups, just as gang membership and activity are markedly different, and it is argued that access to economic, cultural, and social capital affects this. The study also shows that access to legitimate or illegitimate capital is very important, both for gang membership and for the length of the membership. Furthermore, it is noted that the gangs in particular offer significant material and social capital for the respondents in this study, understood as access to both material goods and social contact with peers. Thus, gang membership means

access to capitals these young people may not have had access to before, but it also means that these capitals are usually based on illegal activities.

In his PhD dissertation, Madrigal (2006) has used a quantitative research design to focus on the direct and indirect effects of family environments and violence in the local area on mental illness and gang membership for Latin-American students. Data were collected via questionnaires from 186 students between the ages of 11 and 15, recruited from seven schools in Nevada. Theoretically, the dissertation is based in development ecology as described by Bronfenbrenner (1979) and others. The study shows that violence in the local area was directly associated with an increased risk of mental illness and gang involvement. The study also shows that a positive family environment was directly associated with decreased levels of anger and gang involvement in young people. In spite of violence in the local area showed a negative effect on the hidden as well as open behavior of young people, the familiar environment had a positive impact on reducing young people's anger and risk of gang affiliation.

Walker-Barnes and Mason (2004) focus on parental roles in this quantitative study, for which longitudinal data were collected via 300 ninth-grade classes in Miami. The study explores the effect of moderating parental roles in the relationship between gang involvement and problematic behavior in young people. Among other things, the results show that gang involvement appears significantly predictive about three categories of problematic behaviors closely related to both minor and major degrees of youth crime and drug abuse. The study also shows that parental roles marked by behavioral control, psychological control, family conflict, and closeness moderate the relationship between gang involvement and problem behavior, but that behaviorally controlling and close family roles are emphasized as being the most consistent. These results indicate that interventions targeted at reducing the significance of gang involvement on young people's development should consider factors that potentially reduce the damaging behavior associated with gang membership.

In her dissertation, Whitlock (2004) addresses what she calls a misuse of the concept of *protective* factors, referring to the fact that reduction of risk and protection are not necessarily one and the same. By this, Whitlock means that the use of the term 'protective factors' is often misplaced, as such a term, in her opinion, can only be used if a catalyst effect of a given protective factor can be shown. The focus is on family-based factors as being developing for both risk and resiliency, respectively. The study is done quantitatively, and data were collected via structured interviews with 26 gang members and 30 non-gang members, all male, exploring factors concerning the importance of individuality, family, school, peers, and the local area for gang involvement. The theoretical framework for the dissertation is focused around resiliency (Rutter, 1987), which e.g. has

contributed to creating knowledge about so-called risk factors and the importance of growing up in an environment marked by marginalization. This understanding of risk factors is simultaneously connected to protective factors, which refers to factors and circumstances that protect the opportunities of young people in their formative years. Among other things, the study indicates three risk factors for gang membership: living without both biological parents, low family-based self-worth and a history of gang affiliation in the family. Furthermore, the author points out that despite the fact that no protective factors in the study proved very effective against family risks, a few family buffers could be identified. These are primarily family closeness, family cohesiveness, compromising in response to conflict, and avoiding physical fighting.

Gordon et al. (2004) focus on anti-social behavior and gang membership, especially the periods up to, during, and after gang membership. The study is done quantitatively via longitudinal data from 858 participants divided into two groups. In the first group, the ages were 6-7 years, while the oldest members of the second group were 12-14 years old. The authors point out that the study yielded significant findings in form of proof that boys who join gangs, are more delinquent before doing so than boys who do not join gangs. Additionally, it is pointed out that drug use and sales, violent behavior, crime and vandalism increase significantly, when young people join gangs. Thus, delinquency among peers in the gangs appears have a socializing effect, which is consistent with results in the study that show that young people who leave the gangs reduce their criminal activity to a level similar to before joining. The study concludes, among other things, that youth crime increases significantly in periods, when the young people are gang members, and decreases after the membership ends. It is emphasized, however, that this does not point directly to a causal relationship. Thus, criminal behavior can be more difficult for the individual without the gang, which again can be important for his association with criminal peers.

In this quantitative study, Brownfield et al. (2001) focus on whether gang membership, race, and social class is significant for the risk of young people of being arrested. Data were collected via questionnaires, interview, and police reports, and theoretically the study is based in social class theory (e.g. Hughes, 1945; Becker, 1963). The study shows that the risk of being arrested is the same for gang members and non-gang members. It is also noted that gang membership constitutes no greater risk for arrest as a result of so-called group arrests, but that individual master status (Hughes, 1945; Becker, 1963) constitutes a potential risk based on race and social class. Among others, Hughes (1945) argues that people's placements in social categories limit them in terms of the characteristics attributed to them by others, and Becker (1963) that a person's master

status can have significance for the extent to which people suspect them of criminal activities. The concept of master status can be compared with what is known in Denmark as social class or social category (see e.g. Harrits, 2014). Since both race and social class showed significant predictive value for the risk of arrest, the study tests whether these characteristics had an increased effect. The result shows, in part, that the police are particularly inclined to arrest poor, African-American (“black”) individuals. The authors emphasize that one possible explanation could be that per definition the African-American population and people from lower social classes attract greater interest from the police, which in and of itself increases the risk of being arrested.

Synopsis for theme III

The third theme is about socialization and gang membership and includes 13 studies. Under this theme is described, among other things, that young people are at increased risk of joining, if gangs are represented in the local area. Weak social ties seem to be a significant factor in this context, especially because the young people seek acceptance and identity, which they find precisely in the gangs (Alleyne & Wood, 2014). Harsh child-rearing methods, lack of parental support, and peer pressure are other social factors that contribute to push the young people into gang membership, which is precisely where they can find the sense of community and belonging they seek. However, also so-called society-caused problems like stigmatization and discrimination are emphasized as reasons for young people seeking alternative communities (Urrea, 2010) - although communities that are most often closely associated with crime. Thus, the majority of young people are more delinquent during their gang membership than they were both before and after, and the crime in itself can have a socializing effect (Gordon et al., 2004). Social factors that can prevent gang membership are found in initiatives like the G.R.E.A.T. program (Horst, 2012), where parental attachment, education and association with pro-social peers strengthen the social ties of the young people and are indicated as reducing gang affiliation.

Theme no. IV – Risk factors connected to gang membership

Theme no. 4 includes a total of 11 selected quantitative studies that identify in various ways so-called risk factors that are indicated as potentially paving the way for gang affiliation and being stuck in the gang, e.g. by focusing on the long-term consequences of gang membership and motivation for gang membership.

Title	Country
Merrin, G. J., & Hong, J. S. (2015) Are the risk and protective factors similar for gang-involved, pressures-to-join, and non-gang-involved youth? A social-ecological analysis. <i>American Journal of Orthopsychiatry</i> , 85(6), 522-535.	USA
Ariza, J. J. M., Cebulla, A., Aldridge, J. Shute, J., & Ross, A. (2014) Proximal adolescent outcomes of gang membership in England and Wales. <i>Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency</i> , 51(2), 168-199.	UK
Gilman, A. B., Hill, K. G., & Hawkins, J. D. (2014) Long-Term Consequences of Adolescent Gang Membership for Adult Functioning. <i>American Journal of Public Health</i> 104(5), 938-945.	USA
Melde, C., & Esbensen, F-A. (2014) The Relative Impact of Gang Status Transitions: Identifying the Mechanisms of Change in Delinquency. <i>Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency</i> 51(3), 349-376.	USA
Farmer, A. Y., & Hairston, T. Jr. (2013) Predictors of Gang Membership - Variations Across Grade Levels. <i>Journal of Social Service Research</i> , 39(4), 530-544.	USA
Lachman, P. Roman, C. G., & Cahill, M. (2013) Assessing youth motivations for joining a peer group as risk factors for delinquent and gang behavior. <i>Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice</i> 11(3), 212-229.	USA
McDaniel, D. D. (2012) Risk and protective Factors Associated with gang affiliation among high-risk youth – A public health approach. <i>Injury prevention; Journal of International Society for Child and Adolescent Injury Prevention</i> , 18(4), 253-258.	USA
Melde, C., & Esbensen, F-A. (2011) Gang membership as a turning point in the life course. <i>Criminology</i> , 49(2), 513-552.	USA
Krohn, M. D., Ward, J. T., Thornberry, T. P., Lizotte, A. J., & Chu, R. (2011) The cascading effects of adolescent gang involvement across the life course. <i>Criminology</i> , 49(4), 991-1028.	USA

Bjerregaard, B. (2010) Gang Membership and Drug Involvement: Untangling the Complex Relationship. <i>Crime & Delinquency</i> , 56(1), 3-34.	USA
Lurigio, A. J., Flexoon, J. L., & Greenleaf, R.G. (2008) Antecedents to gang membership – Attachments, beliefs, and street encounters with the police. <i>Journal of Gang Research</i> 15(4), 15-33.	USA

Merrin et al. (2015) explore risk and protective factors for gang involvement for subgroups of young people, e.g. current and former gang members, young people that have resisted gang membership, and young people that have never been involved in gangs or gang environments. The study is done quantitatively, and data were collected via questionnaires from over 17,000 students across 14 school districts in the United States. The students are from grades 7-12. The study is based on development ecological theory (see e.g. Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Kemp, 2010). The results show, that men are more likely gang members than women. Individual contexts also indicate that ethnic minorities, girls, and young people with depression or suicidal ideation are among those at risk for gang involvement. In terms of family context, it is noted that having gang members in the family increases the risk of children joining gangs, and that young people from generally dysfunctional families are among those at risk for gang involvement. The study also shows that alcohol and drug abuse among peers, as well as bullying, are significantly associated with gang involvement. In terms of schooling, students that experience being treated fairly by adults and students that feel connected to school are less likely to become gang members or gang affiliated without actual membership. The local area is emphasized as having a preventive effect for gangs if the area is characterized of the presence of adults and offers an environment marked by a sense of security. The authors further point out that gang prevention must necessarily be done from an ecological perspective (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and that being attentive to several contexts is critical for whether young people stay out of gang environments.

In this quantitative study, Ariza et al. (2014) focus on proximal processes around gang membership, offending behavior, and victimization along with a number of other attitudes related to gang membership and delinquency in England and Wales. Data were collected via interviews and self-registered journals about problem behavior from 1214 young people between the ages of 10 and 16. The study shows that gang debut is significant for delinquent and anti-social behavior, drug abuse, and association with deviant peers. Additionally, the study shows that gang membership increases the risk for unde-

sirable contact with and distrust of the police. The authors conclude that gang membership is clearly connected with delinquent and problem behavior, such as anti-social tendencies and drug abuse. In spite of differences in social contexts, gang history and the level of violence, there are more similarities than differences when it comes to consequences of gang membership, when compared to studies done in the United States.

In this study, Gilman et al. (2014) explore the health-related consequences of gang membership in youth, as well as its later function in adulthood. The study is rooted in life course theory (Elder, 1985; Gotlib & Wheaton, 1997; Sampson & Laub, 1992), and data were collected via surveys pertaining to a total of 808 students in the 5th grade. The study shows that young gang members tested on 23 variables associated with gang membership had greater difficulties in adulthood compared to their peers around things like involvement in crime, illegal income, drug abuse, unhealthy lifestyles, and low levels of education. Based on this, the authors conclude that gang membership in youth has significantly influence on adult life in a number of areas, potentially resulting in a life course marked by stress and risk. On this basis, they argue that gang prevention is not just important to reduce problem behaviors in young people, but also for their later functioning level and health in adulthood.

Melde and Esbensen (2014) focus on the importance of transitions into and out of gangs for involvement in youth crime, identifying mechanisms associated with deviant behavior. Data were collected in two rounds from 3820 young people participating in the G.R.E.A.T. program. Students were between the ages of 9-18, although the majority of the students were between 11 and 12 at the time of the first survey and between 15 and 16 at the time of the second survey. Among these young people, 512 were self-reporting gang members. Data measured things like gang membership, length of time in the gang, involvement in youth crime, pro-social peers, and school engagement. The study shows that gang membership has potentially lasting significance for involvement in crime, but also for attitudes, feelings, and activities connected with a risk of delinquent behavior. It is concluded that gang membership, even for a shorter period, impacts the development of young people, even after the self-reported gang membership ends. It is also emphasized that young gang members are at greater risk for developing anti-social behavior after leaving the gang, than they were before joining.

Farmer & Hairston (2013) focus on risk factors and predictions about gang membership based on student course grades between grades 6 and 12 in American schools. The study was done as a secondarily quantitative study among 19,079 students between the ages of 9 and 23, measuring risk factors based on individual factors, family, peers, school, and the significance of the local area in developing risk of gang membership. Among other things, the study shows that students in grades 6 to 8 had most risk factors,

while students in grades 9 to 12 had the fewest. For both age groups, most of these factors consisted in individual risk in form of negative life events, low self-worth and so-called racial issues. Additionally, several predictions were consistent across grade levels, such as being a male student who had a parent or a close relative die within the last year, had been expelled from school, was a recipient of free school meals, was being rejected by peers, was living in a local area that was perceived as not secure, and finally students that had been held back a year. Based on these results, it is concluded that it is important to develop intervention forms targeting risk factors for gang membership for both grades 6 to 8 and for grades 9 to 12. The interventions should include strategies targeting the above issues, as well as consider younger students than those mentioned, since, according to the authors, gang membership and risk factors according appear earlier than the sixth grade.

