



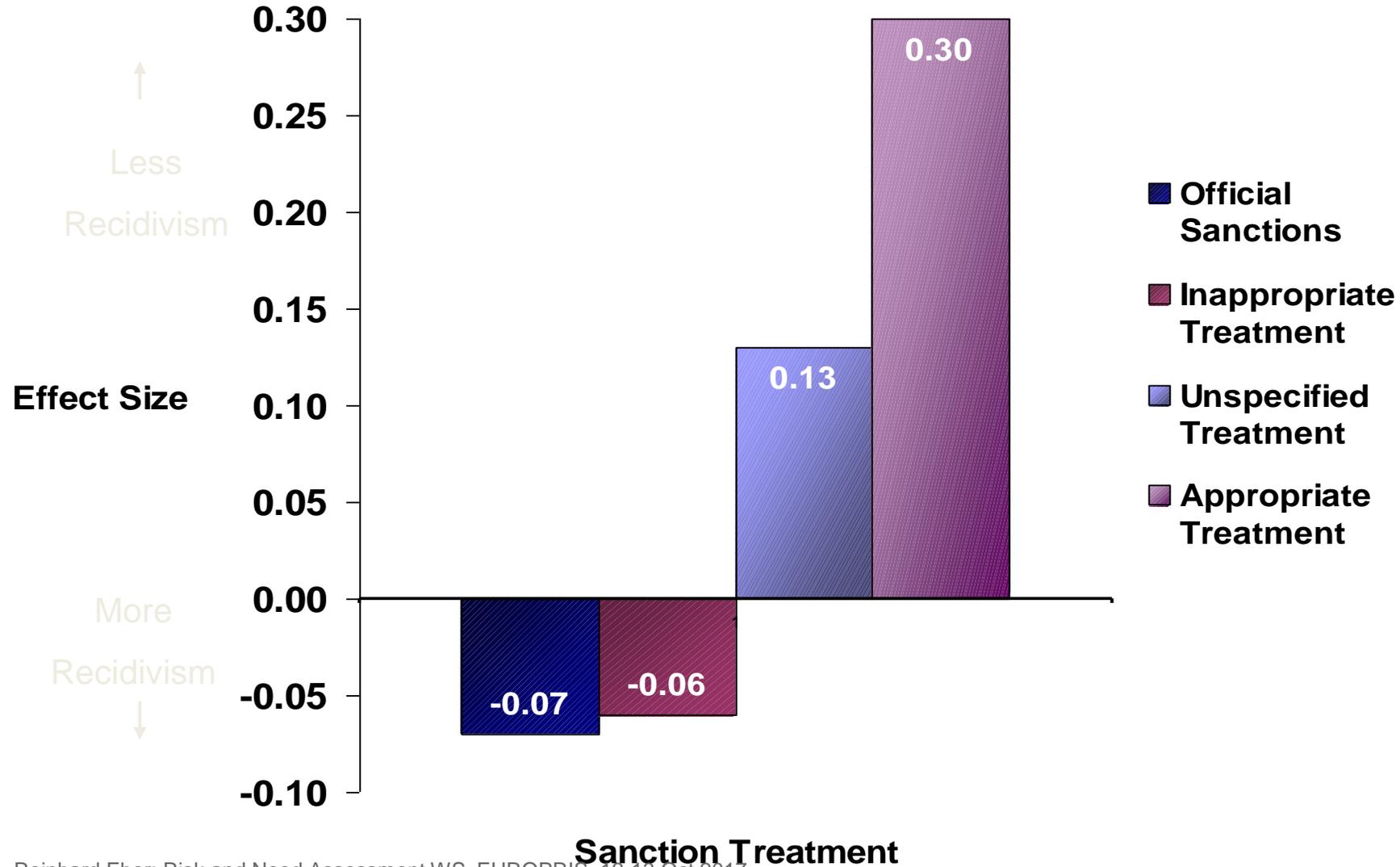
BUNDESMINISTERIUM  
FÜR JUSTIZ

# Capturing Risk, Needs and Risk Relevant Change in Sexual Offenders

Reinhard Eher  
Ministry of Justice, Austria

- Name: Reinhard Eher
- Profession: Psychiatrist, Psychotherapist
- Affiliation: Federal Evaluation Centre for Violent and Sexual Offenders (FECVSO), Ministry of Justice, Austria

