

What's behind decreasing juvenile delinquency and increasing elderly crime in Japan?

Koichi Hamai

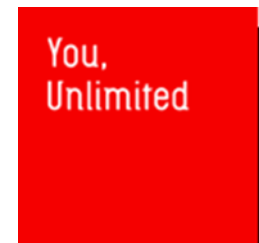
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Asian Criminological Society Conference 2020 in Kyoto

ACS2020

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ASIAN CRIMINOLOGICAL SOCIETY
12th ANNUAL CONFERENCE
2 - 5 Oct 2020

<http://acs2020.org/index.html>

ACS 2020

ASIAN CRIMINOLOGICAL SOCIETY 12th Annual Conference

2-5 Oct 2020

Kyoto, Japan

Theme:

Crime and Punishment in Asian Cultures



Main Venue:

Ryukoku University Fukakusa Campus

Sub Venue:

Kyoto Hall, Ryukoku University Omiya Campus



Fukakusa Campus:
About 90-120 min from KIX→



Omiya Campus:
About 90-120 min from KIX→

Official Homepage:



<http://acs2020.org>

Program

(As of 1st August 2019)

Day	【1st day】 2nd(Fri) Oct	【2nd day】 3rd(Sat) Oct	【3rd day】 4th(Sun) Oct	【4th day】 5th(Mon) Oct
Time / Place	Kyoto Hall	Fukakusa Campus	Fukakusa Campus	Omiya Campus etc.
9:00		Keynote Speech 3 Prof. Shadd Maruna	Keynote Speech 4 Prof. Lorraine Mazerolle	
10:00	Registration Desk Open	Plenary Session 1	Plenary Session 2	Closing Ceremony
11:00	ACS Executive Board Meeting			
12:00		Lunch break	Lunch break	Excursion
13:00		ACS General Assembly Meeting	Oral and Paper Sessions 3	place to visit: Hongwanji Temple Ryukoku Museum Kyoto District Court Kyoto Prison *Voluntary Participation *Under planning.
14:00	Opening Ceremony	Oral and Paper Sessions 1	Coffee Break	
15:00	Keynote Speech 1 Prof. David Garland	Coffee Break	Oral and Paper Sessions 4	
16:00	Keynote Speech 2 Prof. Dennis S. W. Wong	Oral and Paper Sessions 2	Oral and Paper Sessions 5	
17:00				
18:00	Welcome Dinner		Farewell Dinner	
19:00				
20:00				

Keynote Speakers:



Prof. David W. Garland
New York University, USA
Professor of Law and Sociology



Prof. Dennis S. W. Wong
City University of Hong Kong,
Hong Kong
Professor of Criminology and Social Work



Prof. Shadd Maruna
Queens University Belfast,
United Kingdom
Professor of Criminology

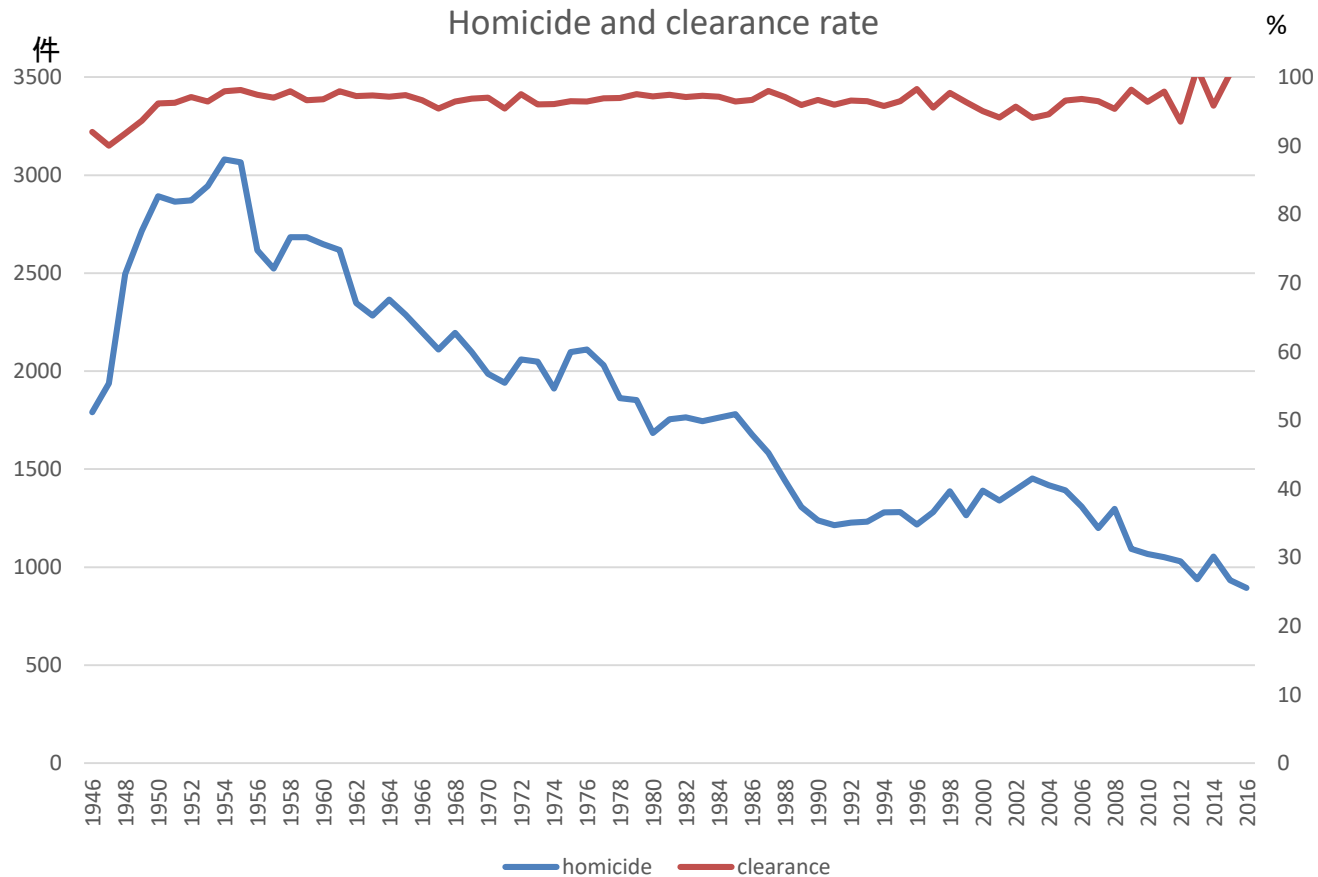


Prof. Lorraine Mazerolle
Queensland University,
Australia
Professor of Criminology

Important Days:

- > 【Call for Abstracts】 December 11, 2019
- > 【Abstract Submission Deadline】 TBA

Homicide has decreased since 1955 in Japan.



Source: National Police Agency

Homicide Rate

It is 0.2 per 100,000 in Japan in the last year



Global Study on Homicide 2013 (UN Office on Drugs and Crime)

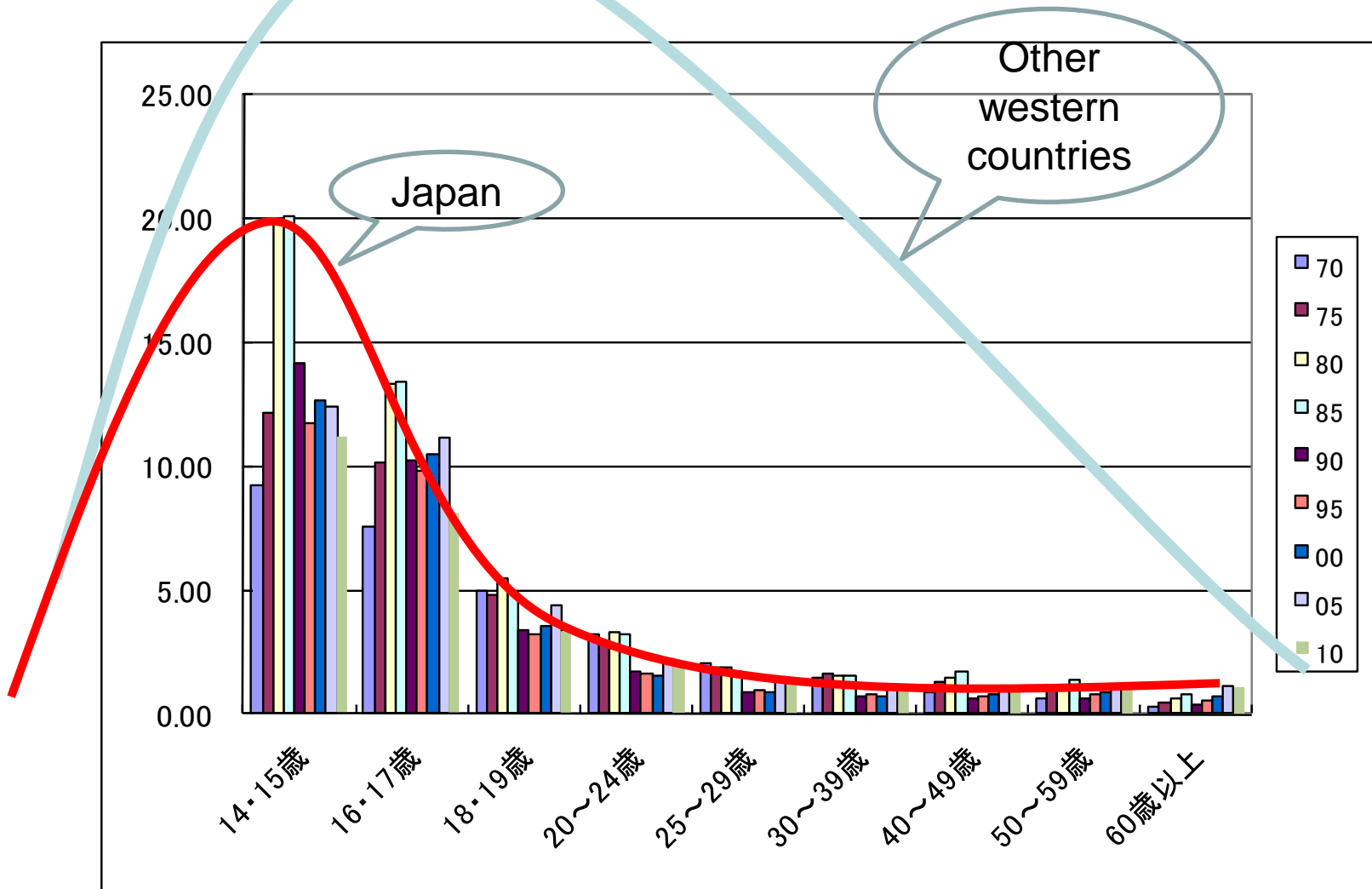
The low birth rate is one of the reasons of low and decreasing crime rate in Japan.