In this quantitative study, Lachman et al. (2013) explore the motivation of young people for joining groups of criminal peers. The study includes a questionnaire with 200 respondents of an average age of 17, who all self-reported about gang membership and are based on network theory (see e.g. Haynie, 2001; Krohn, 1986). The study shows that young people primarily join groups for four main reasons (1) Filling a void, e.g. finding friends and feeling noticed. (2) Instrumental reasons, such as protection, getting money or other material things, or because a family member was affiliated. (3) To belong, which is about things like being with peers, for the excitement, and for pride in the group. (4) Other reasons that have to do with loyalty, getting out of problems, or already established friendships in the group. The results of the study emphasize that young people who join groups for instrumental reasons show more young delinquent behavior than those who don't, and that those who join to fill a void or to establish a sense of belonging display a lower level of youth crime. The authors conclude that the findings of the study can contribute to the prevention of youth crime and gang membership, e.g. by focusing more on the motivation of young people to join gangs and other criminal groups.

In this quantitative study, McDaniel (2012) explores risk factors and protective factors for young people associated with gangs. The study involves 7th, 9th, 11th, and 12th grades in a high-risk local area in the United States, and data were collected via an anonymous questionnaire with 4131 participants across the above-mentioned grades. The study shows that 7% of the participants were gang-affiliated, and precisely this affiliation was connected to engagement in criminal behavior, regular use of alcohol, and regular use of drugs. Belonging to a gang was most commonly based on the following criteria: young men from ethnic minority groups, young people in a depressed state of mind, young people reporting suicidal ideation, alcohol or drug abuse, young delinquents and young people that had experienced aggressive or violent behavior from

peers. Belonging to a gang was least common among young people with confidence in their own mastery strategies and who were supported by peers and parents. Furthermore, monitoring⁴ by parents, support from family and adults, and feeling connected to school are important as protective factor. On that basis, the authors conclude that increased monitoring by parents is especially important in the potential reduction of youth crime, alcohol, and drug abuse and it prevents gang affiliation.

Melde and Esbensen (2011) lay out a life course perspective (Sampson & Laub, 1993) in this study, where they explore and suggest gang membership as a possible turning point in the life course of young people. A turning point with a number of consequences. Data were collected via questionnaires from 2353 students in the sixth to ninth grades across 15 American schools. The study shows that gang membership has substantial significance for emotional changes, attitudes and social behavioral control that lend themselves to youth crime. On the other hand, according to the authors resistance against gangs is not associated with similar systematic changes in these constructions, including as it pertains to youth crime. They conclude that despite earlier research showing some of the same results, this study supplements these by including information about the young people before, during, and after their gang membership, which supports the theoretical basis. Finally, it is emphasized that marginalized young people are more likely to join gangs, while pro-social young people more frequently opt out of such groups. It is recommended that future research explore gang membership from a developmental perspective, while including more sophisticated measurements of important social ties, as well as the psychosocial processes associated with gang membership and youth crime.

The theoretical focus of Krohn et al. (2011) is also on life course (Elder et al., 1985; Farrington, 2005; Sampson & Laub, 1993) in their study of whether gang membership in youth has significance for life opportunity and criminal behavior in adulthood. Data were collected from more than 1000 American youths between the ages of 14-31 years across 14 waves of data collection in the form of structured interviews. According to the authors, it is not surprising that it is possible with this life course approach to identify how decisions, behavior, and consequences from this in youth have possible consequences in adulthood, especially for young people affiliated with criminal street gangs. Thus, they argue that gang involvement leads to unintended consequences in adulthood, particularly in terms of involvement in crime, but also in terms of finances and family relationships, as well as reduced chances for general success in social contexts. Furthermore, these consequences will increase the likelihood of involvement in crime,

⁴ Monitoring by parents refers to whether parents are aware of the whereabouts of their children.

not to mention arrest, for which reason this is a self-perpetuating effect. The longer the gang affiliation, the greater consequences for the individual, they note.

The connection between gang membership and drug involvement is the focus of this study by Bjerregaard (2010). On the basis of past research that shows this connection via cross-sectional or ethnographic studies, Bjerregaard endeavors to answer questions about whether gang members are more likely to be involved in the use and/or sale of drugs than non-gang members, and whether such involvement increases their level of violent behavior. Data were collected via structured interviews of 8984 young people aged 14-16 years. The study shows that gang members are loosely associated with both the use and sale of drugs and violent behavior. Even so, the study supports the assumption that gang membership facilitates the use of drugs, and not the other way around, just as gang membership requires 15-year-olds to sell drugs. The study shows no connection between involvement in drugs and violent behavior, although drug involvement could be connected to weapons possession, primarily firearms. Bjerregaard concludes that gang membership is not predictive for heavy involvement in either the use or sale of drugs, and that involvement in drugs does not necessarily increase violent behavior, as has been indicated in the past.

With a focus on gang member attitudes about school, pro-social behavior, fear of gangs, police, and especially experience with the police, Lurigio et al. (2008) focus in this quantitative study focus on prior interactions with the above and the connection to subsequent gang membership. Theoretically, the study is based in social bonding theory (Hirschi, 1969), whereby school engagement is analyzed in particular. This study compares gang members with non-gang members from the same local area in Chicago (N=891). Within the above themes, it is indicated in connection with school engagement and pro-social behavior that twice as many boys as girls referred to themselves as gang members, and that gang members were generally less worried about the teachers' opinions of them. The largest and most consistent difference between gang members and non-gang members pertains to the young people's attitudes toward and experience with the police. 90% of gang members stated that they had been stopped by the police, while 53% of non-gang members had this experience. Of these, 75% of gang members experienced being treated without respect by the police, a number which was 58% in the non-gang member group. Unsurprising for the authors, far more non-gang members than gang members reported a fear of gangs. In terms of fear of the police, there was no noticeable difference. The authors argue that gang membership is related to frequently being stopped by the police, experiences for so-called disrespect on the part of the police, and general fear, while there is not believed to be a connection between gang membership, school engagement, and pro-social behavior. School engagement with the caveat,

however, that the most hardcore gang members had probably dropped out of school and were therefore not included in the study.

Synopsis for theme IV

The fourth theme focuses on so-called risk factors that can lead to gang membership, as well as the consequences this potentially has for the life course of the young people. This theme consists of a total of 11 studies, and the combined thematics identify risk factors for gang membership to be most significant among men, especially those from ethnic minority groups. Dysfunctional families with little or no supervision of young people are also emphasized as a risk factor, as is current gang members in the family. Also, individual factors like depression, low self-worth, or alcohol or drug abuse appear to have significance for, whether someone joins a gang. The latter is somewhat ambiguous, however, as it is documented in one study that drug abuse is facilitated in gangs, more so than being the reason to join a gang (Bjerregaard, 2010). Motivational factors for gang membership are described as a need for protection, being rejected by socially well-functioning peers, and a yearning for filling a void in life by creating community, which for some is done most easily in gangs. The potential consequences of gang membership are many, with particular emphasis on alcohol and drug abuse, anti-social and delinquent behavior, and negative contact with the police. More long-term consequences are noted as well, especially difficulties in adulthood that consists of persistent criminal behavior, low education level, unhealthy lifestyle, and low income, which may be supplemented by illegal income (Gilman et al., 2014). Further, these issues can be tied to general social and family difficulties. Protective factors are mentioned as the importance of security in the local area and having parents or other adults, e.g. in school, who both support the young people and concern themselves with their whereabouts. Thus, there are signs of actual negative spirals, where anti-social behavior, marginalization, and personal difficulties promote gang membership, while pro-social behavior, inclusion, and support from adults are emphasized as factors preventing gang involvement.

Theme no. V – Characteristics of gangs and ways in and out

Theme no. 5 includes research and knowledge about characteristics for and organizations of gangs – who the young people are, and where they are. Under this theme, 10 studies are included, focusing on who the young people in the gangs are, and how and in which ways gang affiliation can stop again. The studies are primarily quantitative, although two are qualitative, and a single one uses both quantitative and qualitative methods.

Title	Country
Decker, S. H., Pyrooz, D. C., & Moule Jr., R. K. (2014) Disengagement from gangs as role transitions. <i>Journal of Research on Adolescence</i> , 24(2), 268-283.	USA
Pyrooz, D. C. (2014) "From Your First Cigarette to Your Last Dyin' Day": The Patterning of Gang Membership in the Life-Course. <i>Journal of Quantitative Criminology</i> , 30(2), 349-372.	USA
Pyrooz, D. C., Sweeten, G., & Piquero, A. R. (2013) Continuity and change in gang membership and gang embeddedness. <i>Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency</i> , 50(2), 239-271.	USA
Melde, C., Diem, C., & Drake, G. (2012) Identifying correlates of stable gang membership. <i>Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice</i> , 28(4), 482-498.	USA
Esbensen, F-A., & Carson, D. C. (2012) Who are the gangsters? An examination of the age, race/ethnicity, sex, and immigration status of self-reported gang members in a seven-city study of American youth. <i>Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice</i> 28(4), 465-481.	USA
Freng, A. Davis, T. McCord, K., & Roussell, A. (2012) The new American gang? Gangs in Indian county. <i>Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice</i> 28(4), 446-464.	USA
Bolden, C. L. (2012) Liquid soldiers – Fluidity and gang membership. <i>Deviant Behavior</i> , 33(3), 207-222.	USA
Pyrooz, D. C., & Decker, S. H. (2011) Motives and methods for leaving the gang – Understanding the process of gang desistance. <i>Journal of Criminal Justice</i> , 39(5), 417-425.	USA
Moloney, M., MacKenzie, K., Hunt, G., & Joe-Laidler, K. (2009) The path and promise of fatherhood for gang members. <i>The British Journal of Criminology</i> , 49(3), 305-325.	USA

Esbensen, F-A., Winfree, L. T., He, N., & Taylor, T. J. (2001) Youth gangs and definitional issues – When is a gang a gang, and why does it matter? <i>Crime & Delinquency</i> 47(1), 105-130.	USA
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Decker et al. (2014) are focused on the connection between young people's role changes and withdrawing from gangs in this mixed methods study. Data were collected via interviews and questionnaires from 260 former gang members across four American cities. Theoretically, the study is based in role exit and role transitions. This is a process where individuals gradually move from one role to another, thereby deriving new identities from these roles (Ebaugh, 1988). Withdrawal from gangs often takes place in transitioning to adulthood, which is described by the authors as a critical period in young people's lives. The study shows that withdrawal from gangs is an extended process, full of potential failures and obstacles. Gang exit is also described as an ongoing struggle between former and current gang friends on one side often functioning as pull factors, and families of the members on the other side, functioning as motivating push factors for gang exit. Pull and push factors can be explained as factors contributing to gang members leaving or joining gangs. See e.g. Pyrooz & Decker (2011) for more detailed descriptions.⁵ It is concluded that future interventions must be able to distinguish between the doubt, worries, and needs expressed by participants in deviant groups.

Pyrooz (2014) focuses on patterns of gang membership over a life course. The study is based on past research based on life course (Melde & Esbensen, 2011; Pyrooz et al., 2010; Thornberry et al., 2003), and data were obtained via surveys from 8984 young people, who were between 12 and 16 years old on December 31, 1996. The study explores contours of gang membership and their variability over a life course. The result indicates that the cumulative prevalence of gang membership was 8%, while the dynamic age-based prevalence topped at 3% at the age of 15. Gang membership in adulthood was evenly distributed between members carried over from youth and initiation in adulthood. The average length of gang membership was shown to be 2 years or less. The author concludes that gang membership is particularly age segregated, which is typically the case with crime, that young people move in and out of gangs in discrete periods of their life course, and that the growth curve for gang membership supports the majority of worries associated with gang membership empirically.

⁵ See also chapter 3 in this report for a discussion of push and pull factors for gang affiliation.

Within a framework of social networks and life course, Pyrooz et al. (2013) Hagan expand the concept of being rooted in crime (Hagan, 1993) to being rooted in gangs. The study explores the relationship between being rooted in gangs and abstaining from gang membership. Data were collected over a five-year period from 226 convicted young people between the ages of 14 and 17, who reported on gang membership at baseline measurement. The study shows, among other things, that gang members with a so-called low level of being rooted in gangs left the gangs quickly, whereas members with a high level of being rooted in gangs only left gangs in the same number at a point equivalent to two years later. Men and those with ethnic minority backgrounds, e.g. Latin-Americans and African-Americans (blacks) were associated with greater continuity in gang membership, which was also true for members with a low level of self-control. The authors conclude that the concept of being rooted in gangs expands the understanding of heterogeneity in deviant networks and applies to a broad spectrum of criminal and young delinquent networks.