# Treatment Effects (Andrews et al., 1990)



# THE PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE CORRECTIONAL TREATMENT ALSO APPLY TO SEXUAL OFFENDERS

## A Meta-Analysis

R. KARL HANSON  
GUY BOURGON  
LESLIE HELMUS  
SHANNON HODGSON  
*Public Safety Canada*



The effectiveness of treatment for sexual offenders remains controversial, even though it is widely agreed that certain forms of human service interventions reduce the recidivism rates of general offenders. The current review examined whether the principles associated with effective treatments for general offenders (risk-need-responsivity; RNR) also apply to sexual offender treatment. Based on a meta-analysis of 23 recidivism outcome studies meeting basic criteria for study quality, the unweighted sexual and general recidivism rates for the treated sexual offenders were lower than the rates observed for the comparison groups (10.9%,  $n = 3,121$  vs. 19.2%,  $n = 3,625$  for sexual recidivism; 31.8%,  $n = 1,979$  vs. 48.3%,  $n = 2,822$  for any recidivism). Programs that adhered to the RNR principles showed the largest reductions in sexual and general recidivism. Given the consistency of the current findings with the general offender rehabilitation literature, the authors believe that the RNR principles should be a major consideration in the design and implementation of treatment programs for sexual offenders.

# RISK

## Measuring Risk

- Static-99 /  
Static-99 R
- Static-2002 /  
Static-2002R
- Karl R. Hanson
- born 1957
- Senior research  
scientist with Public  
Safety Canada
- Adjunct research  
professor at  
Carleton University,  
Ottawa, Canada



## Proposing five relevant risk categories

- very low risk
- low risk
- average risk
- above average risk
- well above average risk



# Communicating the Results of Criterion Referenced Prediction Measures: Risk Categories for the Static-99R and Static-2002R Sexual Offender Risk Assessment Tools

R. Karl Hanson  
Public Safety Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Kelly M. Babchishin  
University of Ottawa

L. Maaïke Helmus  
Wandering Vagabond

David Thornton  
Sand Ridge Secure Treatment Centre, Madison, Wisconsin

Amy Phenix  
Morro Bay, California

## **Fist step → the middle category → average risk**

- **At the median (at least should include it) of the distribution of the total risk score**
- **Should also reflect the middle category concerning reoffense rates → base rate of the given population**

## Second step → Very low risk

- Usually the **risk is no different than that of offenders with no recorded history of a sexual offense** (Hanson, 2017) → 1-2% within 5y
- Generally procosial individuals

## Third step → low risk

- A group with **meaningfully lower risk than the middle group** but **higher than very low**
- Meaningfully lower → about half the risk of the middle category

## Fourth step → above average risk

- A group with **meaningfully higher risk than the middle group** but **not as high than the highest**
- **Meaningfully higher → about twice the relative risk of the middle category**