Besides Low Birth Rate

There are three social factors which must be related to the low crime rate in Japan

- ① Illegal drug market is very small and very low level of exposure to it among the people.
- ② Very few foreign & minority residents and low level of criminality of them
- ③ Very low unemployment rate especially among young people

Age crime curve per 1,000



Life Course Perspective of Criminals:

Criminal Career Factors

Analyze low crime rate
based on Crime-Age Curve

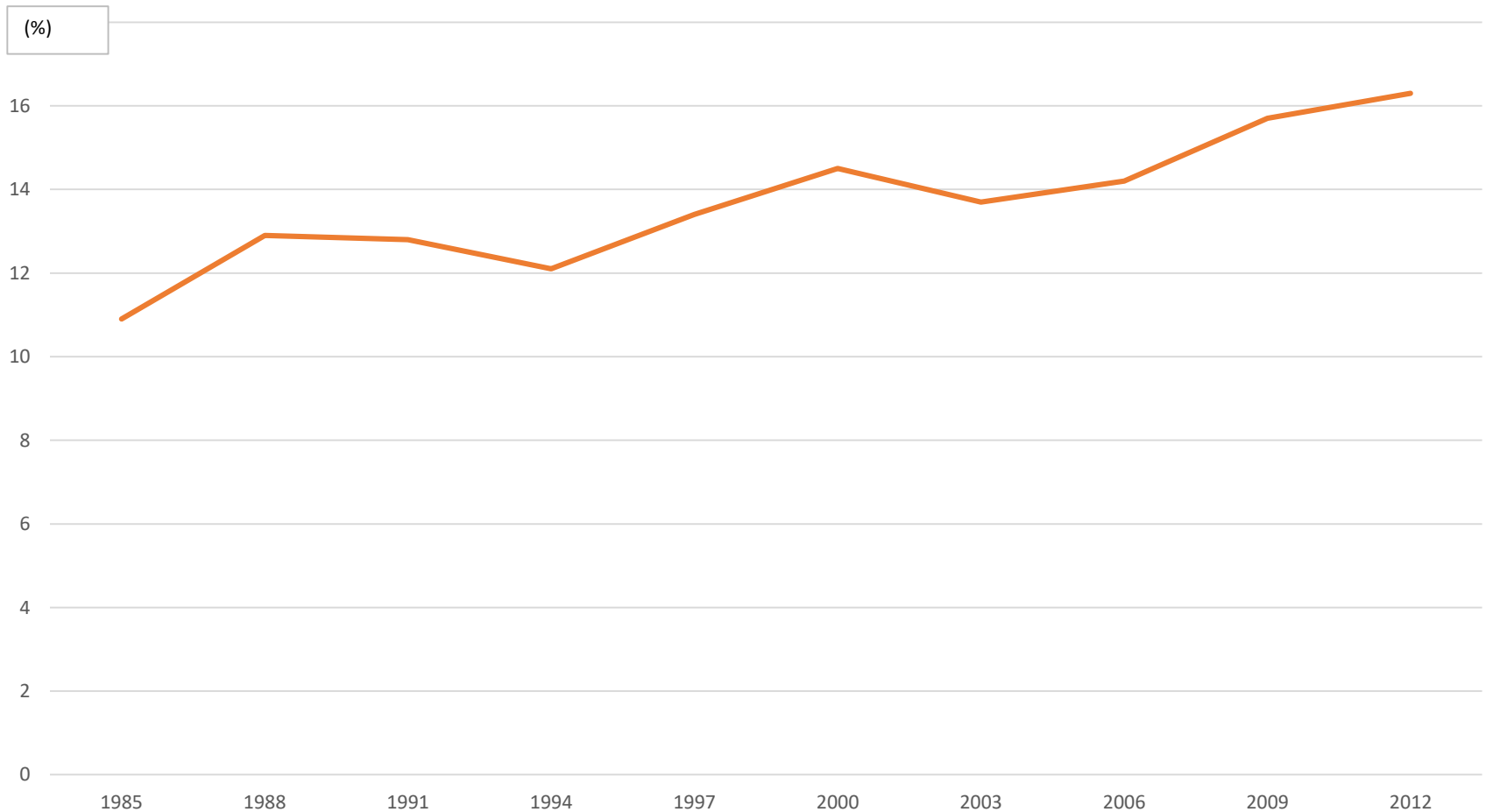
- ① Desistance from delinquency has begun much earlier than that in other countries.
- ② There is no statistically significant relationship between early onset of crime and recidivism.
(That is, most of the juvenile offenders will not become adult offenders.)

Why is juvenile crime still
declining in Japan?

Paradox of Juvenile Delinquency in Japan

- While economic situation of children has deteriorated in Japan, juvenile delinquency has not increased but decreased.

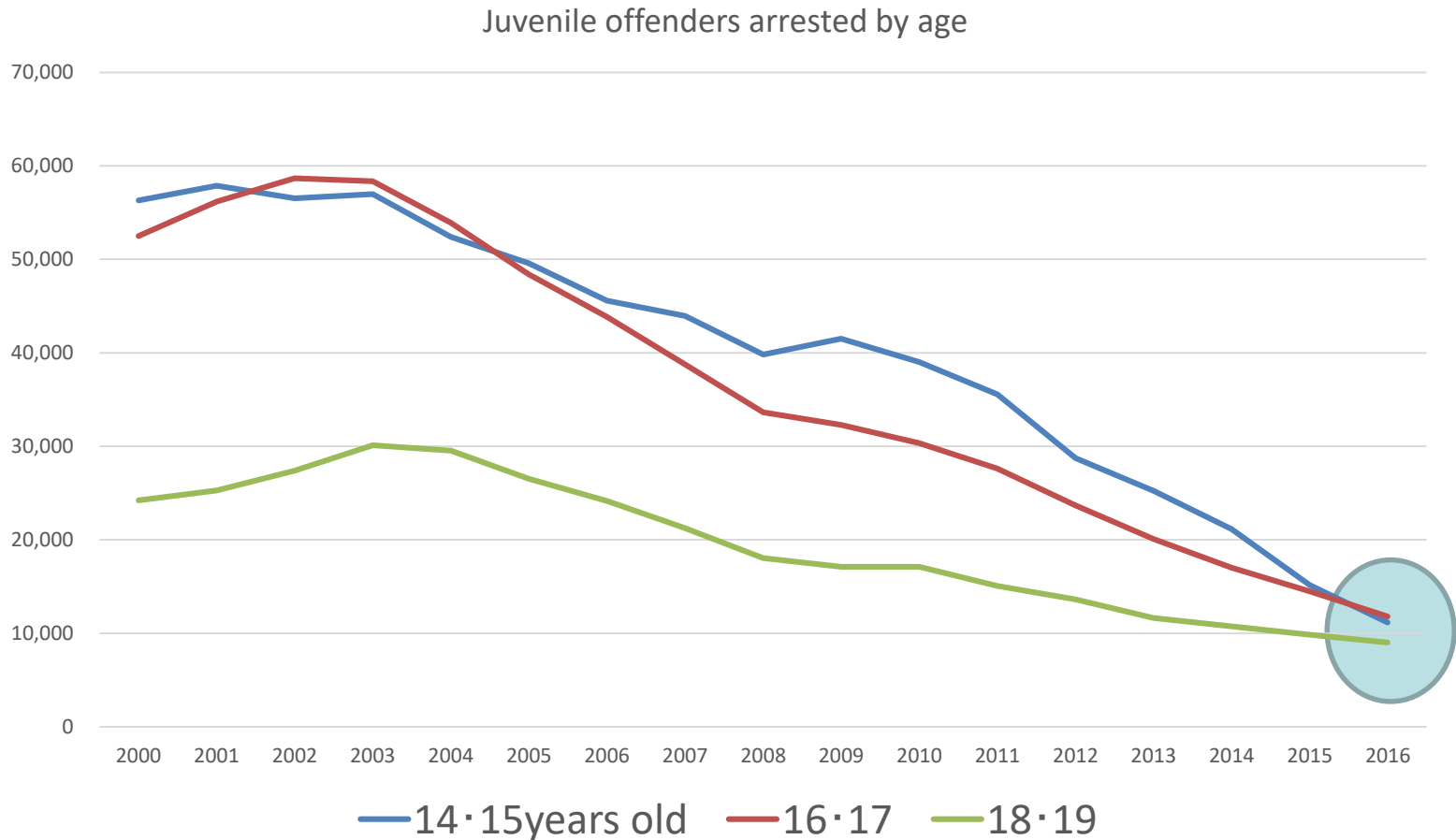
Relative poverty rate of children



Source: White Paper on Children and Young People

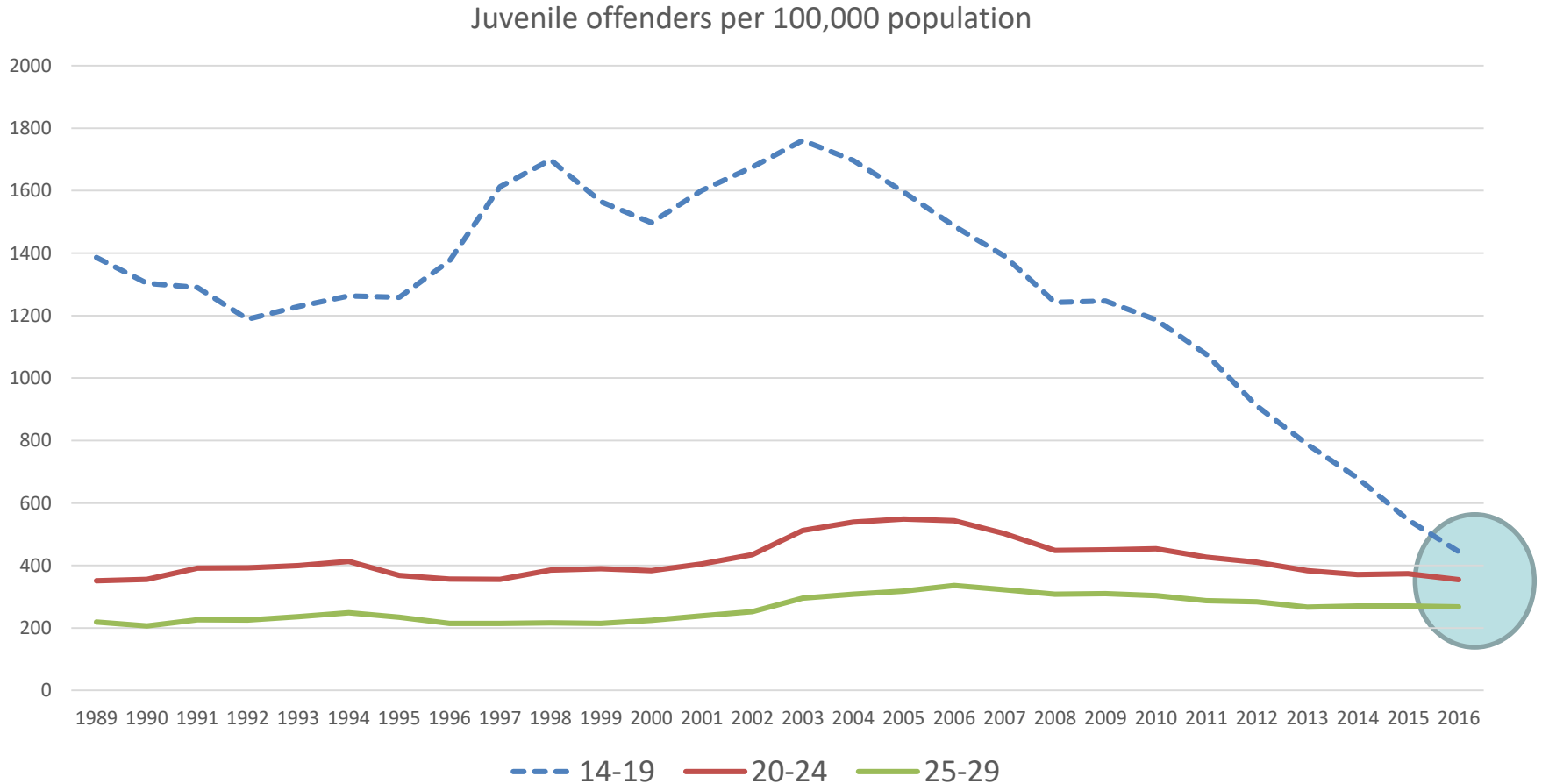
Juvenile offenders arrested

They are decreasing in almost all types of crimes including both violent and property crimes