Stable gang membership and the significance thereof is the focus of this quantitative study by Melde et al. (2012). Based on the assumption that gang membership is usually brief, they focus on whether the length of gang membership has an impact on problems in the short term, as well as in early adulthood. Data were collected via self-reporting from 140 gang members with an average age of about 13 years. The study points out five factors associated with stable gang membership, and contrary to the hypothesis, stable members turned out to be closer to the periphery in their gangs than the more transient members. Protection by the gang was a factor for stable membership, just as gang members in the more organized gangs were more likely to be members longer-term. The study also indicated that those affiliated with gangs over longer periods report increased victimization. Finally, the study showed that young people who reported greater involvement in violent youth crime at baseline were significantly more likely to stay gang members over a longer period. According to the authors, the findings of the study can potentially be used to promote resistance against gangs. It is noted in particular that the lack of ability for the street gangs to reward members monetarily is something to be emphasized with younger or potential gang members.

In this quantitative study, Esbensen and Carson (2012) focus on who the gang members are, in particularly age, gender, and ethnicity, as well as the connection between immigration and gang membership. The purpose of the study is to describe gang members as they look in the 21. century. Data were collected from the G.R.E.A.T. program at 31 schools across 7 cities in the United States. The participating students were in the sixth grade from 26 schools and from seventh grade in the remaining five classes. Over a five-year period, students have filled out questionnaires. It is stated explicitly in

the study that it is not controlled for duration of gang membership, and that students not participating in the entire five-year data collection period are not excluded. Furthermore, no attempt was made to test the effects of gang membership from a theoretical perspective. The study shows that women made up 45% of gang members the first year, and that this distribution fell to 31% after the fifth year. Thus, the authors conclude that the distribution is conditioned on age. They also conclude that all ethnic groups are represented in gang membership, but that African-Americans and Latin-Americans are overrepresented. Finally, it is concluded that gang-affiliated young people are more involved in youth crime, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, and immigration status than their peers who are not gang members.

Freng et al. (2012) focus on gangs in Indian reservations in this quantitative study, justified by increased gang activity in precisely such areas in the 1990's. Data were collected via questionnaires filled out by 106 students across grades 6, 8, 10, and 112 in a reservation in the American west. The questionnaire maps out gang membership, demographic conditions, characteristics of gangs and gang membership, motivations for gang membership, and factors related to gang membership, such as individual factors, family and school factors, and factors associated with peers and local communities. The study shows that Native-American gangs often have about 30 members, which is consistent with gangs from other rural districts. The average age for first affiliation was 13, and in certain cases all the way down to age 10, for which reason the authors point out the importance of early intervention. It is also pointed out that the share of female gang members cannot be ignore, as they made up 40% of the gang members in the results. The authors suggest that gang membership among Native-Americans can be addressed in similar ways as with other gang members in the country, but they also say that more research is needed in this area.

With this qualitative study, Bolden (2012) focuses on relational gang dynamics, among them assumed violent initiation rituals and violent episodes connected to exiting. Data were collected via in-depth qualitative interviews with 15 former gang members in San Antonio, Texas. The author emphasizes what is described as surprising findings in the study, such as none of the respondents indicating having difficulty leaving the gangs, which punctures the media-created idea of 'blood in, blood out'. The study also shows that several of the respondents had switched gangs relatively easily, and that data from the study generally indicates a fluid network. The author concludes that neither initiation nor exit from gangs involves negative sanctions for gang members, and that violence appears not to be associated with joining, switching, or leaving a given gang. Furthermore, the author emphasizes that the study illustrates the difficulties traditionally associated with defining gangs. The reason is indicated as being precisely the tendency

to want to favor stable definitions with a number of subsequent uses. The point is that gangs and gang membership cannot be defined unambiguously, since there is neither a certain number of members, nor one particular definition of membership.

In this quantitative study, Pyrooz and Decker (2011) explore the process for gang exit and analyze motives and methods for how individuals leave gangs. Data were collected via structured interviews with 84 young people arrested at the average age of 15, who had all left their gangs and were analyzed from a life course perspective (Sampson & Laub, 1993). Motives for leaving the gangs turned out to be organized internally (push) and externally (pull) by the gangs, while methods for leaving the gangs was organized into hostile and non-hostile ways of leaving. The study shows that push motives and non-hostility were the modal responses to leaving gangs. Although experiencing hostility was not unusual when leaving a gang, most former gang members report unproblematic exits. The authors conclude that life course perspectives can potentially organize similarities between leaving gangs and abstinence from other forms of crime and deviant groups.

Moloney et al. (2009) focus on fatherhood as a potential turning point in the lives of gang members. Data were collected via qualitative interviews with 91 gang members in the United States. Participants were all from ethnic minority groups with low income and were all self-described current or former gang members, as well as all being fathers. Theoretically, this study continues working with concepts used in prior research, especially life course (Sampson & Laub, 1993). The study shows that fatherhood initiates important subjective and affective transformations leading to changes in the gang members' view of life, priorities, and orientation to the future. The study also shows, however, that these subjective changes were not sufficient, unless they were accompanied by two other initiatives, which include changes in time spent on the street and the ability to support themselves and their families with legal financial income. In spite of fatherhood being no magic bullet for gang exit, fatherhood does seem to function as an important turning point toward staying away from gang membership.

Esbensen et al. (2001) address the definition of gangs in this quantitative study, as well as why precisely the right definition is important. Data were collected via questionnaires from 5935 eight-grade students across 42 schools and 315 class rooms. Students in this study are primarily between 13 and 15 years old. The study is based in social learning theory (Akers, 1985, 1994) and self-control theory (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990). The authors point out that the significance of how gangs are defined differs between theorists, researchers, and politicians. For researchers, the definition serves primarily to refine measurements and to improve validity and reliability. For theorists, it is important to understand factors associated with gang membership and the associated behavior.

For politicians, it is necessary to know the scope and character of the gang problem in order to enable the development of appropriate policies and programs. It is pointed out that the respective interests are not mutually exclusive, but rather should be seen as intertwined. Finally, it is argued that self-reporting about gang membership is a particularly robust measuring tool to identify gang members and non-gang members.

Synopsis for theme V

The fifth theme includes ten studies about the characteristics of gangs and ways into and out of them. In large part, the studies are based in so-called life course (see e.g. Ebaugh, 1988) and describe, among other things, an average period of membership of two years. Contrary to expectations, a single study points out that the long-standing gang members are more peripheral in their gangs, unlike the transient members (Melde et al., 2012). It is also seen, however, that members who are deeply rooted in the gang remain members for a longer period. This may be tied to the difficulties associated with leaving the gangs. These difficulties are primarily associated with connections to former and current gang members on one hand, and on the other hand the motivating role of family in terms of exiting. In this context, it is described as surprising that exiting from gangs is relatively unproblematic, meaning the members can freely leave the gangs or even switch from one to the other without the oft-assumed violent sanctions between gangs and members, wherefore the gang network is described as being relatively fluid (Bolden, 2012). This theme also touches on problems around an actual definition of gangs. Among other things, it is pointed out that this definition differs according to the perspective from which it is considered. In spite of the difficulty in terms of establishing an unambiguous definition, self-reporting as a gang member is emphasized as being a particularly robust method for understanding the understanding of gang affiliation (Esbensen et al., 2001).

Theme no. VI – Gangs, school, and education

Through two qualitative and six quantitative studies, theme no. 6 elucidate a number of the studies that explore how school and education are significant for gang affiliation, e.g. bullying, and other problems related to school, and how they contribute to identifying that young people in gangs are often the group of young people with the most negative experiences of school.

Title	Country
<p>Ang, R. P., Huan, V. S., Chan, W. T., & Cheong, S. A. (2015) The role of delinquency, proactive aggression, psychopathy and behavioral school engagement in reported youth gang membership. <i>Journal of Adolescence</i>, 41, 148-156.</p>	SGP
<p>Smith, C. F. (2013) Gangster undergrads – Perceptions regarding gang members in colleges and universities. <i>Journal of Gang Research</i> 20(2), 41-52.</p>	USA
<p>Bradshaw, C. P., Waasdorp, T. E., Goldweber, A., & Johnson, S. L. (2013) Bullies, gangs, drugs, and school – Understanding the overlap and the role of ethnicity and urbanicity. <i>Journal of Youth and Adolescence</i> 42(2), 220-234.</p>	USA
<p>Pyrooz, D. C. (2012) <i>The non-Criminal of Consequences of Gang Membership – Impacts on Education</i>. PhD dissertation. Arizona State University.</p>	USA
<p>Escribano, L. M. (2010) <i>Exploring school engagement as a protective factor for youth at risk of joining gangs</i>. PhD dissertation. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.</p>	USA
<p>Truong, A. M. (2010) <i>Examining the relationship between school dropout and gang involvement among Vietnamese American youth</i>. PhD dissertation. Northcentral University, School of Business and Technology Management.</p>	USA
<p>Rios, V. M. (2010) Navigating the thin line between education and incarceration – A research case study on gang-associated Latino youth. <i>Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk</i>, 15(1), 200-212.</p>	USA
<p>Cureton, S., Bellamy, R. (2007) Gangster ‘blood’ over college aspirations – The implications of gang membership for one black male college student. <i>Journal of Gang Research</i>, 14(2), 31-49.</p>	USA

In this quantitative study, Ang et al. (2015) explore the significance of youth crime, proactive aggression, psychopathy, which, according to the authors, are closely tied to proactive aggression and define, among other things, anti-social and impulsive behavior (Hare, 1991), as well as behavioral school engagement among young gang members. In this study, psychopathic traits are evaluated based on an Anti-social Process Screening Device (Frick & Hare, 2001), which evaluates psychopathy via 20 questions on a Likert scale. Data were collected via questionnaires for 1027 young people in 7th to 9th grade in Singapore. The study shows that a number of the above factors were significant when the young people reported about gang membership, but also that psychopathy was not related to gang membership. The authors emphasize that a strengthening of the young people's engagement in school, and development and support of the relationship between students and teachers is particularly important for the prevention of gang membership, for which reason school potentially plays a significant role therein, since close relationships between teachers and students are associated both with an increased academic level and better social skills.

In this quantitative study, Smith (2013) questions individual perceptions of the presence of gang members in high schools and universities in the United States, and which significance members have for these institutions of learning. The study is based on survey data collected from campus security and students from introductory criminal justice courses. Among the things presented in the study are results showing that the perception of the presence of gang members on campus varies between the students and security personnel, whereas 22% of the students agree, and agree very much, that gang members are a problem, while there was 68% agreement among security personnel. Smith points out in conclusion that the study shows individual perceptions of the presence of gang members, and that the differences may depend on the respective roles of students and security personnel in the areas around campus.

Bradshaw et al. (2013) explore in this quantitative study the connection between involvement in bullying and involvement in violence, weapons possession, gang membership, drug abuse, and school-related problems, just as life conditions and ethnicity are included as potential risk factors. Data were collected via 16,302 young people in Maryland, U.S., divided into 37.8% young people of African-American background and 62.2% young people with Caucasian background, i.e. primarily from white population groups. The study explores different subtypes of involvement in bullying, both as bully, bully and victim, and no involvement, and the connection between these types and behavior significantly harmful to health, including engagement in violence, drug abuse, and academic problems. The authors conclude that the consequence of bullying in early grades continues at higher grade levels (9.-12.), where the risk for involvement in things

like violence, drug abuse, and gang involvement is greater. They also conclude that the risk for gang membership, weapons possession, poor grades, and drug abuse is greater for older male teens of African-American descent. The authors further suggest focusing on anti-bullying strategies, which they believe could potentially prevent youth violence and crime.

In a study about non-criminal consequences of gang membership, Pyrooz (2012) focuses on the significance of education and connection to the labor market as consequences that have not usually been the object of gang research. The study was completed quantitatively and is based on data from an earlier study (National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, cohort of 1997). Theoretically, the study is based on a so-called life course theoretical approach (see e.g. Elder, 1994; Elder & Giele, 2009). The study also points out key findings which can be summed up briefly by saying that individuals who join gangs are less likely to finish school, which, according to the author, has a negative significance for the rest of their life course in terms of income. At the same time, it is pointed out that potential gang members are recruiters from environments that would most profit from education and income in particular, but who are also least likely to complete an education, and that this educational disadvantage can be difficult to make up for over the course of a lifetime. The study shows, however, that employed gang members had the same employment characteristics as non-gang members in terms of weekly work hours and hourly pay, but that the cumulative effect of gang membership on annual income means that gang members earn less than non-gang members, and that part of the reason lies in gang members spending more time between jobs.

In her PhD dissertation, Escribano (2010) focuses on school engagement as a protective factor for young people at risk for gang affiliation. The study has three focal points, namely identifying at-risk students, examining whether school engagement can be preventive, and finally whether well-supported motivation models can account for facilitation or undermining of school engagement. The study is done quantitatively, and data were collected and analyzed via self-reported questionnaires from 342 students between the ages of 11 and 15. In addition to the existing gang research, the study is theoretically based in developmental psychology (Bowlby, 1969; Bronfenbrenner, 1979), among other things. The study concludes that school belonging played an important role in the prevention of gang membership, and it is particularly effective when the students themselves describe belonging positively at school.