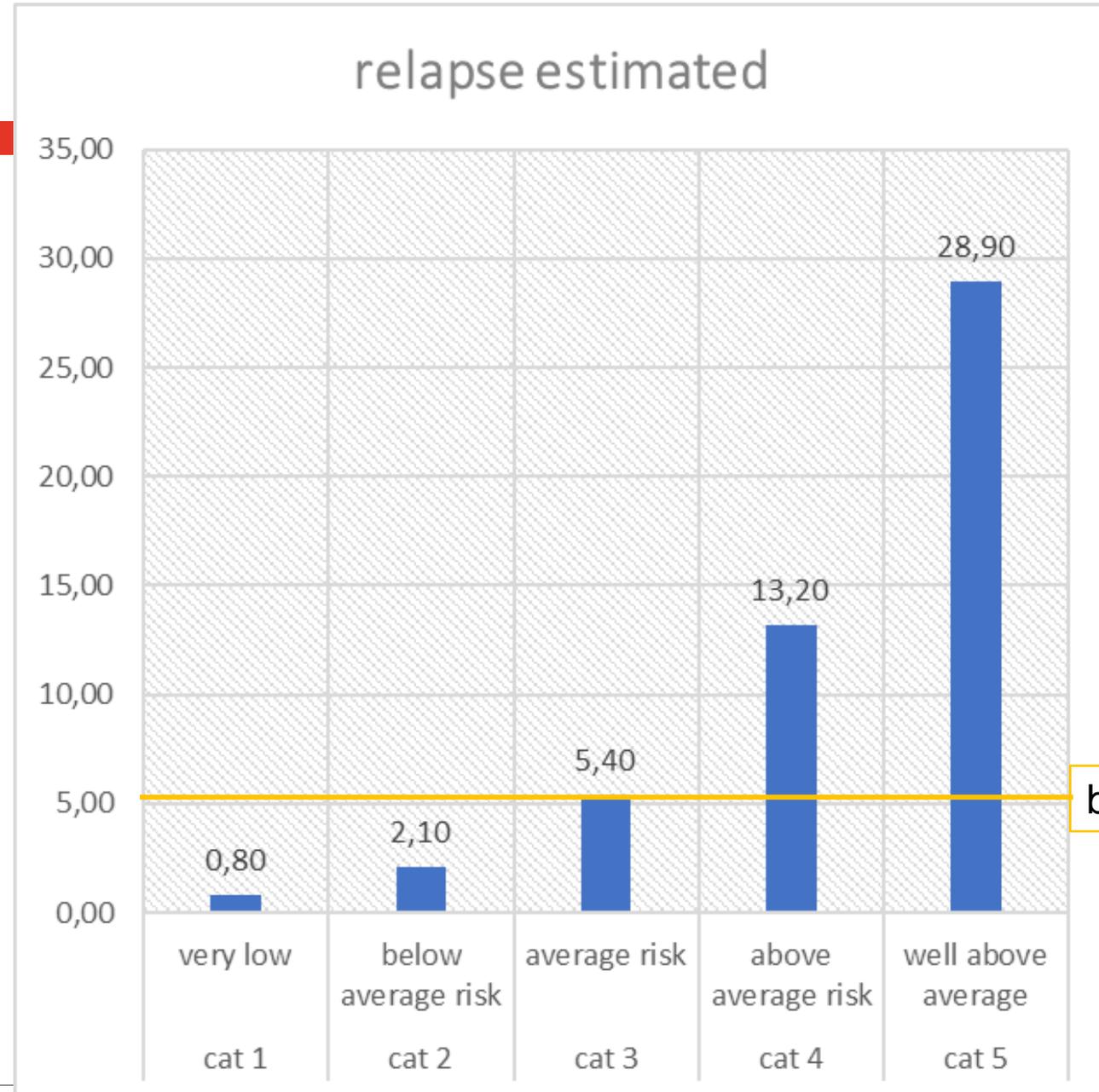
## Fifth step → well above average risk

- Those offenders with **the highest risk**
- about **twice the relative risk of category IV**
- only a small portion of the total population (about 5%)

Sex offenders in  
Austria  
Representative sample

N = 2173

N = 1679 (5y follow-up)



baserate

## German version of the Static-99 – creating five risk categories

<i>Category</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>number</i>	<i>reoffense</i>	<i>relapse observed</i>	<i>relapse estimated</i>	<i>95% CI unten</i>	<i>95% CI oben</i>
cat 1	very low	174	2	1,1	0,80	0,45	1,38
cat 2	below average risk	658	16	2,4	2,10	1,43	3,00
cat 3	average risk	569	28	4,9	5,40	4,28	6,71
cat 4	above average risk	209	23	11	13,20	10,58	16,28
cat 5	well above average	69	24	34,8	28,90	21,38	37,71

5-years sexual reoffense rate  
baserate = 5,4%

## Risk categories

- Meaningful and relevant → can differentiate between relevant offender subgroups
- Valid and reliable → no overlap in 95% CIs  
*(data come from at least 15 different raters)*
- Non arbitrary!
- Linked to relevant criminogenic needs

## Static-99 vs. Static-99R vs. Static-2002

- **German version** → Static-99 superior to Static-99R  
→ Age item needs not to be revised
- Static-2002 → not significantly superior to Static-99



BUNDESMINISTERIUM  
FÜR JUSTIZ

# Criminogenic Needs

## Criminogenic Needs

- represent dynamic risk factors
- dynamic risk factors are **changeable** by definition
- but usually need treatment/supervision for being changed

**Table 2.** Psychologically Meaningful Risk Factors According to Their Strength of Evidence for Predicting Sexual Recidivism