Source: White Paper on Crime

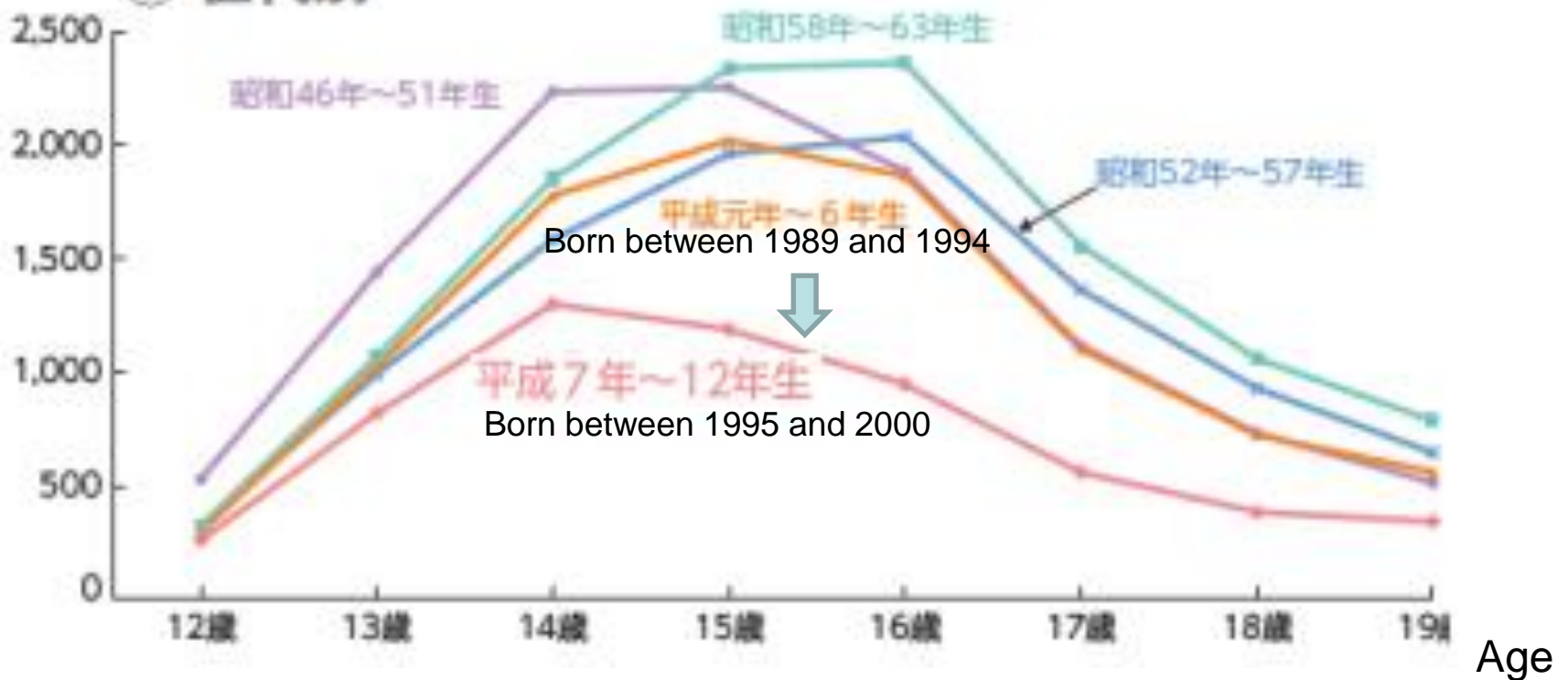
Juvenile offenders per 100,000 population



Source: White Paper on Crime

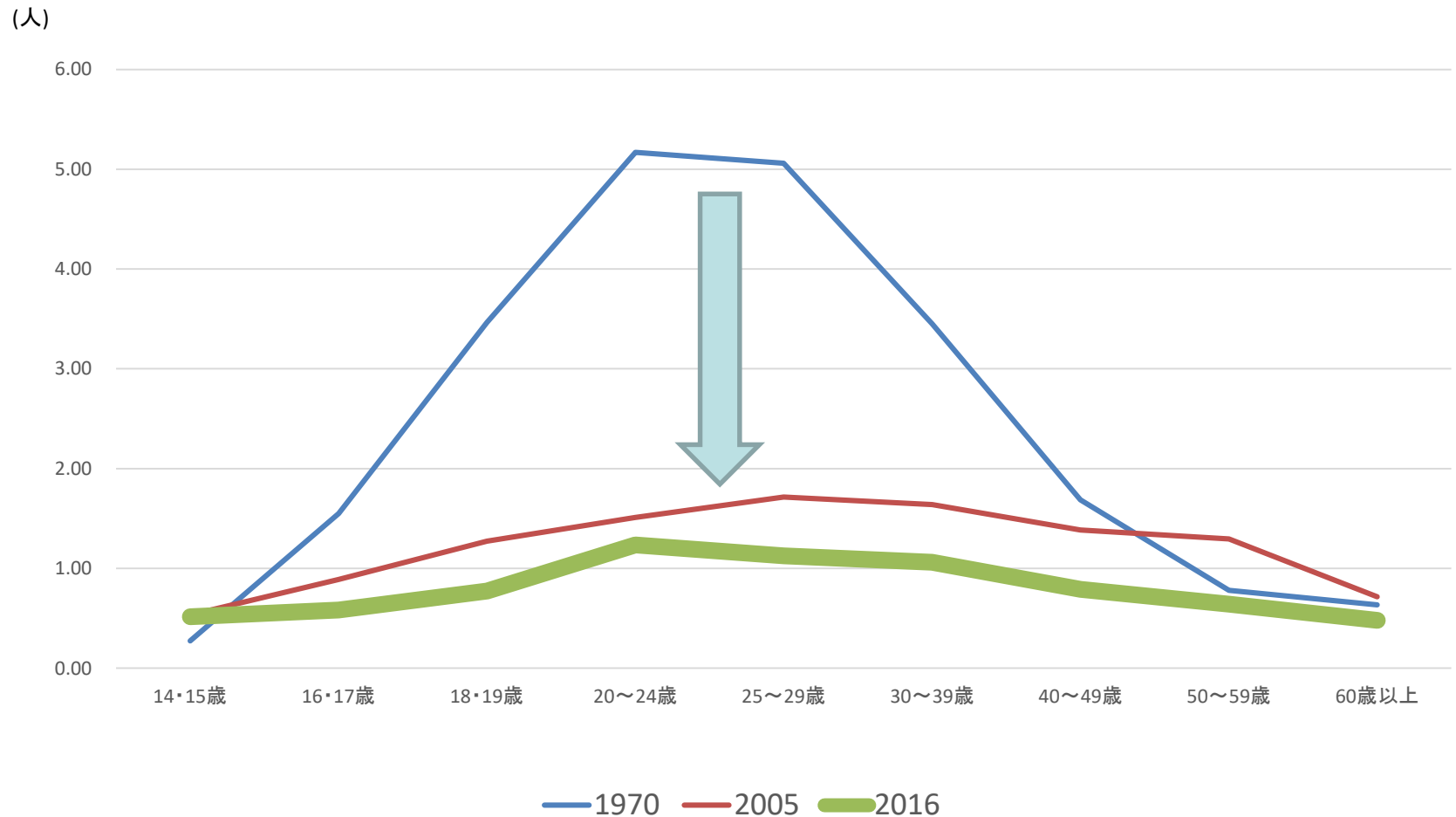
Age-crime curve of all offences in the most recent White Paper on Crime

Offenders per 100,000 population
① 世代別



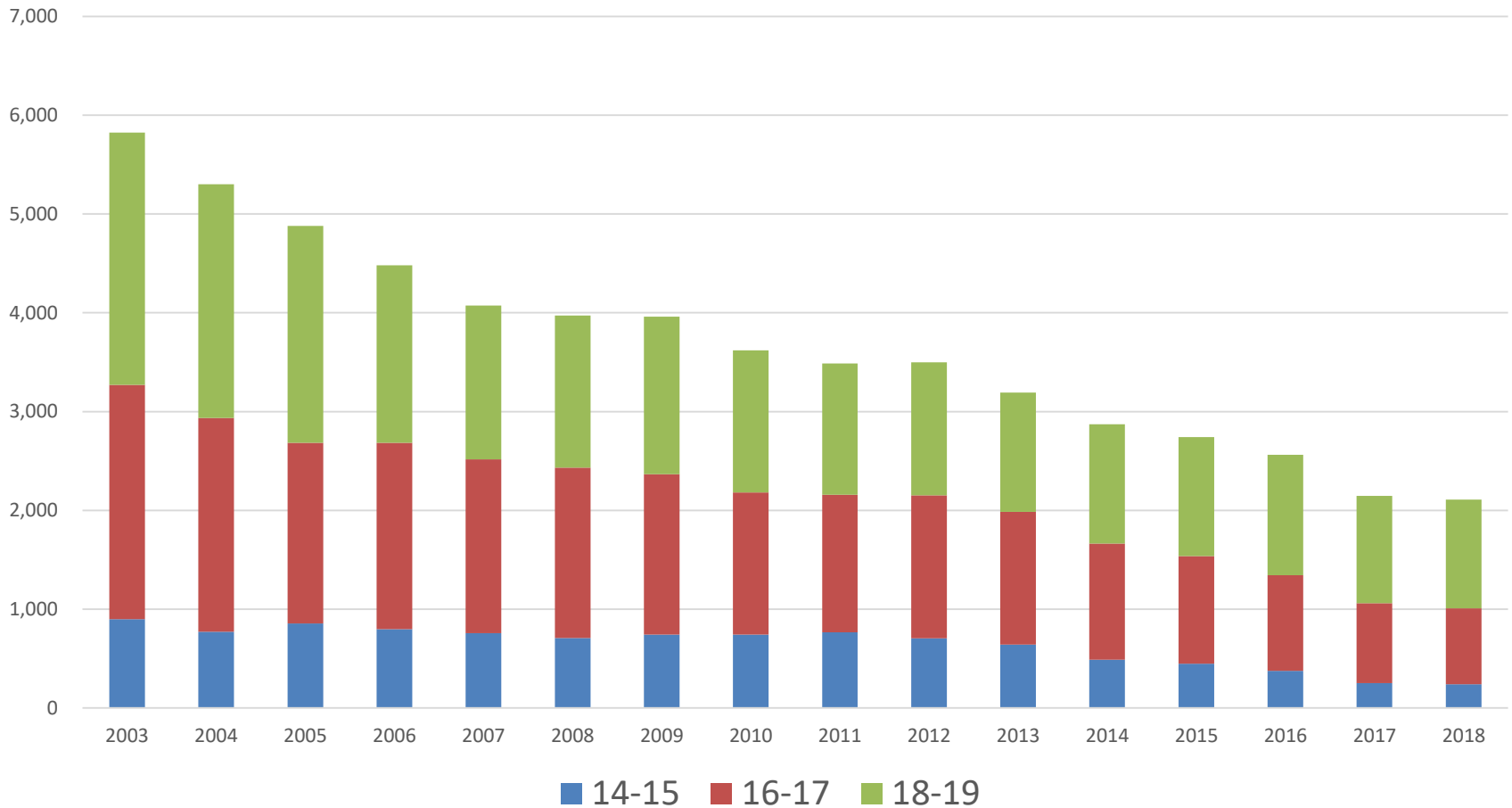
In Japan, desistance from delinquency has begun as soon as onset.

Age-crime curve of homicide per 100,000 population



Source: National Police Agency

Newly admitted juvenile offenders in juvenile training schools



Source: White Paper on Crime

Bert Berghuis and Jaap De Waard pointed out:

- The rise of the smartphone and online gaming, which changed activity of young people in leisure time. Young people are ‘using screens’ more and spend less time loitering in the street.

Declining juvenile crime – explanations for the international downturn
by Bert Berghuis and Jaap De Waard
(Justitiële Verkenningen, vol. 43, no. 1, March 2017)

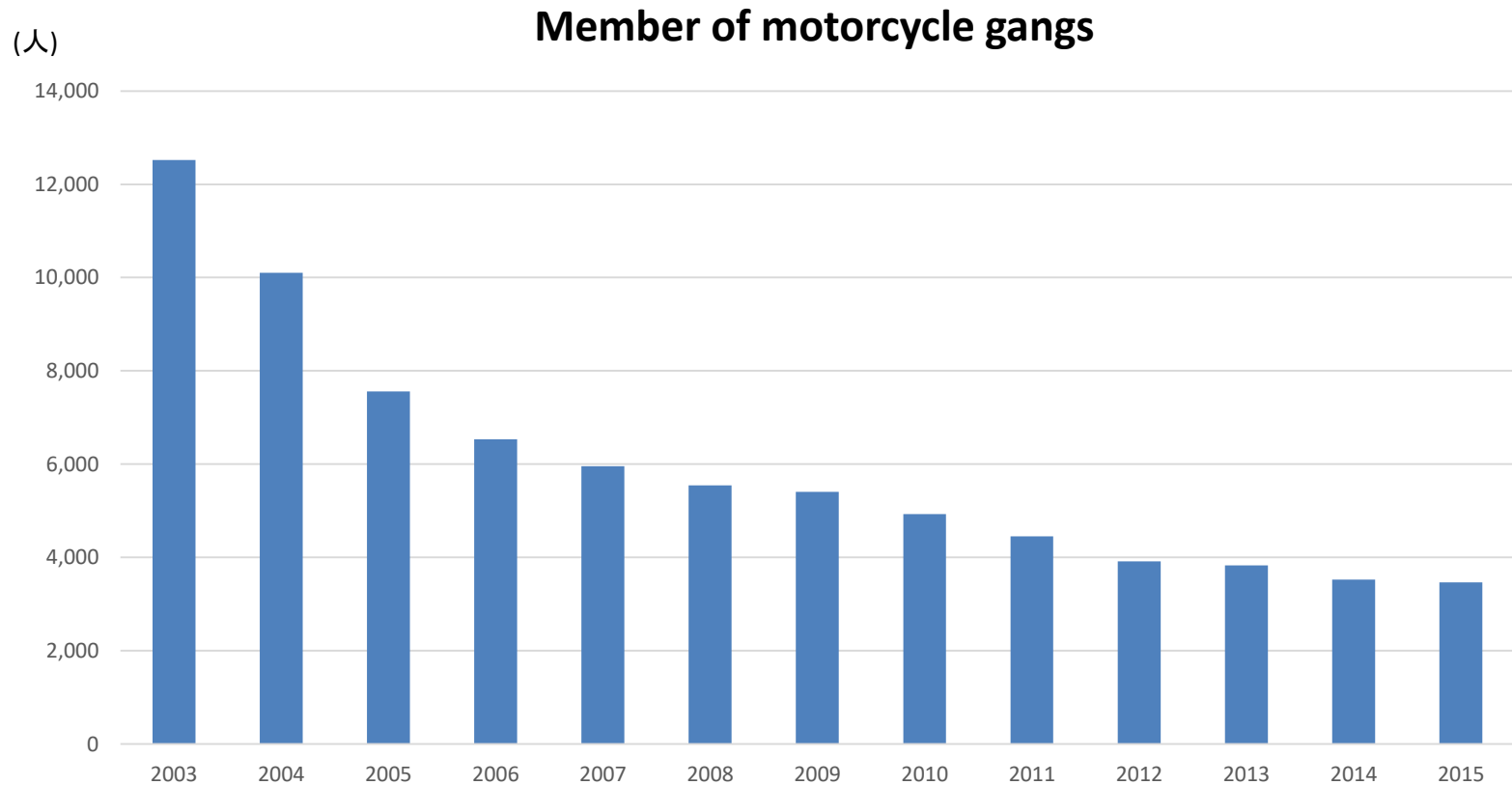
Smartphone changes life among children and youth.