Truong (2010) has also delivered a quantitative dissertation about gang involvement and the significance for school drop-out rates among Vietnamese-American students in Dallas/Fort Worth in the U.S. Data were collected from adults living in the area, who were able to read and write English, and included those who had gone to school in

the United States, and who had children or siblings that had dropped out of school. Theoretically, the study is tied to theories about parent/child relationships (Linwood, 2009), poverty, and behavior problems (Briggs-Gowan et al, 2006). Based on this, the study concludes that neither the relationship between parent and child, behavior, or family income had significance for dropping out of school, but rather that school-related factors, such as academic problems, behavioral control, and learning difficulties were the primary reasons for dropping out. This indicates that respondents scoring highly on school-related problems were significantly likely to be involved in gang membership later on.

In this action research project, Rios (2010) focuses on the so-called thin line between the likelihood of either education or arrest for Latin-American young people in the United States. The purpose of the study was to examine how poor, gang-affiliated Latin-Americans perceived school and police work, in order to elucidate the extent to which the research project might facilitate the educational hopes of these young people. Data were collected via observations, interviews, and workshops with 56 gang-affiliated young students between the ages of 15 and 21. These young people had encountered many negative interactions with authorities on a daily basis, which had affected their hopes for the future, and some named precisely these experiences as their reason for dropping out of school. Based on this and earlier experiences, measures were put into place in collaboration with the local area, to help the young people back to their school and their community. Among other things, they implemented a mentor program, gender specific workshops, an attention program, and a weekly workshop for gang leaders. The author concludes, among other things, that relationship-based approaches can potentially facilitate change processes for gang-affiliated youth.

In this qualitative study with one male African-American student and gang member, Cureton and Bellamy (2007) explored whether the realization of education is influenced negatively by ties to criminal social environments and/or ties to so-called deviant peers. Data were collected via an in-depth interview with "Sweet T", a male black student who is a declared gang member, and who has given up his hopes of an education due to his social biography. The study shows that men who seek gang membership are not necessarily subject to class stratification or family dynamics. The study also indicates that so-called attention-seeking middleclass males become interested in gangs because of the increased attention they bring. The authors conclude that this unique case does not constitute generalized findings, but rather that the study shows convincing information for future research on the subject, and that there is a need for further research into social biographies of black men who seek legitimacy via education. Furthermore, the fact that gang members already exist in universities makes research into gang culture

necessary. Understanding the significance of gang membership may potentially lead to important information, which could strengthen the school ties of young black men, keeping them in school, and whereby they can gain social legitimacy.

Synopsis for theme VI

Gangs, school, and education were reviewed in the sixth theme of this research and knowledge gathering, a theme containing eight studies. Generally, the studies draw a picture that positive relations between adults and children are conducive to schooling as well as ordinary well-being, and that this has a preventive effect for joining a gang (Escribano, 2010). In addition, it is described that positive relationships between teachers and students has implications for students' academic and social development. Despite the fact that relationships between parents, teachers and students are emphasized, we also find examples of young people as potentially gang members, even though they grow up in supportive home environments and not adversely affected by class stratification or family dynamics. The attention that the gang membership seems to offer may be enough to put their educational ambitions on standby (Cureton & Bellamy, 2007). The relationship between the students is also affected and it is pointed out that bullying in early childhood potentially can have major consequences on the person's later life, for example violent behaviors, drug abuse and gang membership. Gang membership also has an impact on young people's educational opportunities. It is thus pointed out that gang members are less likely to graduate, which increases the risk of poorer living conditions.

Theme no. VII – Prevention and intervention

Theme no. 7 focuses on research and knowledge exploring different types of intervention to prevent gang affiliation. The studies included here show different types of intervention effort that serve to prevent movement into gangs, as well as leaving the gang again. The studies are distributed across a single mixed methods study, two qualitative, and five quantitative studies.

Title	Country
Hennigan, K. M., Kolnick, K. A., Vindel, F., & Maxson, C. L. (2015) Targeting youth at risk for gang involvement – Validation of a risk assessment to support individualized secondary prevention. <i>Children and Youth Services Review</i> , 56, 86-96.	USA
Lopez-Aguado, P. (2013) Working between two worlds – Gang intervention and street liminality. <i>Ethnography</i> , 14(2), 186-206.	USA
Valdez, A., Cepeda, A., Parrish, D., Horowitz, R., & Kaplan, C., (2013) An adapted brief strategic family therapy for gang-affiliated Mexican American adolescents. <i>Research on Social Work Practice</i> , 23(4), 383-396.	USA
Esbensen, F-A., Osgood, D. W., Peterson, D., Taylor, T. J., & Carson, D. C. (2013) Short- and Long-Term Outcome Results of a Multisite Evaluation of the G.R.E.A.T. Program. <i>Criminology & public policy</i> , 12(3), 375-411.	USA
Deuchar, R. (2011) The impact of curfews and electronic monitoring on the social strains, support and capital experiences by youth gang members and offenders in the west of Scotland. <i>Criminology & Criminal Justice</i> , 12(2), 113-128.	SCO
Bella, J. K. (2011) <i>Exploring the Suppression of Gang-Related Crime in Norfolk, VA: A Case Study</i> . PhD dissertation, Graduate Faculty of the School of Business Administration, Northcentral University.	USA
Melde, C. Gavazzi, S., McGarrell, E., & Bynum, T. (2011) On the efficacy of targeted interventions – Can we identify those most at risk? <i>Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice</i> 9(4), 279-294.	USA
Ruddell, R., Decker, S. H., & Egley, A. (2006) Gang interventions in jails – A national analysis. <i>Criminal Justice Review</i> , 31(1), 33-46.	USA

Based on the fact that 10-19% of young people between the ages of 12 and 16 living in so-called high-risk areas are likely gang members, Hennigan et al. (2015) have examined a special form of risk assessment as a gang prevention initiative. The risk assessment Gang Risk of Entry Factors (GREF) is a risk assessment created for the purpose of identifying young people at high risk for gang affiliation (Hennigan et al., 2014). Data were collected via structured interviews with about 400 students aged 11-16 years. The study shows that this form of risk assessment is effective for prospectively identifying the young people at greatest risk for gang membership in marginalized neighborhoods. 100% of the participating young people who reported gang membership, and 81% of those who reported past gang membership, along with 74% of the ones associating with gangs in the final test were assessed to be in the risk group in the earlier baseline assessment. All, except for a 14-year-old girl who participated in the study and who ended up reporting gang involvement, were identified as part of the risk group in the baseline assessment. Based on this, it is concluded that the GREF risk assessment is effective in terms of prospectively identifying young people with the greatest risk of gang membership.

In this ethnographic study, Lopez-Aguado (2013) focuses on the experience of former gang members and its significance for young, active gang members. The study examines the liminality of former gang members, meaning their knowledge of both gangs and commonly accepted social environments. Data were collected via participant observation and semi-structured interviews, and the study is based in Grounded Theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). It is noted that the liminality of former gang members is precisely what helps them utilize the knowledge they have about both environments, which benefits the active gang members, because they can make resources available to help them navigate between these different social worlds. Similarly, it is pointed out that there is a constant balancing act between preventing and reducing and actually facilitating interest in gang membership. The author emphasizes ways in which liminality can be incorporated, utilized, and negotiates, thereby expanding understanding or working around hierarchical boundaries between gang environments and regular social environments.

Intervention targeting families of gang members are studied quantitatively in this study from Valdez et al. (2013). Data were collected from 200 Mexican-American young people and their families, who were divided into an intervention group and a control group with 96 and 104 families, respectively. The intervention consisted of so-called Brief Strategic Family Therapy (BSFT), which, in short, is an intervention with focus on things like drug abuse, behavior problems, and youth crime (Szapocznik et al., 2012). Under the BSFT program, these issues are seen as a consequence of poorly adjusted family relations and interactions, and as such the focus is on improving these. Theoretically,

it avails itself particularly on the significance of adult-child interactions and norm-focused theory (Hart & Risley, 2003; Kam et al, 2009). Measurements were young people's drug intake, conflict resolution, gang identification, parental knowledge about drugs, gang attention, family belonging, children's behavioral problems, and stress. The study shows that were significant differences between the intervention and control groups in terms of young people's alcohol consumption and the parents' reporting on behavior problems, due to which they conclude that the program as adjusted for Mexican-American young people is beneficial in just that area. On the other hand, there is no observed difference between the intervention and control groups in terms of young people's illegal drug use. The study also points to the importance of social work being customized to the cultural contexts for marginalized Latin-Americans.

In this multisite evaluation, Esbensen et al. (2013) describe an example of short-term and long-term benefit from the G.R.E.A.T. program. The study involves seven cities in the United States, and data were collected from 3820 students across 31 schools and 195 primarily sixth and seventh grades, of which 102 received G.R.E.A.T. intervention and 93 served as a control group. The evaluation was based in the declared goal of the program, to help young people avoid gang membership, to reduce violent and criminal behavior, and to help young people develop a positive relationship with law enforcement. Among other things, the study shows that students who participated in the G.R.E.A.T. program were less likely to become gang members than the control group. The G.R.E.A.T. students also displayed more positive attitudes toward the police, as well as expressing awareness and joy of doing something positive for others and the community without expecting anything in return. Thus, the intervention group showed more pro-social behavior in a number of program-specific areas. Although, according to the authors, G.R.E.A.T. cannot be considered a panacea for gang abatement, the emphasize the promising results around the program.

Deuchar (2011) explores the effect of curfew and electronic monitoring of young gang members in Scotland in this qualitative study. The study includes 20 young people between 16 and 21, who have been involved in so-called individual offenses as a result of former association with gang culture. Data were collected via semi-structured interviews and analyzed via Grounded Theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The study indicates that the sanctions had limited success in reducing antisocial behavior, although in a few cases it resulted in a temporary pause in delinquent behavior. On the other hand, there were cases when curfews failed in building up pro-social capital with young people, who seek out delinquent behavior as a source for social identity, status and recognition. Thus, there is reference to punishment not keeping youth from crime, as the punishment in itself encourages criminal behavior in young people (Agnew, 2006). The same was

true for the young people in this study, who became angry and frustrated due to the curfew and electronic monitoring, causing negative family relationships, increased dependency on alcohol and drugs, and in some cases domestic disturbances. Based on this, the author suggests that future research on the subject is necessary, particularly with a focus on developing law enforcement with the power to rehabilitate and care in a way that builds up pro-social capital, rather than contributing to breaking it down.

In this qualitative case study, Bella (2011) focus on a particular gang initiative carried out by the police in Norfolk, Virginia, U.S. The initiative consists of a so-called suppression unit, which is a police program with at least one full-time employee with the sole purpose of gang abatement, among other things by suppressing gang activity and preventing it in spreading. Data were collected via both semi-structured interviews with police officers, archival data, and so-called police ride-alongs, where the researcher patrolled with the police. Theoretically, the dissertation is based in contingency theory (Katz et al., 2002) and institutional theory (Davies, 2007; King, 1981). Among other things, the dissertation shows that suppression units had an effect on gang-related crime, and that no new gang members were identified during the duration of the project.

Similarly, Melde et al. (2011) focus on risk factors and the connection between them and the effect of targeted gang interventions. The study draws data from two groups of marginalized young people, identified via Global Risk Assessment Device (GRAD). One group of young people (N=146) was selected on the basis of their participation in an anti-gang project, as opposed to the other group (N=1438), which functioned as comparison group assessed as at-risk for gang affiliation. The young people were all between the ages of 14 and 17. The results from the study show that young people from the comparison group scored significantly higher on risk factors in three out of four areas than young people from the intervention group and in seven out of twelve associated subareas. The first area for risk factors covered education, and the parameters discontinued education, learning difficulties, and a lack of progression in the educational system. Another area asked about mental health, including ADHD issues. The third area focused on family circumstances and the general environment in the family, while the fourth and last are concerned criminal peers, and whether the young people had contact with or were members of such groups or gangs. The study shows that in view of the intent of the program, the participating young people did not reflect the group of young people most at risk, who needed the given intervention most. The authors therefore conclude that identification of young people in the risk group should not be taken for granted, and they recommend further research into so-called best practice for implementation of intervention targeted to prevention of gang membership.

In this quantitative study, Ruddell et al. (2006) explore interventions in correctional facilities. Data were collected via questionnaires to 134 administrators of correctional facilities in 39 states in the United States. Questions included the number of gang members in their correctional facilities, which problems they trigger, which methods are used to classify gang members, and approaches to reducing disturbances and violence from these inmate groups. Among other things, the study shows that the number of gang members varies geographically, but that small correctional facilities report fewer gang members. It is also emphasized that gang members in correctional facilities are described as less disruptive than inmates with mental illness, but that assault and battery on other inmates were more likely on the part of gang members. As the most effective intervention model, they emphasized the segregation of gang members and collecting intelligence concerning gang members, which could be forwarded to other law enforcement agencies.

