



Resisting Punitiveness in Europe?: Welfare, Human Rights and Democracy

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This volume provides an important and exciting contribution to the knowledge on punishment across Europe.

Over the past decade, punitiveness has been studied through analyses of ‘increased’ or ‘new’ forms of punishment in western countries. Comparative studies on the other hand have illustrated important differences in levels of punitiveness between these countries and have tried to explain these differences by looking at risk and protective factors. Covering both quantitative and qualitative dimensions, this book focuses on mechanisms interacting with levels of punitiveness that seem to allow room for less punitive (political) choices, especially within a European context: social policies, human rights and a balanced approach to victim rights and public opinion in constitutional democracies.

The book is split into three sections:

1. *Punishment and Welfare*. Chapters look into possible lessons to be learned from characteristics and developments in Scandinavian and some Continental European countries.
2. *Punishment and Human Rights*. Contributions analyze how human rights in Europe can and do act as a shield against – but sometimes also as a possible motor for – criminalization and penalization.
3. *Punishment and Democracy*. The increased political attention to victims’ rights and interests and to public opinion surveys in European democracies is discussed as a possible risk for enhanced levels of punitiveness in penal policies and evaluated against the background of research evidence about the wishes and expectations of victims of crime and the ambivalence and ‘polycentric consistency’ of public opinion formations about crime and punishments.

This book will be a valuable addition to the literature in this field and will be of interest to students, scholars and policy officials across Europe and elsewhere.

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