- Dr. Jean Twenge, a famous psychologist known for her books iGen (2017), wrote in The Atlantic SEPTEMBER 2017 ISSUE
- “More comfortable in their bedrooms than in a car or at a party, today’s teens are physically safer than teens have ever been. They’re markedly less likely to get into a car accident and, having less of a taste for alcohol than their predecessors, are less susceptible to drinking’s attendant ills.”

Alternative to delinquency

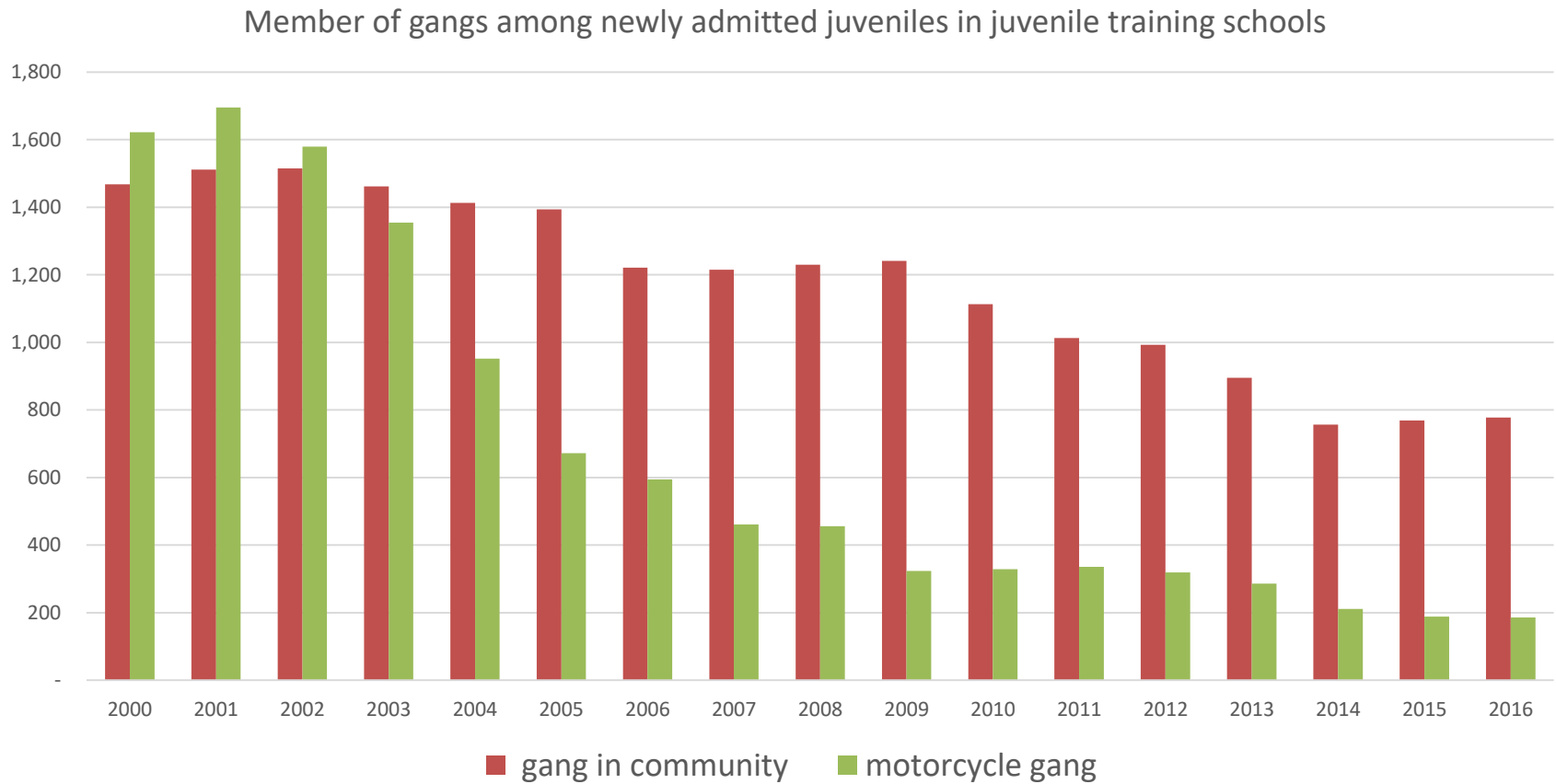
- Smartphone provides young people with more attractive alternative activities to delinquency.

Juvenile members of motorcycle gangs



Source: White Paper on Crime

Member of gangs (delinquent groups) among newly admitted juveniles in juvenile training schools

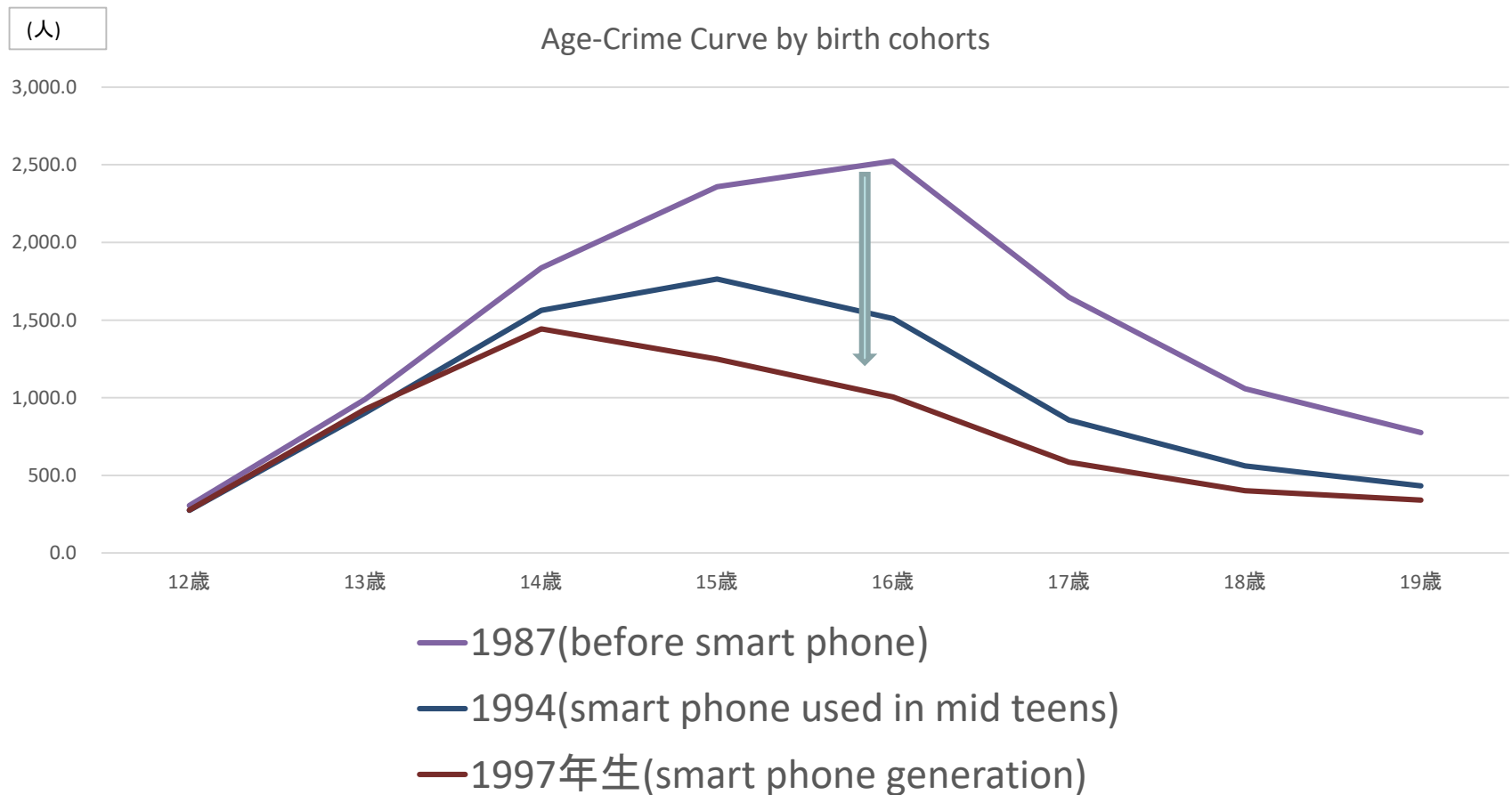


Source: White Paper on Crime

Smartphone have made
delinquent juveniles (gangs)
broken apart and they lost place
to learn delinquent (criminal)
behaviors.

The relationship between introduction of smartphone and age-crime curve

Age-Crime Curve by Birth Cohorts (pre-smartphone, post smartphone)



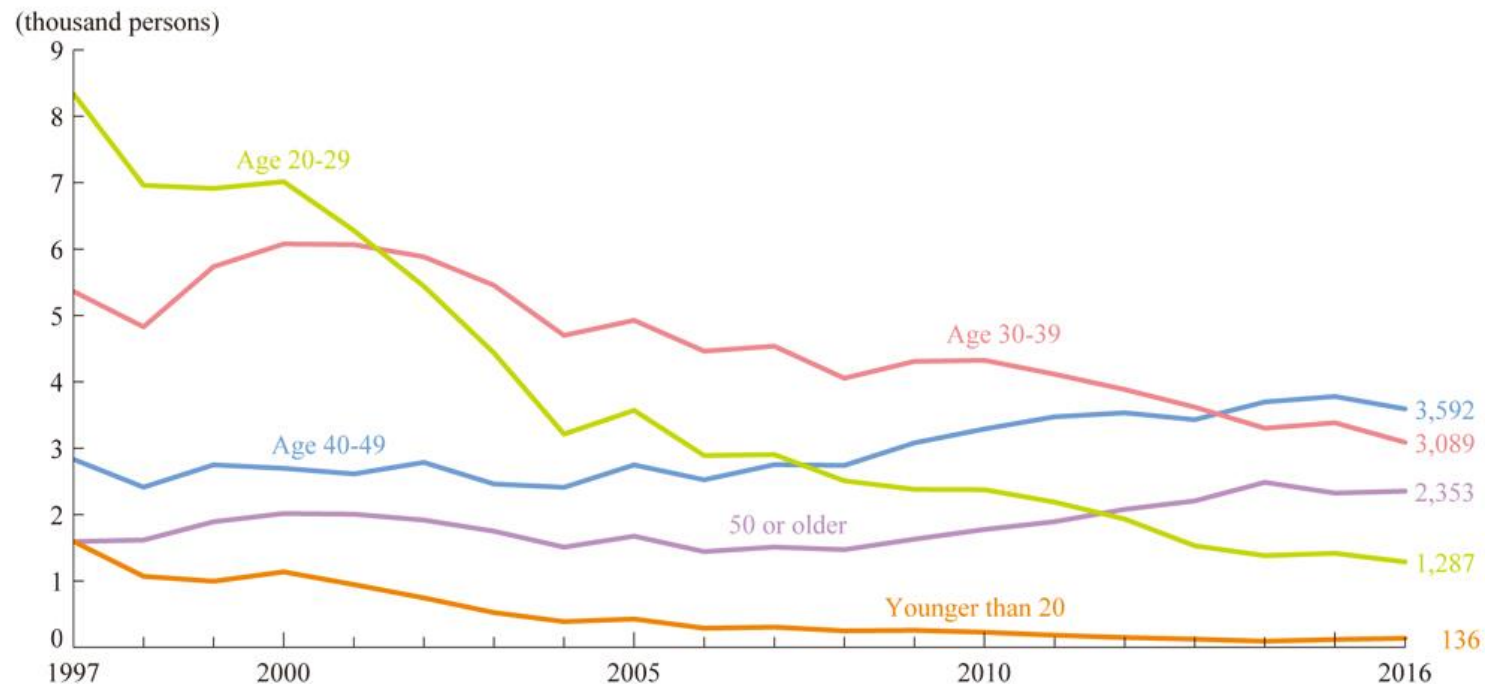
Source: White Paper on Crime

Then
Juveniles can find something
interesting in cyber space and
kill time with smartphone
without taking a risk in real
world.