Synopsis for theme VII

The research and knowledge gathering in theme no. 7 focuses on prevention and intervention and includes a total of eight studies. Aside from the preventive factors mentioned peripherally in theme no. four, it is pointed out in theme no. 7 that intervention targeted to dysfunctional families has an impact on young gang affiliation, and that former gang members can help young people away from the gang environment. However, a potential risk in this type of intervention is the fact that these former members may simply facilitate gang membership by inspiring the young people with their stories (Lopez-Aguado, 2013). Prospective risk assessments may also have preventive potential, as subsequent interventions can be targeted directly at the young people most at risk of becoming gang involved. It should be noted, however that the identification of future gang members cannot be taken for granted, which is why continued research in this area is recommended (Melde et al., 2011). This theme also indicates that correctly implemented interventions at best strengthen the pro-social behavior of young potential gang members and their attitudes towards the police, as well as an ongoing need for research on interventions targeted at gang prevention and efforts to encourage young gang exit.

Theme no. VIII – Gangs and their influence on local neighborhoods

Theme no. 8 includes six studies, of which one is qualitative, which in various ways explore gangs and their significance and impact on local neighborhoods, e.g. in form of fear of gang behavior among the rest of the residents of the local area or the proliferation of crime and marijuana sales in neighborhoods with gangs.

Title	Country
Stodolska, M., Shinew, K. J., Acevedo, J. C., & Roman, C. G. (2013) "I was born in the hood" – Fear of crime, outdoor recreation and physical activity among Mexican-American urban adolescents. <i>Leisure Sciences</i> , 35(1), 1-15.	USA
Brantingham, P. J., Tita, G. E., Short, M. B., & Reid, S. E. (2012) The ecology of gang territorial boundaries. <i>Criminology</i> 50(3), 851-885.	USA
Lurigio, A. J., Flexon, J. L., & Greenleaf, R. G. (2012) Predicting fear of gangs among high school students in Chicago. <i>Journal of Gang Research</i> 19(3), 1-12.	USA
Taniguchi, T. A., Ratcliffe, J. H., & Taylor, R. B. (2011) Gang set space, drug markets, and crime around drug corners in Camden. <i>Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency</i> 48(3), 327-363.	USA
Katz, C. M., & Schnebly, S. M. (2011) Neighborhood variation in gang membership concentrations. <i>Crime & Delinquency</i> 57(3), 377-407.	USA
Tita, G., & Ridgeway, G. (2007) The impact of gang formation on local patterns of crime. <i>Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency</i> 44(2), 208-237.	USA

In this qualitative study, Stodolska et al. (2013) focus on perceptions of crime, and the effect it has on outdoor recreation and physical activity among young Mexican-Americans, and how young people negotiate limitations related to fear of crime in their local area. Data were collected via in-depth qualitative interviews with 25 young people between the ages of 11 and 18, living in Chicago, Illinois. The study is hemmed in by theory

of environmental impact and theory of human territorial functions (see e.g. Taylor, 1988; King et al., 2002). The study shows, among other things, that crime prevents young people from being in parks or in areas, where they must cross the territorial boundaries of gangs to get there. They also described how fear of gangs limit the participation of young people in outdoor recreation. Activities that take place near home or school during school hours and activities organized and supported by adults are considered to be the safest. Further, the study points out that the young people use mitigating strategies to promote their participation in outdoor activities, such as being on guard or schedule activities together in order increase their mutual feeling of security.

In this quantitative study, Brantingham et al. (2012) explore the way gangs have split up geographical areas in Los Angeles between them. The study uses the Lotka-Volterra⁶ competition mode to derive hypotheses about competitive territory division between the gangs (see e.g. Case et al., 2005; Cosner & Lazer, 1984). Data are based on 563 gang shootings among a total of 13 rival gangs. The study points out that violence is closely related to and concerns the territorial boundaries between areas considered by individual gangs as belonging to them, and that precisely the Lotka-Volterra model can contribute as predictive. The authors conclude that competition between gangs seems to follow tight patterns of territorial aggression, and that there are certain advantages to the Lotka-Volterra model, although they do not exclude that other processes could contribute to explaining the division of gang territories.

Lurigio et al. (2012) focus on predicting fear of gangs in local neighborhoods. The study is done quantitatively and consists of a questionnaire for students (N=981) from a total of 18 schools in Chicago. The students had an average age of 16. The study explores the students' potential fear of gangs based on different variables, such as gender, ethnicity, gang membership, confidence in the police, experiencing the relationship between the police and the local area, anti-social or criminal conviction, having been stopped by the police in the past year, and family structure. The study shows, among other things, that African-American young people were 67% less likely to fear gangs compared with other ethnic groups of young people. Young people in gangs had 57% less risk, while young people with anti-social or criminal behavior had 17% less. The study concludes that young people's perception of fear of gangs depended primarily on race and ethnicity, especially for African-American youth, which is explained, among other things, by

⁶ The Lotka-Volterra model is a mathematical model, which can describe reciprocal effects between various populations, explaining, among other things, that the growth of a population depends on both the size of the population and the sizes of the other populations.

gangs being represented more in local communities with the particular ethnic combination of residents, for which reason there is greater conformity around gangs than there might be, e.g. in neighborhoods for white Americans.

In this quantitative study, Taniguchi et al. (2011) explore local communities, and more specifically areas near street corners which are occupied by gangs for the purpose of selling drugs. The study includes two types of street corners, both the ones dominated by a single gang, and street corners seen as dominated by several gangs, all for the purpose of selling drugs. The study was done in Camden, New Jersey, and data were collected from the local district attorney, as well as from Camden Police Department, totaling more than 12,000 criminal events analyzed in the study. The study shows, among other things, that areas marked by territorial competition and economic gain by several gangs had the highest levels of crime. In spite of earlier arguments that gang presence in specific areas potentially reducing the level of crime (Tita & Ridgeway, 2007), the authors in this study conclude that there was no evidence of a decrease in crime around places where drugs are sold. On the contrary, these areas proved to be associated with substantially higher levels of violence and property crimes, especially when several gangs were associated with the same street corner.

Katz and Schnebly (2011) explore the relationship between local community structure, violent crime, and the concentration of gang members in the area. The study is done quantitatively, and three data sets were used in the analysis; official police intelligence about the prevalence of gangs in the area, files from electronic police journals covering crime and data from census information, revealing socioeconomic and demographic structures in 93 local communities in Mesa, Arizona. The study shows, among other things, indications of a connection between the concentration of gang members, economic deprivation, and social and family disadvantages, although the authors point out that this connection lessens in areas with extreme disadvantage in the areas cited. In spite of crime in the local area having no impact on the concentration of gang members, the results of the study reveal that instability in the local area is a key component to understanding variation in the gang phenomenon.

This quantitative study by Tita and Ridgeway (2007) explores the significance of gangs for local crime patterns, and it also focuses on the reasons why gang members commit more crimes than individuals, who are not gang members. Data were collected via calls to emergency dispatch, where criminal behavior, such as assault and battery, burglaries, drug sales, robberies and shootings are reported, and where they also register where crimes have taken place geographically. The authors test the extent to which individual levels of crime connected to gang membership can be equated to increased

crime citywide. The study shows, among other things, that local communities not marked by gang assembly have less reported crime than areas with gang affiliation.

Synopsis for theme VIII

Theme eight explicates six studies, which explore the impact of gangs on local neighborhoods. Several studies describe areas with gang activity as more afflicted by crime than areas without gangs. This applies particularly to violence and property crime. The gangs seem to be more prolific in areas of social and economic deprivation, just as it a certain stability in residential composition is required. Thus, gangs are less present in areas with frequent resident changes, as this creates social instability and changing structural conditions (Katz & Schnebly, 2011). The presence of gangs also limits opportunities for free expression for other young people, e.g. because they are afraid of roaming in and around areas controlled by gangs.

Theme no. IX – Gangs, race, and ethnicity

Theme no. 9 focuses on studies that have identified correlations between gang membership and the ethnic minority backgrounds of young men, and several studies have shown a correlation between gang membership and ethnicity. A single study is qualitative, while the remaining four are quantitative.

Title	Country
Knight, G. P., Losoya, S. H., Cho, Y. I., Chassin, L., Williams, J. L., & Cota-Robles, S. (2012) Ethnic identity and offending trajectories among Mexican American juvenile offenders – Gang membership and psychosocial maturity. <i>Journal of Research on Adolescence</i> , 22(4), 782-796.	USA
Miller, H. V., Barnes, J. C., & Hartley, R. D. (2011) Reconsidering Hispanic gang membership and acculturation in a multivariate context. <i>Crime & Delinquency</i> , 57(3), 331-355.	USA
Pyrooz, D. C., Fox, A. M., & Decker, S. H. (2010) Racial and ethnic heterogeneity, economic disadvantage, and gangs – A macro-level study of gang membership in urban America. <i>Justice Quarterly</i> , 27(6), 867-892.	USA

<p>Hixon, S. J. (2010) <i>Archetypal perspectives on Nordic and Germanic initiation symbols, mythology, and rites of passage in a European American self-referenced white supremacist gang</i>. PhD dissertation, Saybrook University.</p>	<p>USA</p>
<p>Freng, A., & Esbensen, F-A. (2007) Race and gang affiliation – An examination of multiple marginality. <i>Justice Quarterly</i>, 24(4), 600-628.</p>	<p>USA</p>

In this quantitative study, Knight et al. (2012) focus on the development of ethnic identity (Phinney, 1992), delinquent life courses (Huizinga et al., 1991), and psychosocial maturity (Chassin et al., 2010) among Mexican-American youth. Data were collected via computer-assisted interviews with 300 young male offenders between the ages of 14 and 22. In the study, ethnic identity is measured on the basis of self-reporting questionnaires, with questions covering such things as ethnic belonging, so-called ethnic pride, and knowledge of one's own ethnic group to establish the level of ethnic identity. The study presented two groups of less serious offenders, of which one had the highest level of self-reported ethnic identity, which changed gradually with age. The other had the lowest level of ethnic identity and was age-stable. A third group showed moderate decreasing delinquency and moderate stable ethnic identity. A fourth group showed individuals with a high degree of delinquency with a moderate, but increasing, level of ethnic identity, and who started out lower in terms of psychosocial maturity and greater risk of gang membership. The authors emphasize the need for further research in contextualizing the theory of ethnic identity development, especially because the study indicates that whether the development of ethnic identity is considered a risk or a protective factor may depend on how this development is associated with characteristics in the social lives of the young people, e.g. in terms of gang membership, psychosocial maturity, and cultural patterns of belonging.

Gang membership and processes for cultural change are the focus of this study by Miller et al. (2011) with the purpose of elucidating whether certain young people are at particular risk for gang membership. The study builds on research indicating that individuals who are less integrated in mainstream American society are at greater risk for gang membership (Lopez & Brummett, 2003). Theoretically, the study is based in Vigil's (1988) concept of marginalization. Data were collected via questionnaires from 1633 students between the grades of 9 and 11 in a major American city, and in an area characterized by its large concentration of Latin-American residents. Among other things, the study shows that student's grades in school, ease of access to drugs in the local area, the

level of ethnic marginalization, and the level of integration were significantly associated with self-reported gang membership. Additionally, it is pointed out that marginalization is a potential consequence of a lack of integration into society.

In this study, Pyrooz et al. (2010) focus on race, ethnicity, economic marginalization, and gangs. The purpose is to present analyses of gang membership in large cities in the United States, and particularly analyses of the significance of ethnic heterogeneity for the relationship between economic marginalization and gang membership. Data were collected quantitatively and analyzed on the basis of theory and research into social exclusion, marginalization, and race conflicts (see e.g. Alonso, 2004; Davis, 2006; Vigil, 2002). Among other things, the study points to race and ethnic heterogeneity as having significance. Heterogeneity has an independent, additive and multiplicative effect on gang membership, and it is noted that greater levels of heterogeneity and economic marginalization will most likely lead to increased gang activity. Additionally, the authors recommend that future gang research to a greater extent test the applicability of theoretical concepts, such as social disorganization, and the extent to which economy, demography, and law enforcement changes over time, and how this affects the gangs.

In her PhD dissertation, Hixon (2010) focuses on European-American gangs in the United States, the so-called white supremacist gangs. White supremacist gangs are described as gangs, that endeavor to promote the dominance and control of whites in society, and according to the author, they can typically be divided into two categories: the philosophically oriented and those inspired by utilitarianism. The former typically consists of so-called 'Skinheads', who focus primarily on promoting the supremacy of whites, while the utilitarian group also focus on more typical gang activities, such as the manufacturing and sales of drugs, burglaries, and robberies. The focus is on whether culturally relevant myths, symbols, and rituals can be identified and analyzed within a meaningful framework of analytical psychological theory (Van Gennep (1960), and whether there is derivative history, mythology, and symbolism that can be understood differently and serve as correcting interventions in the work with ethno-cultural gang members. Data were collected via interviews with 8 male gang members with an average age of 26 years. The study shows that analytical psychological theory can constitute a robust epistemological framework for exploring intersubjective psychological processes. Additionally, the author points out that the interviewed young gang members appeared to yearn for involvement, and that this awareness makes them receptive to gang recruiting.

As part of the G.R.E.A.T. program, Freng and Esbensen (2007) have explored the connection between race and gang affiliation. Via questionnaires to 4997 students dis-

tributed among white Americans, Latin-Americans, and African-Americans, this is analyzed through a theoretical framework for marginalization (Vigil, 1988; 2002). The study shows that multi-marginalization is a plausible explanation for current gang membership. In the study of the applicability of the theoretical framework for members of different ethnic groups, important differences appear in terms of current gang membership or having been a gang member at one time. For current gang members, there are significant differences between ethnic groups pertaining to financial stress for white Americans and social control and street socialization for African- and Latin-Americans. When researching those who have been gang members at one time, the study shows that social control and street socialization is relevant for all groups.