Less young people have abused drugs

Fig. 4-2-1-2 Stimulants Control Act violations: persons cleared, by age groups

(1997-2016)



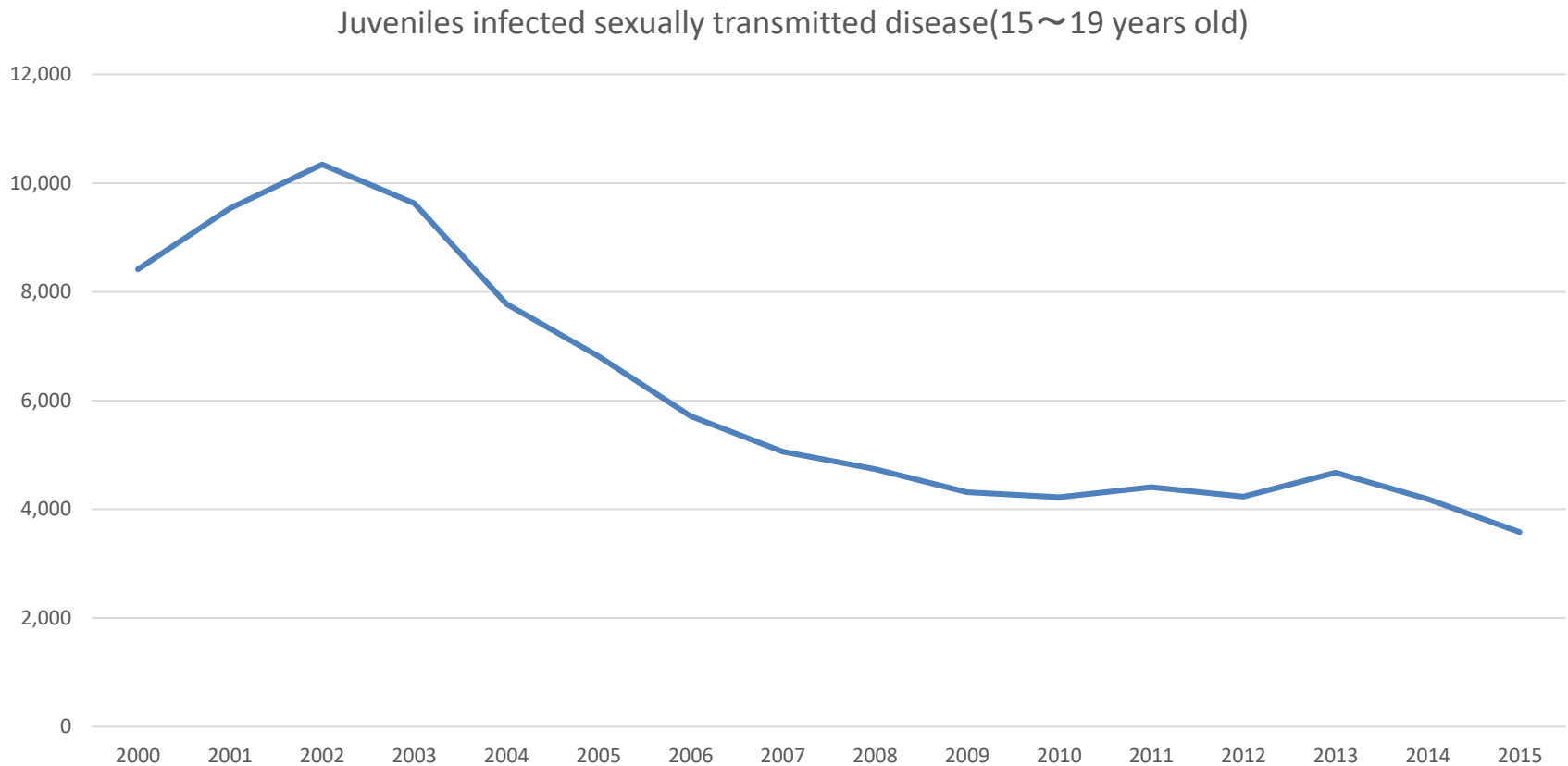
Notes: 1. The figures are based on the age at the time of the offense.

2. Include persons cleared for the violations of Act on Special Provisions for Narcotics concerning stimulants. Do not include persons cleared by officials of law enforcement agencies other than the police.

Source: The Criminal Investigation Bureau, National Police Agency

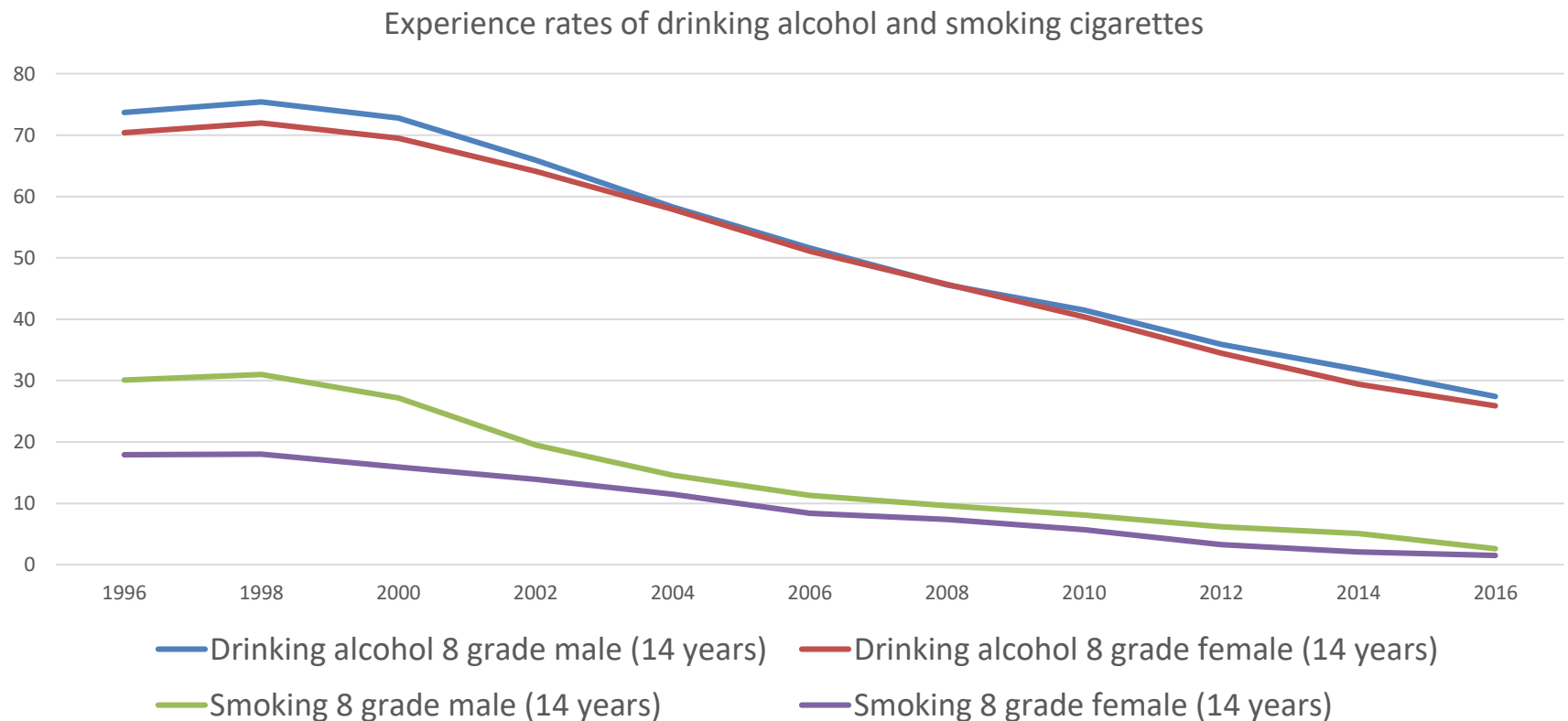
Source: White Paper on Crime

Less sexual activity among young people. Juveniles infected sexually transmitted disease (15~19 years old)



Source: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

Experience rates of drinking alcohol and smoking cigarettes among 8 grade students (14 years old)

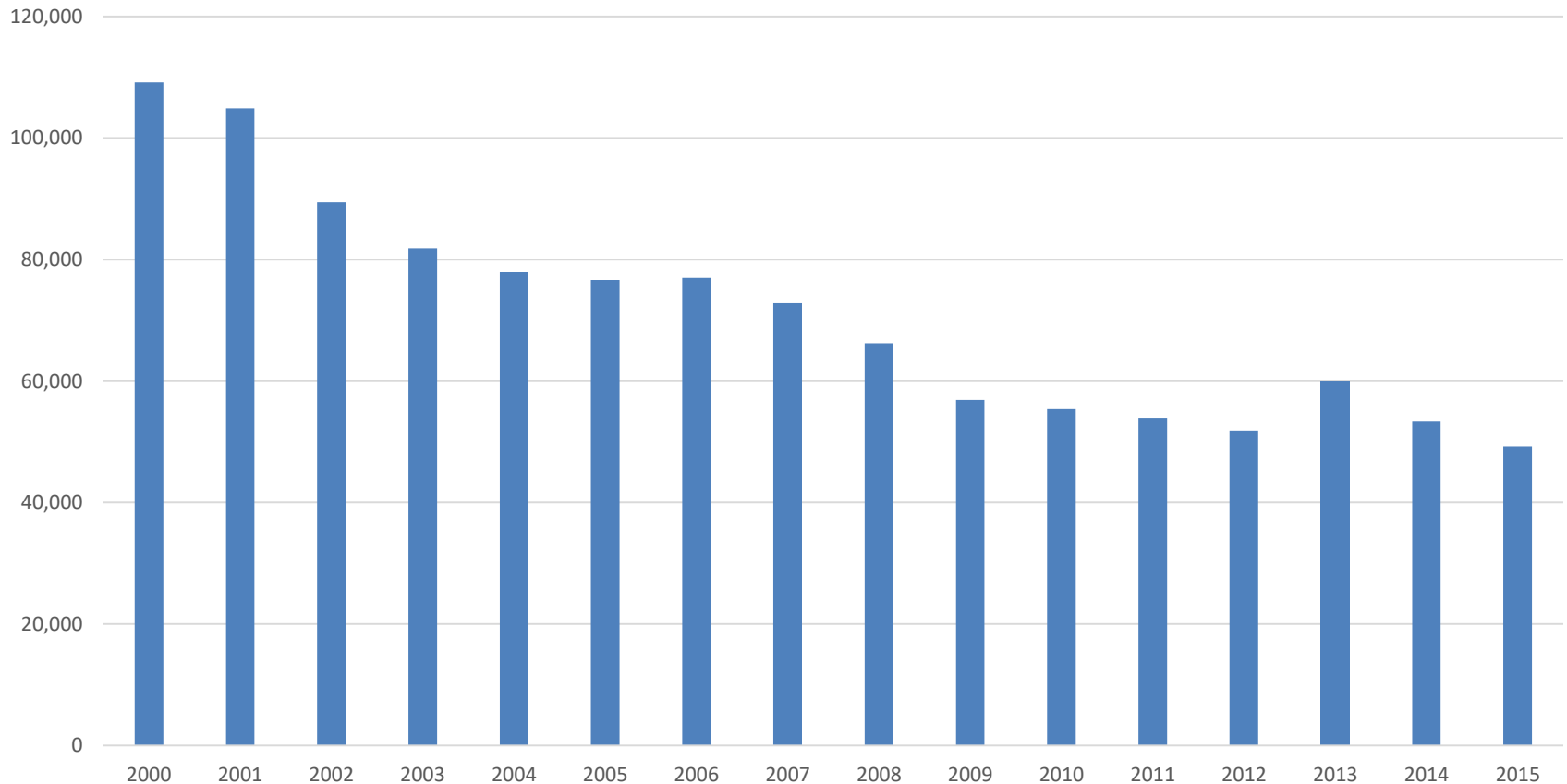


Source: https://www.ncnp.go.jp/nimh/yakubutsu/report/pdf/J_NJHS_2016.pdf

High school dropouts decreased (Dropout rate is about 1% in 2015)

by White Paper on Children and Young People

High school dropouts



Source: White Paper on Children and Young People

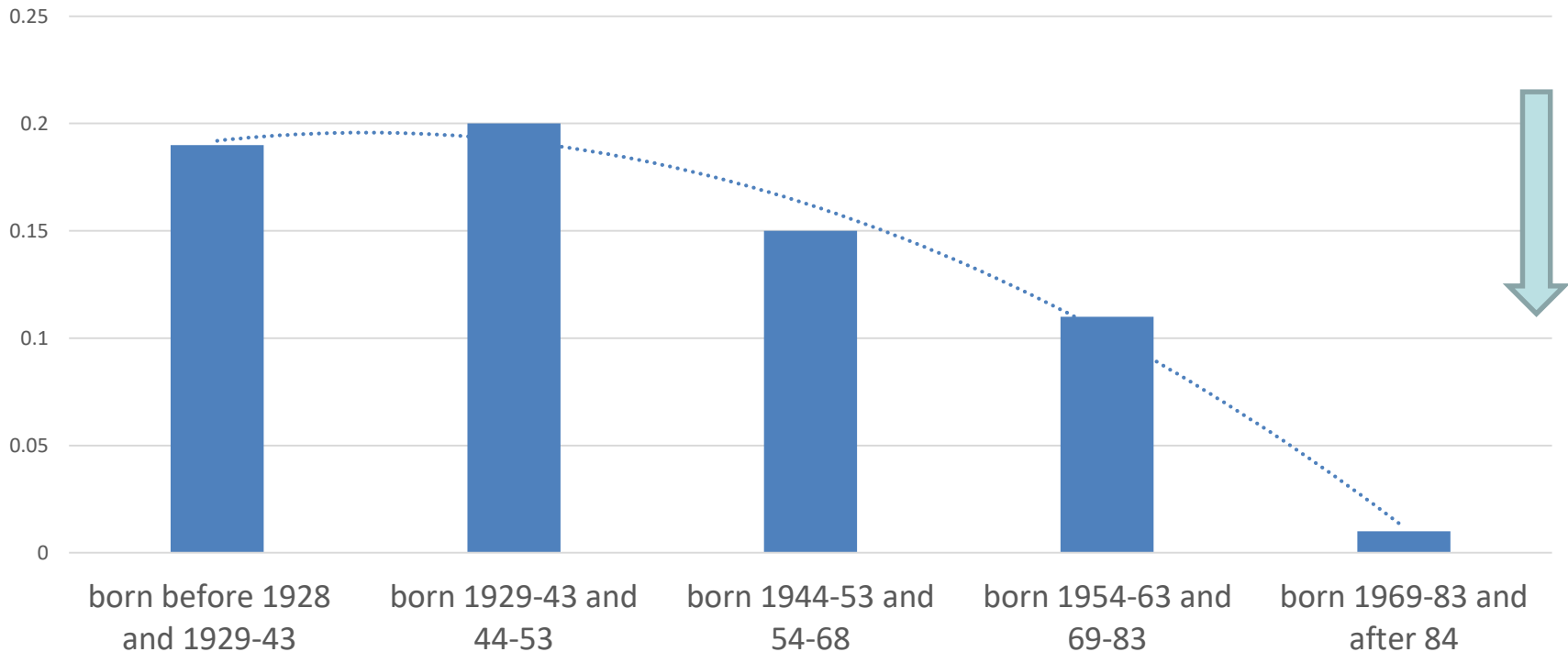
Generation Gap between parents and children on attitudes (sense of values) has been smaller and smaller.

Survey on the Structure of Japanese Attitudes Today

Gendai shakai to media, kazoku, sedai (Media, the Family, and the Generations in Society Today)

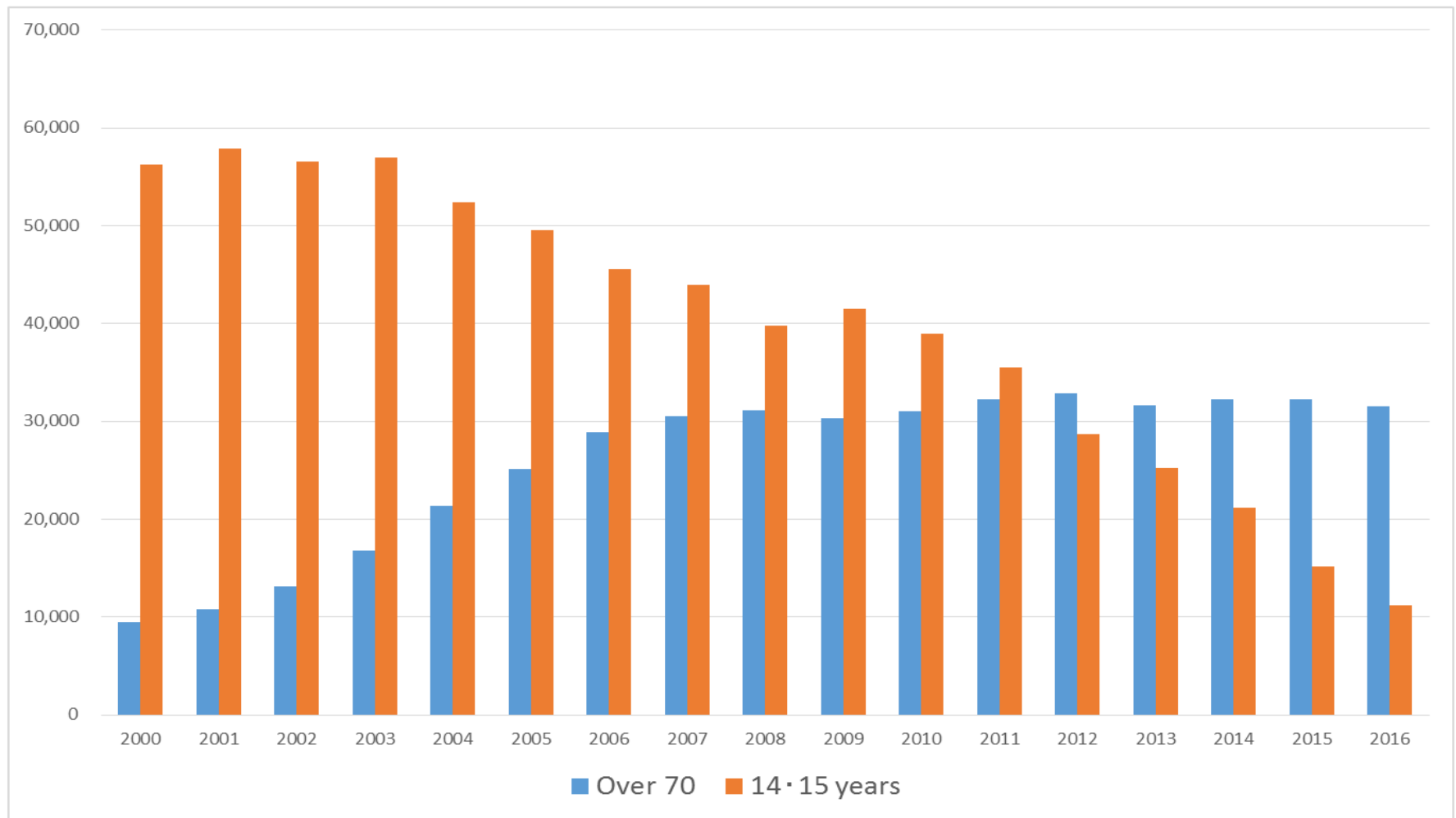
by The NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute

Disappearing intergenerational conflict



On the other hand, many elderly people have difficulties to adjust themselves in this smartphone (digital) era.

In Japan, the less we have juvenile offenders,
the more we have elderly offenders.



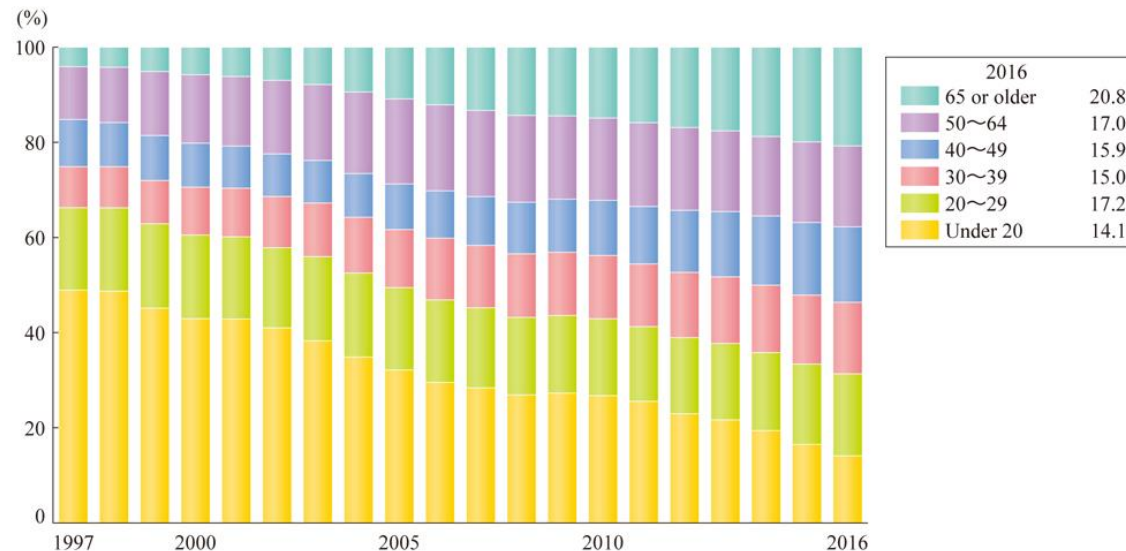
Source: White Paper on Crime

Penal Code offenses: cleared persons (percentages by age groups)

In 2018, 21.7% of offenders are elderly 65 years of age and over.