Synopsis for theme IX

Race and ethnicity were the focus in theme no. nine, which consists of five studies. It is indicated under this theme that ethnic marginalization and the level of integration are strongly associated with self-reported gang membership (Miller et al., 2011), and that areas characterized by ethnic heterogeneity correspond to increased gang activity, both for whites and African-Americans. The concept of marginalization is emphasized and used, for instance, to clarify that young people need to belong, and the more young people experience being marginalized, the more receptive they are to be recruited into the gang environment (Hixon, 2010).

Theme no. X – Gender and gang membership

The 10th and last theme includes two quantitative, one qualitative, and one mixed methods study, all focusing on gender in relation to gang affiliation, and endeavoring to identify differences between girls' and boys' affiliation with – and in some cases exit from gangs. However, only a few studies have been submitted that directly focus on girls/women with gang connections compared to the number of studies focusing on boys/men.

Title	Country
Trickett, L. (2016) Birds and sluts – Views on young women from boys in the gang. <i>International Review of Victimology</i> , 22(1), 25-44.	UK

O'Neal, E. N., Decker, S. H., Moule Jr., R. K., & Pyrooz, D. C. (2016) Girls, gangs, and getting out – Gender differences and similarities in leaving the gang. <i>Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice</i> , 14(1), 43-60.	USA
Bell, K. E. (2009) Gender and gangs – A quantitative comparison. <i>Crime & Delinquency</i> , 55(3), 363-387.	USA
Varriale, J. A. (2008) Female gang members and desistance – Pregnancy as a possible exit strategy? <i>Journal of Gang Research</i> , 15(4), 35-64.	USA

In this qualitative study, Trickett (2016) focuses on the growing problem of sexual abuse of women in the gang environment, exploring potential reasons for an apparent normalization of this abuse. Based on interviews with male gang members between the ages of 16 and 25 from Birmingham in England, the author argues that understanding the masculinity adopted by the young men is critical for explaining their attitudes toward young women. This because only by encouraging a redefinition of this masculinity, based on providing young men the right tools and incentives to negotiate and appropriate a different masculinity will they potentially distance themselves from gangs and from the abuse of young women allegedly taking place in them. Although the article is primarily orienteered to the abuse of young women in gangs, the author points to its relevance in other areas as well.

In this mixed methods study, O'Neal et al. (2016) examined whether the catalysts for and consequences of gang exit differ between men and women. Qualitative and quantitative data were collected from 143 young adult men (N=108) and women (N=35), who were interviewed about their status as former gang members in the United States. The study is focused particularly on motives for gang exit and sources for support during the exit process, and real and perceived concerns and consequences of gang exit. Theoretically, the study is based in the so-called role exit theory (Ebaugh, 1988). Very few differences between the exits of men and women were found. The women reported constant worry regarding threats to their families, while men reported constant police harassment after their exit. The authors emphasize that group processes contribute to forming experiences associated with gang exit regardless of gender.

Bell (2009) addresses whether risk factors associated with gang membership differ between men and women in this quantitative study. Data were collected via questionnaires and interviews with 7212 young people of both genders in grades 7-12. Theoretically, the study is based in social disorganization theory (Sampson & Groves, 1989) and

social control theory (Hirschi, 1969), which point out, among other things, that youth crime occurs in neighborhoods where the relationships between the residents and the social institutions have collapsed, for which reason these can no longer contribute to maintaining effective social control. Additionally, the study draws on feminist perspectives on crime and youth crime (e.g. Campell, 1990), which emphasize, among other things, that female gang members have experienced being childhood victimization or live in violent relationships as adults, just as they are potentially at risk for the sexual victimization that exists in gangs (Miller, 2001, 2002). The study shows that based on the theoretical foundation, there are few differences in risk factors between boys and girls in terms of gang membership. On the other hand, there are indications that parental control, belonging, and involvement, security in school, fighting with peers, age, and race have similar impacts on the gang involvement of boys and girls.

In this quantitative study, Varriale (2008) has tried to evaluate differentiated gang processes as they vary between the genders. Data were collected via the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (Center for Human Resource Research, 2005). The study functions as a test of earlier studies, e.g. by Fleisher and Krienert (2004) who point out that pregnancy is a potential exit strategy for female gang members. The studies were tested via three main hypotheses: A majority of female gang members leave the gangs precisely because of being pregnant; among those who have been pregnant, gang-affiliated women are more likely to give birth to the child; finally, a context can be seen between distancing oneself from gang membership on one hand, and pregnancy in 1997 or 1996 with a subsequent birth in 1998 on the other. The author finds no support of these studies in terms of causality of maternity as a potential mechanism for distancing oneself from gang membership. Based on this, the author argues that the development of qualitative studies to quantitative tests should continue within gang research, as the two approaches complement each other.

Synopsis for theme X

The tenth theme focuses on gang membership and gender, and a total of four studies were included, suggesting that this is the least prioritized topic within the field of gang research. The primary findings in the studies concern differences in gang exits and gang-related victimization, which indicate very few differences for both (O'Neal et al., 2016; Bell, 2009). The most significant gender-related difference between male and female gang members is described as women's greater exposure to sexual victimization (Trickett, 2016). This victimization is explained through the male members' understanding of masculinity, and the issue may potentially be reduced by encouraging male members to redefine this masculinity.

Recapitulation of the ten themes

This research and knowledge gathering has moved over ten themes through a number of different perspectives on gangs and gang membership, each contributing to identifying youth in gangs, who the young people are, and efforts indicated as having significance in terms of prevention or intervention. Thus, this chapter sums up ten themes, which overlap in many areas. The ten included themes were as follows:

Theme no. I	Danish and Nordic gang research
Theme no. II	Gangs, crime, violence, and victimization
Theme no. III	Socialization, education, and gang membership
Theme no. IV	Risk factors connected to gang membership
Theme no. V	Characteristics of gangs and ways in and out
Theme no. VI	Gangs, school, and education
Theme no. VII	Prevention and intervention
Theme no. VIII	Gangs and their influence on local neighborhoods
Theme no. IX	Gangs, race, and ethnicity
Theme no. X	Gender and gang membership

A total of 1097 studies were obtained through the search process, in addition to which reference lists, articles, monographies, and anthologies were reviewed for the period 2000-2016. 417 studies were reviews more closely, of which 111 studies were selected and included in this research and knowledge gathering for the purpose of identifying a wide selection of the research field associated with young people in gangs, both in international and national context. The ten themes are developed in a way that they collectively provide insight into the findings of the research field in terms of elucidating which young people join gangs, reasons for this, and efforts that either prevent or support young people in leaving gangs again.

Generally, a number of central findings can be emphasized through the included studies, distributed across the ten themes, which will be presented here in a collective form:

- that gang members are typically identified as including young men. Several studies indicate that these young men are of ethnic minority origin, and in American studies often young men of African-American, Hispanic or Latin American, or Asian origin. In addition, it is noted that young men growing up in socially marginalized neighborhoods (so-called ghettos), are the ones at risk of gang affiliations – especially if gangs are already present in the neighborhood. To a lesser degree than

boys, girls also participate in gangs, however, and the risk factors and consequences of gang membership for them are the same as for boys, except that studies indicate an increased risk of sexual abuse of girls in gangs.

- the studies identify reasons for children and adolescents gravitating into gangs as multifaceted and complex. A large number of the studies also point to several and simultaneous conditions and factors associated with reasons related to gang affiliation. Poverty, being raised in exposed neighborhoods, cognitive difficulties in terms of school and education, as well as neglectful or harsh child-rearing methods on part of the parents have been identified in a wide range of studies. By and large, relatively identical factors are observed – even across borders – such as poverty, ethnic minority background, young men’s need for group affiliation as part of adolescence, search for masculinity and identity, early crime activities, and social, emotional and cognitive difficulties – even before joining a gang – as relatively consistent causal explanations. Several studies indicate that children as young as 10-13 years can become involved in gangs, and several studies point to the fact that young people typically stay in these gangs for about 2 years, some longer if they feel deeply rooted in the gang. Another factor, also referred to as a reason for gang affiliation, is pressure from deviant peers as well as familial gang members.
- The above descriptions are largely recurrent in the studies, which in various ways identify the young people affiliated with gangs. Several studies show that many of these young people have committed crime before joining a gang, have negative school experiences and are described as having various types of behavioral difficulties, e.g. aggressive behavior, poor self-control, etc. The studies describing the behavioral difficulties of children and adolescents also point out that young people affiliated with gangs show social and emotional difficulties more frequently than young people who are not affiliated with a gang, but who have committed crimes. Young people in gangs are also the group who commits the most violent crime, including aggression, robbery, shootings, and assault, compared to young people who are criminals but not affiliated with gangs. Some studies have also identified that the young people who are or have been associated with a gang do poorly over the course of their lives, which is to say that youth gang affiliation impacts the youths in adulthood. This is identified as persistent criminal behavior in adulthood, lack of education, a less stable attachment to the labor market, as well as unhealthy lifestyles and poverty in adulthood.

A number of key findings associated with studies focusing on prevention efforts for children and adolescents joining gangs, or efforts helping young people leave the gangs are identified:

In several studies, positive relationships with adults have been identified as a potentially reducing risk of gang membership, just as the opposite tends to increase the risk. Thus, parents play an important role in young people's gang affiliation, as several studies identify positive family environments as creating more pro-social young people. Contrary to this, young people lacking attachment to significant adults or growing up in families that deal with abuse or poverty seek community in the gangs, where they potentially achieve the acceptance and identity they seem to crave. A typical consequence of gang membership is the increased risk of victimization, i.e. becoming a victim of violence of some kind. In addition, lack of educational commitment and the associated inequalities in life is presented as a dominant risk factor for gang membership, and conversely, the importance of good and stable schooling and good cognitive abilities prevent gang involvement.

In spite of a considerable amount of international gang research, however, intervention and prevention studies are relatively few and far between, although scattered suggestions in terms of preventive efforts are presented in the form of proactive risk assessments, family treatment programs and alternatives to the so-called masculinity, which gang membership is frequently said to supplement or supply. This may be explained by the fact that the development of intervention and exit strategies constitutes a major endeavor that requires a more unambiguous understanding of the gangs as well as of the organization of the exit programs, so everyone receives the same exit opportunity. For those who participate in such programs, it is typically the most committed gang members, who benefit. This can also be attributable to the fact that the defining the gangs continues to be difficult in as much as everything is defined differently according to different perspectives, such as those of theorists, researchers, and politicians.

Several studies suggest that the future research into and about gangs and gang members should bring perspectives that address the applicability of theoretical concepts and the extent to which economy, law enforcement, and timeframes affect the gangs. The importance of understanding contexts and their significance for youth gang affiliation or gang resistance is also pointed out. Furthermore, the development of interventions targeting the known risk factors is recommended, as well as reaching a better understanding of gang membership, which potentially will lead to important knowledge that can be used in preventive efforts.

The studies obtained from Nordic and Danish research show in particular that the gang research is still a relatively new field of study compared to the United States and the rest of Europe. A distinctive feature of this research is the fact that a significant number of studies were conducted by governmental institutions such as law enforcement

and the Research Office of the Ministry of Justice, such as evaluations, reviews and mapping of various interventions and initiatives on the topic. It should be pointed out that no studies obtained from the search process had a systematic focus on prevention, enabling the identification from a research perspective the interventions that prevent children and young people from gang involvement. A few studies have explored the importance of various intervention efforts in response to gangs, but the Nordic countries are too spread out to infer distinct conclusions about the types of interventions that may be considered particularly relevant to implement. Thus, in concluding theme 1 with a particular view to the Nordic countries, the studies indicate a need to develop further our research-based knowledge about prevention, intervention, and the living conditions of children and young people, especially when they grow up in so-called socially marginal neighborhoods, which are also infested by gangs.

Chapter 3

Discussion of the existing knowledge on the subject – how does it look?

The purpose of this research and knowledge gathering is to present existing knowledge about young people's gang involvement through the search for and collection of Danish, Nordic and international studies. This research and knowledge gathering is based on the exploration of a number of key and related issues that focus on existing research and knowledge to identify the young people actually involved in a gang – and to identify the efforts that prevent youth from either becoming involved in gangs or help them leave gangs.

Thus, based on this collection of gathered knowledge from the research field associated with youth in gangs, a so-called risk matrix can be developed with focus on factors that counteract/reduce the risk, the so-called 'pull factors', and on the factors that increase and/or maintain the risk of moving into a gang, the so-called 'push factors', respectively. This interpretative matrix of pull and push factors in relation to young people moving into gangs was developed with particular inspiration from the social educational research tied especially to research about social mobility in society (see e.g. Jæger, 2003; Hansen, 2003, 2015). The social educational approach with an explicit focus on the concept of mobility is shown through different perspectives and interpretations of the societal (and global) development, causing factors that respectively encourage (pull) or hinder (push) the social mobility of individuals to interact in complicated patterns. Jæger (2003) shows, for instance, how these societal push-and-pull factors can be brought to bear at a societal level in terms of the opportunities of individuals to break patterns⁷ in modern society. Decker & van Winkle, (1996) have also used the so-called push-and-pull approach in researching the motivation for young people moving into gangs. In this

⁷ According to Jæger (2003), the concept of pattern breaking is about identifying deviations from the general mechanism that an advantageous childhood also provides advantageous life opportunities (Jæger, 2003, s. 11). In this context, Jæger discusses the concept of pattern breaking in relation to research about social mobility, where the focus is on the connection between distribution of socioeconomic goods among the generations; education, occupation, income, etc. and where pattern breaking is focused on deviations from the mechanism that hvor mønsterbrydningen er fokuseret på afvigelserne from den mekanisme that an advantageous childhood also provides advantageous opportunities later in life. See also Esping-Andersen's (2002) analyses of social mobility across national borders and with a focus on the welfare state in a Nordic context.

context, push factors are indicated as including economic, social, and political circumstances, such as growing up in marginalized neighborhoods, which can push young people into gangs, so to speak. On the other hand, pull factors are shown as the way individual young people see the advantages of gang affiliation, e.g. experiences of security and protection against mod victimization (Decker & van Winkle, 1996).

Here, the interpretive matrix is developed and adjusted to provide an overview of the existing research and knowledge in the area of gangs, which is included in this context. Thus, the push factors here provide an overview of the factors that appear to counteract or reduce the risk of moving into a gang, while the pull factors provide an overview of the factors empirically identified as based in the existing research, which are indicated as increasing the risk of moving into a gang, and/or keeping young people in gangs. The review is based on the five areas, i.e. the individual, friendship groups, school, neighborhood, and family circumstances, respectively, which are typically researched in relation to explanatory models in the area of gang research (Densley, 2015).

Figure 1.

A risk matrix over pull-and-push factors for gang affiliation based on the included research in the field of study

<p>Pull factors</p>	<p>Being a boy of an ethnic minority background between the ages of 12 and 18. Growing up in marginalized neighborhoods, the so-called ghetto areas, where there are already gangs, or where there is also so-called gang history in the family. The child-rearing practices of the parents are harsh, and the international research further argues that mothers often bring up the children alone, and the father is absent from the home. Poor school career, poor school experiences, and having been bullied, Early criminal debut, including a focus on scope and seriousness of criminal and violent acts. Encounters with the police. Abuse/use of drugs/marijuana</p>
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	Emotional difficulties, low self-worth, difficulties with temper control, aggressive behavior, low impulse control. Belonging to a group, with a “shared identity”, masculinity, protection, community/friendships.
Push factors	Good school career, supportive and attentive parents, growing up outside the so-called ghetto areas, low or no delinquent behavior in early youth, not ethnic minority background, being a girl, no substance abuse, no psychological difficulties.

The so-called push factors are actually identified somewhat backwards, as the focus of this research and knowledge gathering was not to research studies dealing theoretically and empirically with studies exploring why young people do *not* move into gangs, e.g. even though they are young, of an ethnic minority background, growing up in marginalized neighborhoods, etc. It is important to maintain that far from all young people move into gangs, which Densley (2015) points out as well. Thus, the so-called push factors excluded in this context are only found and included through a number of the international studies, e.g. the ones that explored why some young people move into a gang, while others “only” commit crime – without moving into a gang. This type of study is often built on a larger quantitative research design and often covers several schools with large groups of students or correctional facilities with inmates.

On the other hand, the pull factors are included through a significant number of the obtained studies (see for instance elaboration under theme no. 2), where a large part of the research, even across the themes delineated in this research and knowledge gathering, identifies, which young people move into gangs, what characterizes their life circumstances, conditions growing up, family relationships, school and education situation, and crime and violent behavior.

The review of the 111 included studies in this research and knowledge gathering, a number of circumstances and conditions are revealed, which so to speak are found across the research and across national borders. Even though the so-called gang research and theory about gangs is founded in the historical, political and economic society of the United States, van Gemert & Weerman (2015) in particular argue that gangs also exist in Europe and in the Nordic countries, although studies of these are relatively more recent and not nearly as comprehensive. In particular, van Gemert & Weerman (2015) point to

the fact that the different European countries also have young people in groups that largely match Eurogang's definition: a street gang (or troublesome youth group corresponding to a street gang elsewhere) is any durable street-oriented youth group whose involvement in illegal activity is part of its group identity), although you can find differences in group sizes, the scope and seriousness of the crime, and the various gangs' forms of expression, also among the European countries. Van Gemert & Weerman (2015) further point out that there is a need for more empirical research for cross-border analysis of differences in gangs, especially with focus on migration, marginalization processes, and growing up in marginalized neighborhoods, as well as the role of the media and its significance for young people moving into gangs.

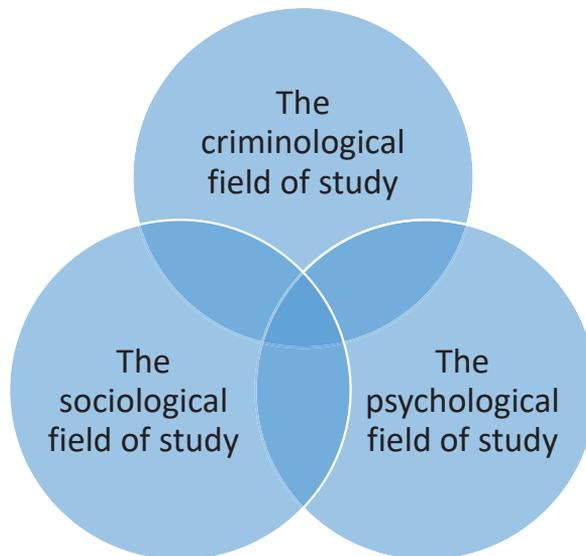
Although it is always necessary, regardless of the field of study, to control for comparisons between countries in terms of social, political, economic, and cultural circumstances, there are still a number of interesting factors in the existing research in the area of gang studies, which appear to "move" across are largely recurrent.

The first factor is connected to the results of the gang research presenting largely identical empirical findings in terms of who moves into a gang, where gangs "belong", and which forms of crime are committed by young people in gangs. Young people (often male) with ethnic minority backgrounds, who have grown up and live in marginalized neighborhoods (the so-called ghetto areas) recur in most of the studies obtained for this research and knowledge gathering. Similarly, the various descriptions of the criminal behavior of the young gang members are largely the same: financial crime, drug sales, assault/battery/violence, and shooting other gang members and random individuals. Thus, a review of the obtained studies largely illustrates that young gang members appear as a relatively homogenous group of young people, moving in specific urban areas and neighborhoods who commit apparently the same criminal acts as part of belonging to a gang, notably also across borders. Van Gemert and Weerman (2015), however, point out that the violence associated with the use of firearms in American gangs is not identified in European gang research to the same extent and degree.

Another circumstance appearing relatively identical across the research field and across borders is a so-called theoretical understanding of the particular angle or focus through which gangs should be studied. In this context, the so-called theoretical understanding does not cover explicit theoretical selection for construction of the research field or in analyses of the behavior and actions of the young gang members, but on the other hand, dominant scientific disciplines are included, which in various ways deal with the subject of gangs. Three scientific disciplines in particular appear to dominate the combined field of study, as was also discussed initially, i.e. the criminological field of study, the sociological field of study, and for a smaller group of studies, the psychological field

of study can be identified as well. Figure 2 below details the three scientific areas that dominate the field of gang research:

Figure 2



The first circle in the figure encompasses the many studies, that in various ways belong under the criminological field of study, where the focus is on revealing, elucidating, and discussing the crime committed by young men in gangs. The criminal acts covered in the different studies contribute to identifying that young people in gangs commit a significant number of (often serious) criminal acts, such as violence, including with the use of knives and firearms, financial crime, including drug sales, robberies, muggings, etc. The majority of the international studies are really part of the criminological field of study and are thus based in searching and mapping out criminal behavior associated with youth gangs (see for instance elaboration under theme no. 2).

The second circle in the figure, which encompasses the sociological field of study, is also connected to the criminological field of study, as the distinction between the two disciplines is often unclear, and the two disciplines are often interwoven. Characteristic for the studies under the sociological field of study are things like an overarching interest in the significance of poverty, ethnicity, migration, and growing up in marginalized neighborhoods. These exact angles on gang research continue to apply in recent times.

Thus, Van Gemert et al. (2008) elucidate that precisely the gang affiliation of young people with ethnic minority backgrounds should be seen as a symptom of a difficult assimilation process on a sociological level, which has not succeeded sufficiently:

“The gang, on the other hand, is simply one symptom of a type of disorganization, that goes along with the breaking up of the immigrant’s traditional social system without adequate assimilation to the new”. (van Gemert et al., 2008, p. 3)

The third and last circle encompasses studies, which on a general level could be placed within the field of psychological. This can capture a number of studies, where the focus is on the significance of belonging to a group, identity, emotional difficulties, such as low self-worth or difficulties with temper control, as well as the significance of parental childrearing practices. As an example, Alleyne & Wood (2010, 2012) have focused on which young people move into gangs seen from a psychological perspective. Alleyne & Wood (2010) in particular point out that gang research has been based primarily in sociological and criminological research so far, which means that there is insufficient knowledge about the psychological perspectives for the reasons young people move into gangs. With inspiration from, among other things, interactionist theory, which can include individual, social and psychological factors, Alleyne & Wood (2010, 2012) show that gang members are often young men, whose schooling is complicated by learning difficulties and psychological problems. Social problems are identified with a focus on the fact that the young people often come from families of low socioeconomic background and with parents that have difficulty raising their children, parents who have committed crimes as well and may also have been in gangs themselves – all social factors that are cited as supporting the young men’s movement into crime and gangs.

The three circles overlap to illustrate how several of the obtained and reviewed studies cover all three fields of study, which often makes it difficult to isolate them as one or the other. Of course, in this context any attempt to isolate them is primarily a matter of gaining a clear picture over the complete field of study. On one hand, such a picture provides clarity in terms of the dominating research disciplines, but on the other hand, it contributes to identifying one of the most significant theses connected to the current field of study about young people in gangs.

The third and last circumstance includes the theoretical perspectives included in the extensive gang field of study, and which are generally distributed across the three main scientific disciplines (ibid.), although without being able to identify significantly dominant theoretical approaches in the so-called gang field of study. Thus, a review of the obtained studies employs a wide range of theories, e.g. for analysis of concepts like

marginalization, ethnicity, and social capital, or for analysis of behavioral issues, including so-called deviant behavior, crime and violent behavior, psychological difficulties, and learning difficulties. Characteristic for the obtained studies is the fact that they often explore young people in gangs from different angles, e.g. gangs and violent behavior, gangs and masculinity, or gangs and schooling thus bringing a significant breadth to the theoretical approaches brought to bear in the field. Densley (2015) points out that the majority of the theoretical perspectives that exist in the area of gang research is connected to explanations for why young people gravitate into gangs is supply-oriented, so to speak, where the focus is on the motives for being in a gang. Here, Densley (2015) points out extensive studies that deal with *why* young people move into gangs, while a better question may lead to an exploration of the so-called dynamic interactions and processes, that research *how* young people move into gangs.

Thus, based on the obtained research and knowledge on the subject, it is important to emphasize that there appears to be a continuing need to develop concepts, theories, and analytical tools for the so-called gang research – especially in a Danish and Nordic context, where the research is still relatively limited – especially when it comes to analyses connected to the Nordic welfare state, which in several areas is decidedly different from other countries in Europe and the United States. Concepts, theories, and analytical tools that can contribute to expand the understanding and perspectives of young people in gangs, but certainly also concepts and theories that can sharpen the focus on systematizing and analyzing the often very complex and dilemma-filled contexts that include children and young people, who grow up and develop, which for some – but far from all – leads to joining a gang.

Conclusion

The purpose of this research and knowledge gathering is to present existing knowledge about young people's gang involvement through the search for and collection of Danish, Nordic and international studies. This research and knowledge gathering is based on the exploration of a number of key and related issues that focus on existing research and knowledge to identify the young people actually involved in a gang – and to identify the efforts that prevent youth from either becoming involved in gangs or help them leave gangs.

417 studies were reviewed, of which 111 studies were included in this research and knowledge gathering, distributed over a total of 10 themes, which in various ways deal with young people in gangs. The 111 studies are selected as representative for the combined field of study and contribute to elucidating theoretical, empirical, and analytical perspectives on the combined field of research and knowledge, both in a Danish and international context. The reviewed literature is written in English, Swedish, Norwegian and Danish.

As explained initially in this report, the concept is not a new phenomenon, especially not in an international context. The first gangs were found in London all the way back in the 14. and 15. centuries and were connected to England's switch from an agrarian society to industrialization, as well as to the population growth and density in the cities, among them London (Shelden et al., 2013).

The same development can be identified in the United States, where the major cities, such as Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York, all have several gangs. Shelden et al. (2013) explain that precisely appearance and development of gangs is closely related to societal development, including migration and poverty in cities. Add to this the fact that over the past 30 years, where society has changed again, this time from the industrial society to the information society, making young people's schooling and education even more demanding, there has been an increase in the number of gangs as a way to handle the increased societal demands (Shelden et al., 2013).