Fig. 1-1-1-2 Penal Code Offenses: cleared persons (percentages by age groups)

(1997-2016)



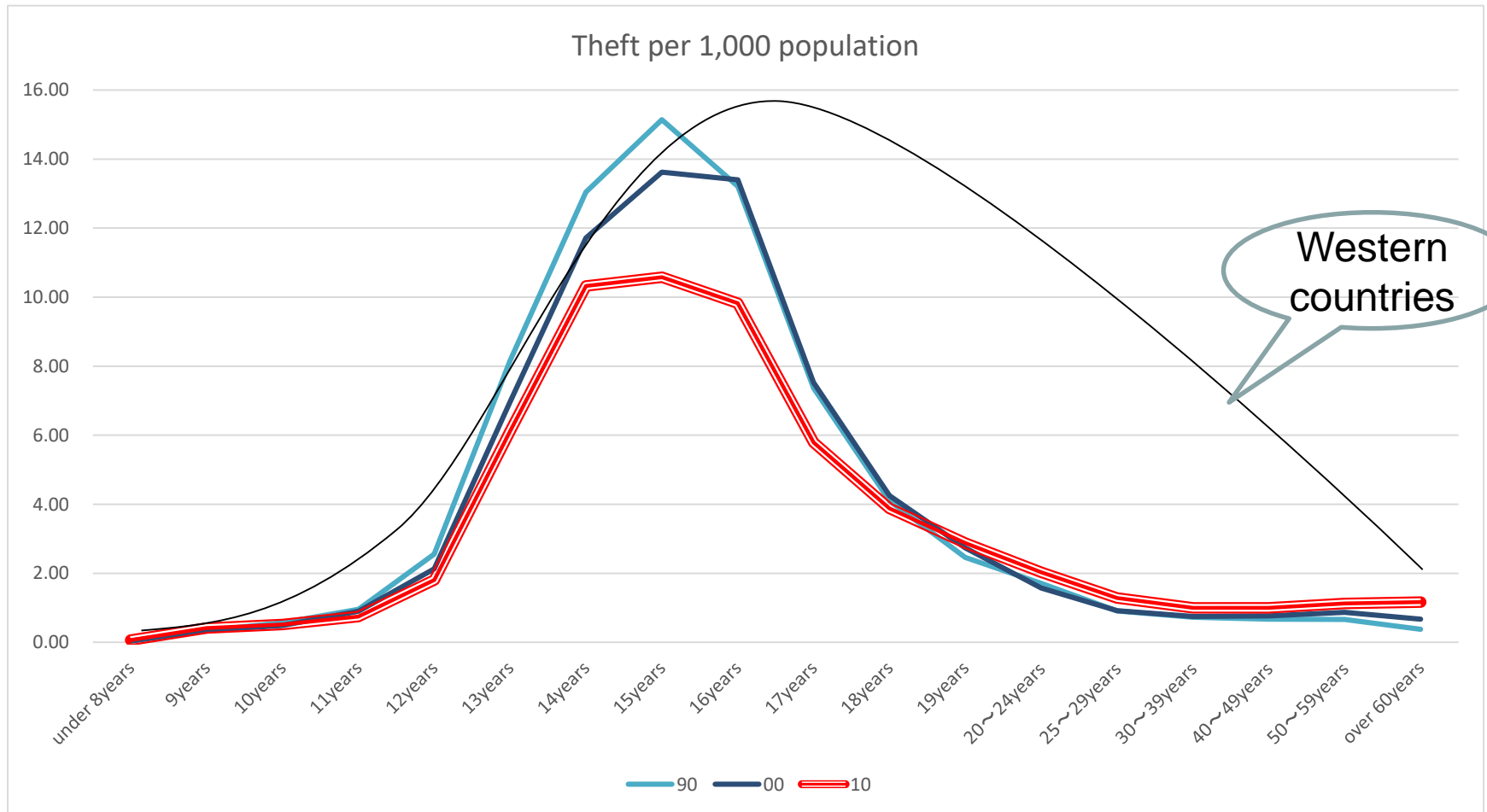
Notes: 1. The figures are based on the age at the time of offense.

2. "Penal Code Offenses" of years 2002-2014 include Dangerous driving causing death or injury.

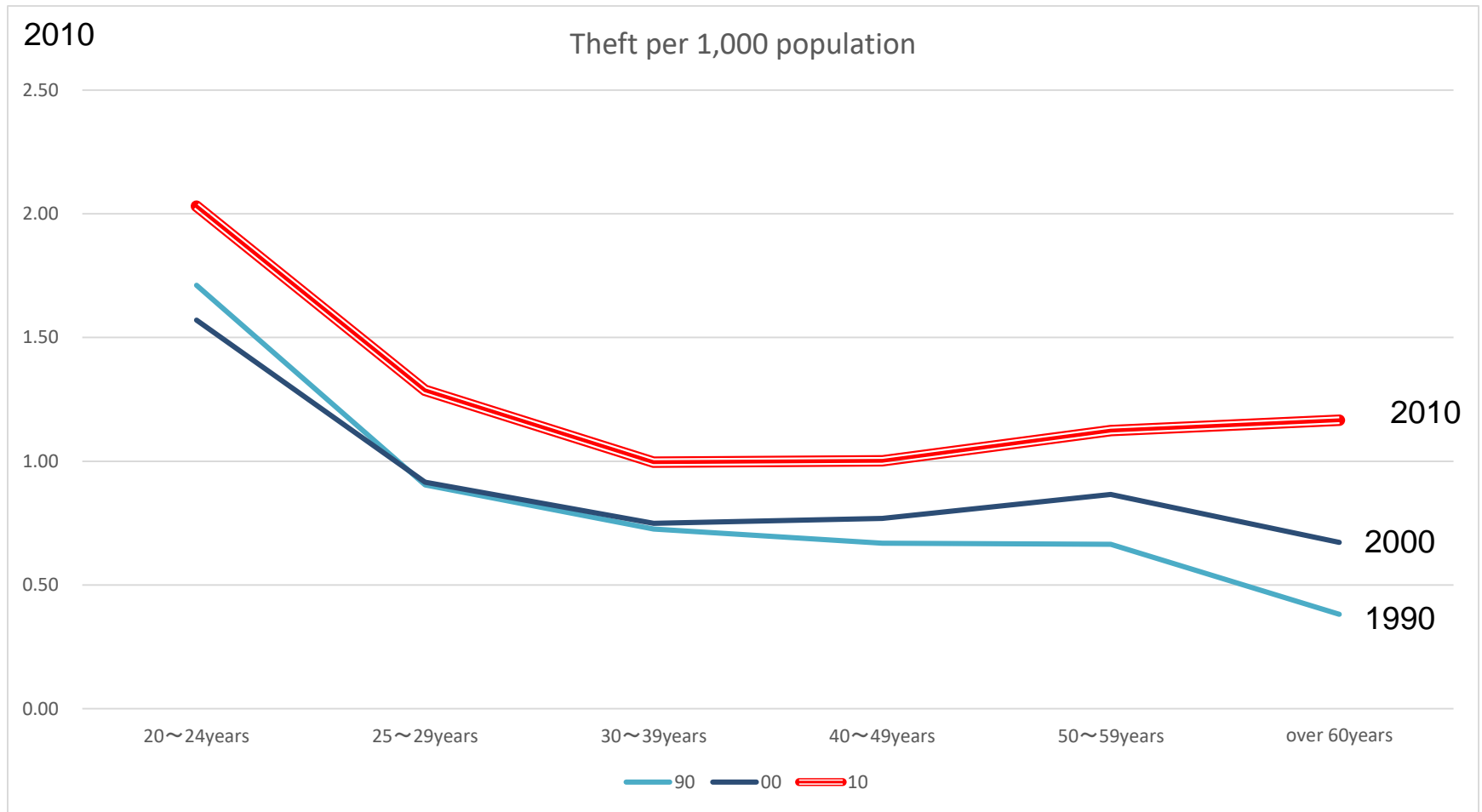
Source: Criminal Statistics of the National Police Agency

The Traffic Bureau, National Police Agency

Age-crime curve: Theft per 1,000 population by age group



Theft per 1,000 population (of each age group) by age group among adults



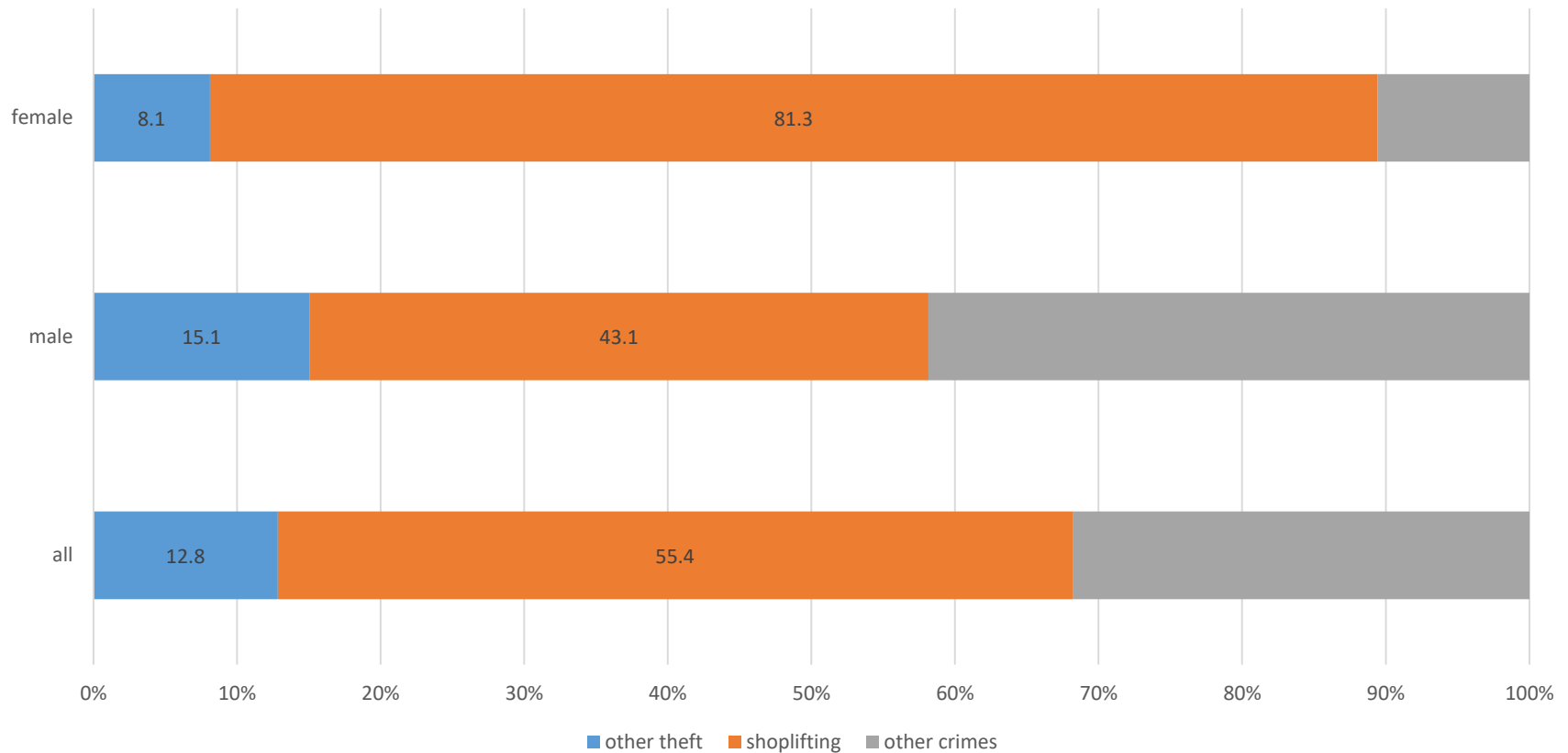
There were the choices for the elderly who lost job and family:

- Welfare assistance (no pension)
- Become homeless
- Commit suicide
- Commit crime and go to prison
- In Japan, while less than one person are killed a day, 60-70 people kill themselves a day.

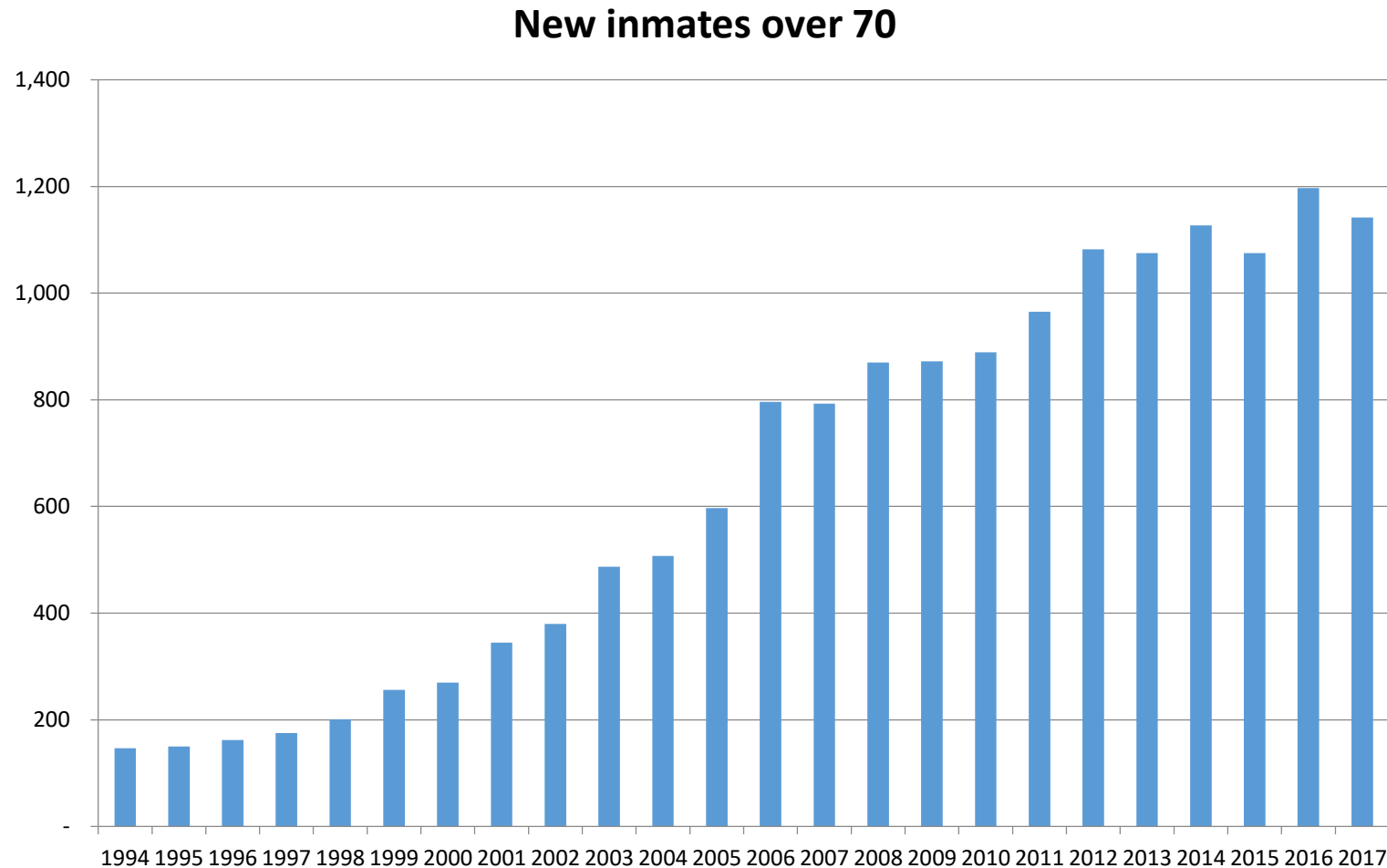
Many of elderly offenders are
onset of crime when they
become above 60.

Type of crime by elderly offenders above 65

Type of crime by elderly offenders above 65



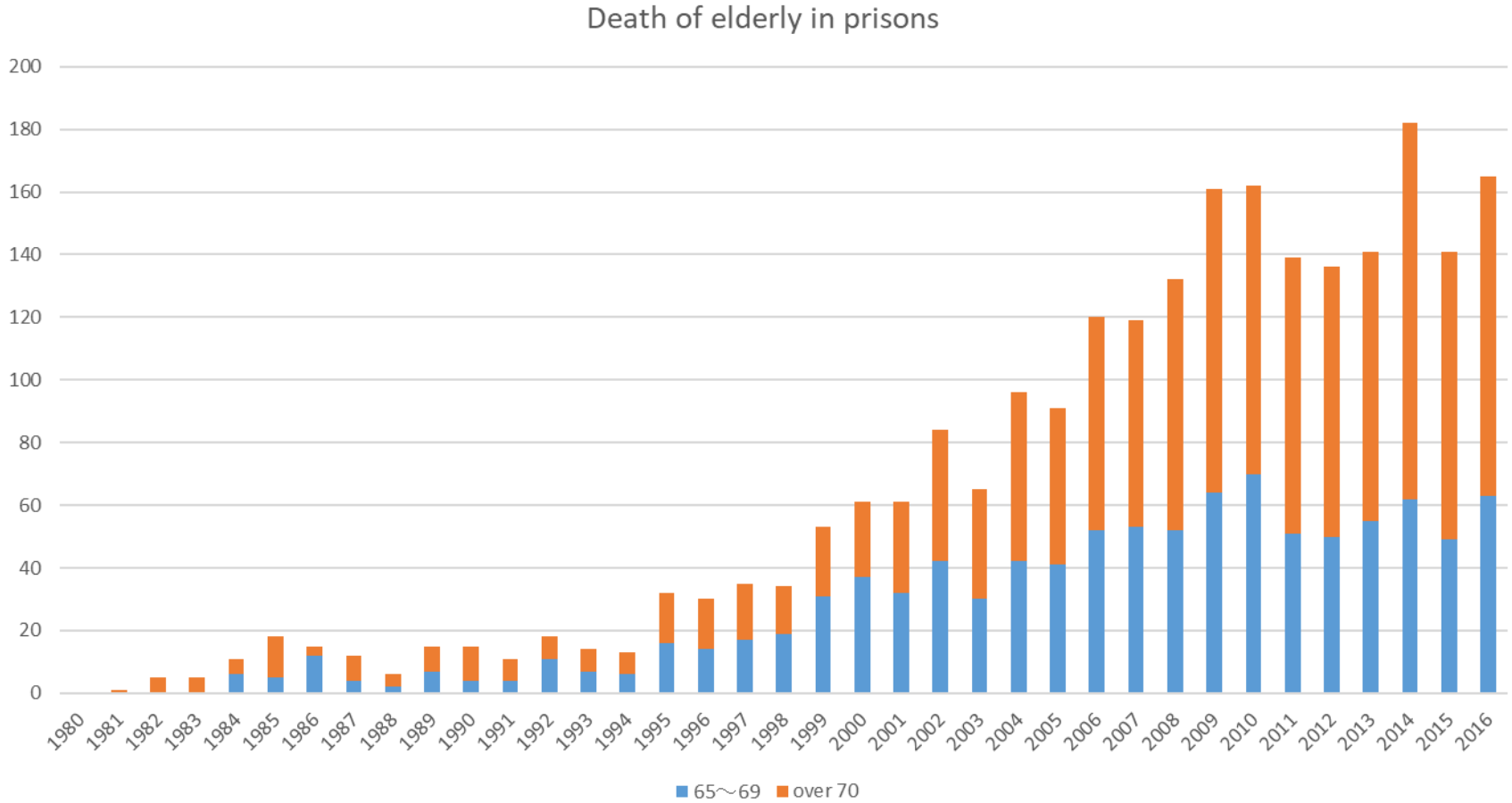
More elderly people who continued to commit very minor offences such as shoplifting have been put into prisons.



(Alzheimer) Dementia seen in 14% of elderly inmates in Japan More than 20% of above 70

- About 1,300 people, or some 14 percent, of 9,700 inmates in Japan aged 60 or older showed signs of dementia as of the end of 2014, according to a Justice Ministry study.
- In the tests, 59 inmates, or about 14 percent, showed signs of dementia. Among those aged 65 or older, the proportion was higher at 17 percent. The proportions were, however, similar to figures for Japanese society as a whole, a ministry official said. In a bid to slow the progress of dementia among elderly inmates, the ministry plans to provide more health care instructions to them. It will also provide dementia lectures for prison officials.

More elderly have died in prisons



Smartphone changes social life differently between juveniles and elderly people

- Smartphone makes juveniles connect with more people in cyberspace, and makes their social life easier.
- Smartphone makes elderly, who cannot catch up with the technology (without skill of SNS), connect with less people and makes their social life difficult and makes them marginalized and isolated socially.

- Almost all juvenile delinquents released from juvenile training schools have smartphone,
- But almost no elderly inmate released from prisons has smartphone.

“It’s me” swindle (Fraud) is increasing

- “The swindlers proceed like this: usually targeting an elderly person, calling and introducing themselves as “It’s me”, tricking the victim into believing it is a close relative, like a son. Victims, who suffer from dementia or Alzheimer are the easiest target. They are then told, that the close relative is in financial trouble and are asked to help as soon as possible with an imminent money bank transfer. Good-hearted many victims want to help out and often pay even on the same day. Needless to say, that those ‘fake’ sons were never in trouble.”

Recently in Japan, the elderly are encouraged to avoid contact with unknown people (strangers) and to be cautious on telephone call to avoid “It’s me” swindle.

In addition, the police now encourage the elderly to return their driver’s license.

It makes the elderly isolated in community.

In addition

While the less juvenile delinquents are visible in the street, the more juveniles who have problems are in Hikikomori (social recluse) and invisible in the society.

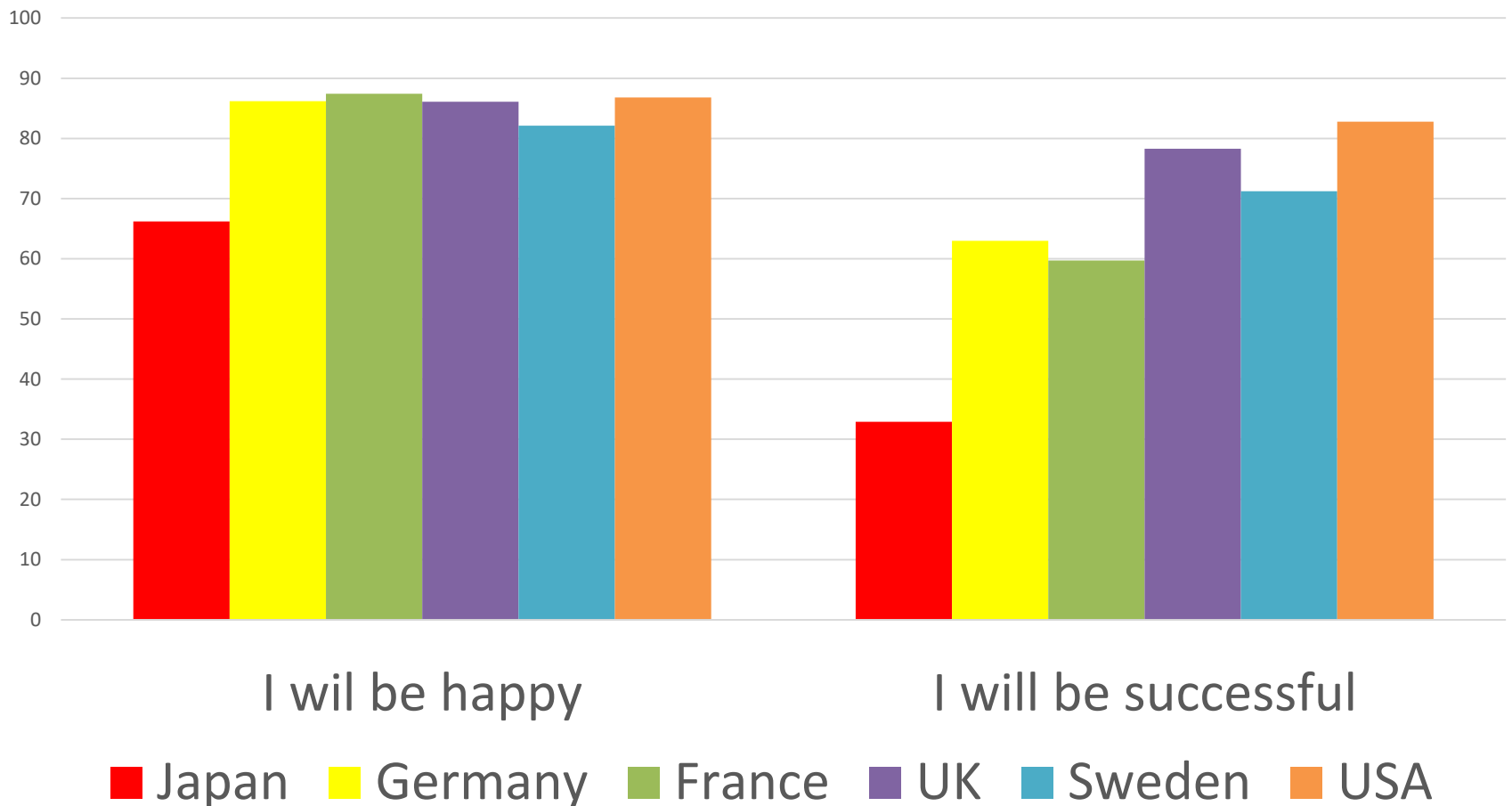
Some of juveniles who have social (inter-personal relationship) problems in their life, have been just hidden and invisible as “Withdrawn to Hikikomori”

- According to the Cabinet Office survey in 2010, we have about 700,000 (estimated) Hikikomori youth in Japan.

Robert Merton's Theory might explain the low level of juvenile delinquency in Japan:

- The theory states that society puts pressure on individuals to achieve socially accepted goals (such as the American dream), though they lack the means. This leads to strain which may lead the individuals to commit crimes.
- That is, very low level of dream (expectation) by accepting the reality leads to less strain.

Survey on hope for future among youth by the Cabinet Office of Japan in 2013: Young people in Japan do not anticipate happier life in the future.



Have Smartphones Saved or Destroyed a Generation?

More comfortable online than out partying, post-Millennials are safer, physically, than adolescents have ever been. But they're on the brink of a mental-health crisis.

By Jean Twenge

The Atlantic SEPTEMBER 2017 ISSUE

ISRD

- In order to know what is going on among juveniles, we have joined in the international project (International self-reported delinquency survey), then in this week we are doing the survey in OSAKA.

Thank you