If we turn our attention to the Nordic countries, on the other hand, research and knowledge development on this subject is still quite limited. Only very few studies were obtained through the search process, and in a Danish context, they are primarily reports from governmental sectors focused on identifying bikers and gangs in Denmark, as well as mapping out exit programs and criminal behavior (see e.g. Pedersen & Lindstad, 2011; Lindstad, 2012; Klement & Pedersen, 2013). Theme no. 1 in particular has contributed to elucidating the very limited knowledge development in a Nordic and Danish context,

despite many resources being spent in recent years on both legal and law enforcement efforts connected to young people in gangs.

The purpose of this research and knowledge gathering was to identify existing knowledge on this topic, and in conclusion will identify what we know, based on the obtained studies, but also what we don't know yet.

What do we know now?

A broad overview of both the international research and that written in English reveals an extensive number of studies about young people in gangs. Additionally, this is, as mentioned earlier, a field of study with quite a long tradition, as the first studies of young men in gangs appear already in the 1930's, particularly in American research (Thrasher, 1927; Whyte, 1943), where research into young men in gangs was closely connected to sociological studies of poor neighborhoods and the issue of unequal living conditions (*ibid.*). Where poverty and inequality are great, there are gangs, as Thrasher (1927) pointed out. It must also be emphasized that the so-called field of study about gangs originated particularly in American society, where there is still extensive theoretical and empirical research on the subject, while Europe and the Nordic countries in particular have nowhere near an equivalent amount of theoretical and empirical research in this area. Specifically, this means that most of the existing knowledge and research must always be read into an American context, i.e. seen on the background of European and Nordic research standing on the shoulders of definitions, theoretical and methodical approaches, and findings founded in American gang research.

Cross-border comparisons, albeit with differences in scope and severity, appear to identify the same reasons for young people moving into gang and the same forms of committed crime. Other studies, including the ones bases in the Eurogang research network (Klein et al., 2001) have identified and elucidated young people in gangs in Europe, pointing out that based on Eurogang's definition of the term gang where the concept covers a gang or a group whose involvement in illegal activity is part of its group identity (Klein et al., 2001; Weerman et al., 2009 and Alleyne & Wood, 2010) it is often young men with ethnic minority background that move into gangs in a European context. Klein et al. (2001) illustrate how gangs in a European context primarily include young people with ethnic minority background that reflect the immigration and refugee patterns characterizing the various European countries.

It looks different in the United States, where primarily young people of so-called Hispanic or African-American background are in gangs, while it is only rarely young people of Asian or Caucasian background. In this context, Klein et al. (2001) point out

that ethnicity and race are not the primary identical explanation for young people gravitating to gangs across the United States and Europe, but instead the young men's lives in socially marginalized circumstances. There are precisely studies – especially based in the sociological field of study – that point to the fact that young men moving into gangs appear, regardless of the country where it is happening, to be young people living under poor, isolated, and marginalized life conditions, while also living and moving in marginalized neighborhoods (the so-called ghetto areas).

Furthermore, we know – also across borders and based on the included studies – that young people in gangs are more delinquent and commit more violent crime compared to young people who are delinquent but not gang affiliated. Criminal acts in gangs consist of robbery, violence, muggings, drug sales, burglaries, as well as the use of firearms and knives, drive-by shootings, etc. – particularly targeted at others and at rival gangs, generally accounting for the most extensive and serious.

The included studies are also relatively unambiguous in explaining the reasons connected to young people joining gangs. Typically, the age is narrowed down to age 13-15, even younger for some studies, as the average age where young people gravitate toward gangs. In addition, as already mentioned, would-be gang members are typically young men, and several studies further identify them as young men who have experienced difficulties in school, and furthermore also young men with psychological issues, e.g. in form of aggressive behavior, difficulties controlling their temper, and low self-worth. In addition to these explanatory reasons, several studies point out the significance of parental child-rearing practices, referring to young people moving into gangs having typically been raised by one parent (mother) and have been subject to so-called harsh child-rearing methods along with very little so-called parental supervision, i.e. the opportunity to live their lives at a young age without their parents knowing what the young people are doing.

Similarly, some of the included studies indicate that young men who have been gang affiliated while young, do significantly worse in adulthood, also after they are no longer gang affiliated. Poor schooling, lack of education, and a sporadic connection to the labor market are identified, as is continued criminal behavior, albeit in varying degrees. Add to this, poorer living conditions in general and poorer general health.

And what don't we know?

We don't know what daily life looks like in a gang. Only very few studies obtained through the search process followed young people from the *inside*, so to speak, just as no studies were obtained through the search process that focused on the contact children have with gangs before becoming affiliated.

Also, we don't know, based in the many different contexts, e.g. institutional contexts, where children and young people grow up and live their daily lives, how different conditions, dilemmas, and challenges bring young people to join gangs.

Similarly, research connected to the many social and cultural contexts, where children and young people live their everyday lives, is relatively limited, indicating the significance of developing knowledge in more contextual ways, e.g. about school, recreational and youth clubs, in the street and in neighborhoods, where young people who are affiliated with or on their way into gangs also live their daily lives.

Nor do we know in a cross-border *longitudinal* perspective how and in which way movements into gangs, life in gangs, and life when and if they leave the gang again, look for young people.

We also still need comparative cross-border studies of gangs, e.g. between the Nordic countries, and comparative studies that explore different forms of prevention or intervention efforts in this field. The empirical knowledge about which efforts work, be they social and educational, associated with law enforcement or the youth justice system, or legislative, is as of yet only sporadically identified, which calls for much more and systematic knowledge development. At the same time, Spergel et al. (2014), among others, point out that research-based knowledge with focus on specific evaluation of established programs and efforts is still insufficient, and that it therefore remains difficult to provide unambiguous information about the effect of the many established programs connected to prevention and intervention of young people joining gangs.

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Appendix 1 – Recommended literature

In addition to the electronic and manual searches for relevant literature, we also, as part of the search process, contacted prominent international gang researchers to inquire and obtain as much as possible of the existing research on the subject. The following presents the literature recommended by the experts contacted. The presentation is indicated according to the expert recommending it, along with a letter to indicate whether the recommendation is a book (A), a journal article (B), or a review (C). A few recommended articles were from anthologies about gangs and gang research. In these cases, we refer to the actual anthology, as the entire book will provide greater insight into the field. Please note that recommended literature published before the year 2000 is not included in the actual knowledge gathering, therefore appearing only in the following appendix.

<p>Scott Decker, PhD Foundation Professor and Director of the Center for Public Criminology. School of Criminology & Criminal Justice Arizona State University</p>	
<p>Maltz, M. D., Rice, S. K. (2015) <i>Envisioning Criminology: Research as a process of Discovery</i>. Cham: Springer International Publishing.</p>	A
<p>Wooldredge, J., Smith, P. (2015) <i>The Oxford Handbook of Correctional facilities</i>. New York: Oxford.</p>	A
<p>Decker, S. H., Pyrooz, D. C., Moule Jr., R. K. (2014) Disengagement from gangs as role transitions. <i>Journal of Research on Adolescence</i>, 24(2), 268-283.</p>	B
<p>Decker, S. H., Melde, C., Pyrooz, D. C. (2013) What Do We Know about Gangs and Gang Members and Where do We Go from Here? <i>Justice Quarterly</i>, 30(3), 369-402.</p>	C

Pyrooz, D. C., Decker, S. H. (2012) Delinquent Behavior, Violence, and Gang Involvement in China. <i>Journal of Quantitative Criminology</i> , 29(2), 251-272.	B
Pyrooz, D. C., Decker, S. H. (2011) Motives and methods for leaving the gang – Understanding the process of gang desistance. <i>Journal of Criminal Justice</i> , 39(5), 417-425.	B
Decker, S. H., Pyrooz, D. C. (2011) "Gangs, Terrorism, and Radicalization." <i>Journal of Strategic Security</i> , 4(4), 151-166.	C

David Pyrooz, PhD Assistant Professor. Faculty Associate, Problem Behavior & Positive Youth Development Institute of Behavioral Science University of Colorado Boulder	
Pyrooz, D. C., Turanovic, J. J., Decker, S. H., Wu, J. (2016) Taking stock of the relationship between gang membership and offending. <i>Criminal Justice and Behavior</i> , 43(3), 365-397.	B
Decker, S. H., Pyrooz, D. C. (2015) <i>The handbook of gangs</i> . Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell.	A
Pyrooz, D. C. (2014) "From Your First Cigarette to Your Last Dying Day": The Patterning of Gang Membership in the Life-Course. <i>Journal of Quantitative Criminology</i> , 30(2), 349-372.	B
Gilman, A. B., Hill, K. G., Hawkins, J. D. (2014) Long-Term Consequences of Adolescent Gang Membership for Adult Functioning. <i>American Journal of Public Health</i> 104(5), 938-945.	B
Melde, C., Esbensen, F-A. (2014) The Relative Impact of Gang Status Transitions: Identifying the Mechanisms of Change in Delinquency. <i>Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency</i> 51 (3), 349-6.	B

Hughes, L. A. (2013) Group cohesiveness, gang member prestige, and delinquency and violence in Chicago, 1959 – 1962. <i>Criminology</i> , 51(4), 795-832.	B
Papachristos, A. V., Hureau, D. M., Braga, A. A. (2013) The corner and the crew – The influence of geography and social networks on gang violence. <i>American Sociological Review</i> , 78(3), 417-447.	B
Esbensen, F-A., Osgood, D. W., Peterson, D., Taylor, T. J., Carson, D. C. (2013) Short- and Long-Term Outcome Results of a Multisite Evaluation of the G.R.E.A.T. Program. <i>Criminology & public policy</i> , 12(3), 375-411.	B

Finn-Aage Esbensen, PhD E. Desmond Lee Professor of Youth Crime and Violence. Chair, Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice. University of Missouri-St. Louis.	
Melde, C., Esbensen, F-A. (2011) Gang membership as a turning point in the life course. <i>Criminology</i> , 49(2), 513-552.	B
Thornberry, T. P., Krohn, M. D., Lizotte, A. J., Smith, C. A. (2003) <i>Gangs and Delinquency in a Developmental Perspective</i> . New York: Cambridge University Press.	A
Miller, J. (2001) <i>One of the Guys: Girls, Gangs, and Gender</i> . New York: Oxford University Press.	A

Beth Bjerregaard, PhD Professor & Chair, Department of Criminal Justice & Criminology. University of North Carolina at Charlotte	
Krohn, M. d., Ward, J. T., Thornberry, T. P., Lizotte, A. J., Chu, R. (2011) The cascading effects of adolescent gang involvement across the life course. <i>Criminology</i> , 49(4), 991-1028.	B

Pyrooz, D. C., & Decker, S. H. (2011) Motives and methods for leaving the gang – Understanding the process of gang desistance. <i>Journal of Criminal Justice</i> , 39(5), 417-425.	B
Howell, J. C., Egley, A. (2005) Moving risk factors into developmental theories of gang membership. <i>Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice</i> , 3(4), 334-354.	C
Hill, K. G., Howell, J. C., Hawkins, J. D., Battin, S. R. (1999) Childhood risk factors for adolescent gang membership: Results from the Seattle Social Development Project. <i>Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency</i> , 36(3), 300-322.	B
Thornberry, T. P., Krohn, M. D., Lizotte, A. J., Chard-Wierschem, D. (1993) The role of juvenile gangs in facilitating delinquent behavior. <i>Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency</i> , 30(1), 55-87.	B

Cheryl C. Maxson, PhD Professor and Chair. Department of Criminology, Law and Society. University of California, Irvine.	
Curry, G. D., Decker, S. H., Pyrooz, D. C. (2013) <i>Confronting Gangs – Crime and Community</i> . New York: Oxford University Press.	A
Klein, M. W., Maxson, C. L. (2006) <i>Street Gang Patterns and Policies</i> . Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.	A
Decker, S., Decker, S. H., Van Winkle, B. (2004) <i>Life in the Gang – Family, Friends, and Violence</i> . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.	A
Fleisher, M. S. (2000) <i>Dead Than Kids – Gang Girls and the Boys They Know</i> . Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.	A

<p>Ross Deuchar, PhD Professor Assistant Dean, Research, Enterprise and International. School of Education. University of the West of Scotland.</p>	
<p>Hallsworth, S. (2014) <i>The Gang and Beyond: Interpreting Violent Street Worlds</i>. London. Palgrave MacMillan.</p>	A
<p>Maxson, C. L., Egley, Jr., Miller, J., Klein, M. W. (2014) <i>The Modern Gang Reader</i>. New York: Oxford University Press.</p>	A
<p>Densley, J. (2013) <i>How gangs work: An ethnography of youth violence</i>. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.</p>	A
<p>Deuchar, R. (2013) <i>Policing Youth Violence: Transatlantic Connections</i>. London: IOE Press.</p>	A
<p>Hagedorn, J. (2008) <i>A World of Gangs: Armed Young Men and Gangsta Culture</i>. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.</p>	A

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