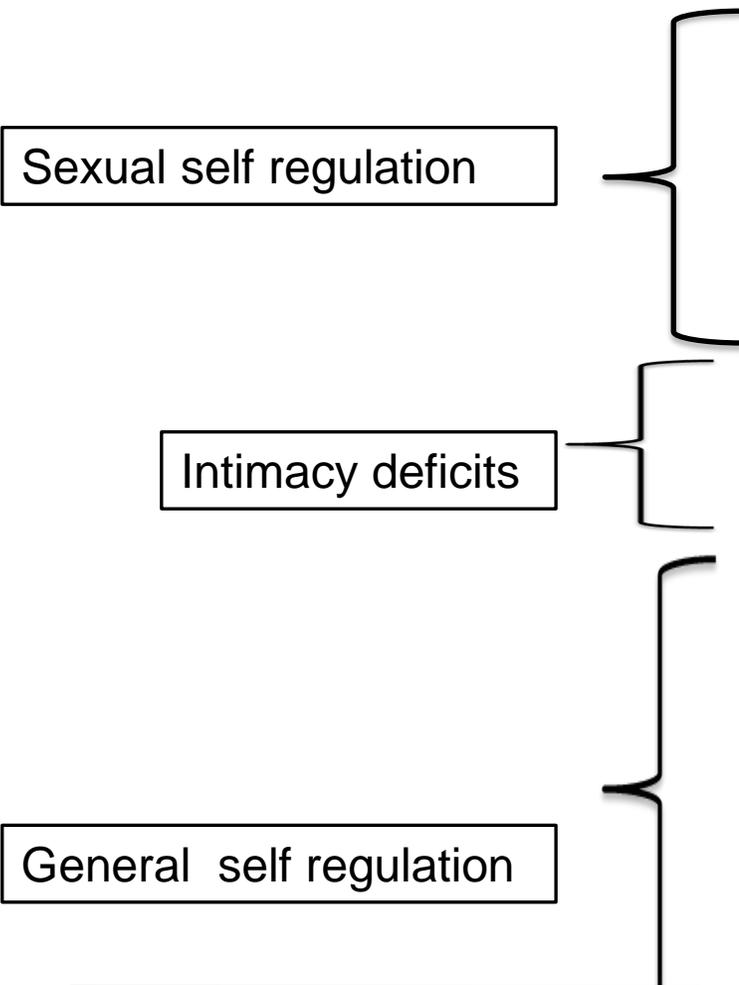
Variable	Mean <i>d</i>	95% CI	<i>Q</i>	<i>N</i> ( <i>k</i> )	Source
<b>Supported</b>					
Sexual preoccupation	0.39	0.23, 0.56	8.31	1,119 (6)	A
Any deviant sexual interest	0.31	0.21, 0.42	21.91	2,769 (16)	A
Sexual preference for children (PPG)	0.32	0.16, 0.47	11.52	1,278 (10)	B
Sexualized violence	0.18	0.04, 0.32	5.14	1,523 (8)	B, C
Multiple paraphilias	0.21	0.01, 0.41	6.71	477 (4)	B
Offense-supportive attitudes	0.22	0.05, 0.38	14.53*	1,617 (9)	B
Emotional congruence with children	0.42	0.16, 0.69	4.32	419 (3)	B
Lack of emotionally intimate relationships with adults					
Never married	0.32	0.21, 0.45	9.62	2,850 (8)	D
Conflicts in intimate relationships	0.36	0.05, 0.66	2.08	298 (4)	B
Lifestyle impulsivity					
General self-regulation problems	0.37	0.26, 0.48	22.85	2,411 (15)	A
Impulsivity, recklessness	0.25	0.06, 0.43	5.35	775 (6)	B
Employment instability	0.22	0.13, 0.30	20.88	5,357 (15)	A
Poor cognitive problem solving	0.22	0.05, 0.40	4.90	1,274 (4)	B, E
Resistance to rules and supervision					
Childhood behavior problems	0.30	0.16, 0.43	7.11	1,996 (8)	B
Noncompliance with supervision	0.62	0.45, 0.79	5.86	2,159 (3)	B
Violation of conditional release	0.50	0.34, 0.65	16.55***	2,151 (4)	B
Grievance/hostility	0.20	0.09, 0.31	13.58	3,139 (11)	B, C, E
Negative social influences	0.26	0.08, 0.44	2.66	1,736 (7)	B, E
<b>Promising</b>					
Hostility toward women	0.29	0.00, 0.58		799 (1)	E
Machiavellianism	1.40	0.48, 2.33		99 (1)	F
Callousness/lack of concern for others	0.29	0.11, 0.47	0.001	1,173 (2)	C, E
Dysfunctional coping					
Sexualized coping	0.43	0.14, 0.74		798 (1)	E
Externalizing	0.27	0.03, 0.51		380 (1)	C

**R. Mann, R.K. Hanson,  
D. Thornton, 2010**

Assessing Risk for Sexual Recidivism:  
Some Proposals on the Nature of  
Psychologically Meaningful Risk Factors

**Table 2.** Psychologically Meaningful Risk Factors According to Their Strength of Evidence for Predicting Sexual Recidivism

Variable	Mean <i>d</i>	95% CI	<i>Q</i>	<i>N</i> ( <i>k</i> )	Source
<b>Supported</b>					
Sexual preoccupation	0.39	0.23, 0.56	8.31	1,119 (6)	A
Any deviant sexual interest	0.31	0.21, 0.42	21.91	2,769 (16)	A
Sexual preference for children (PPG)	0.32	0.16, 0.47	11.52	1,278 (10)	B
Sexualized violence	0.18	0.04, 0.32	5.14	1,523 (8)	B, C
Multiple paraphilias	0.21	0.01, 0.41	6.71	477 (4)	B
Offense-supportive attitudes	0.22	0.05, 0.38	14.53*	1,617 (9)	B
Emotional congruence with children	0.42	0.16, 0.69	4.32	419 (3)	B
Lack of emotionally intimate relationships with adults					
Never married	0.32	0.21, 0.45	9.62	2,850 (8)	D
Conflicts in intimate relationships	0.36	0.05, 0.66	2.08	298 (4)	B
Lifestyle impulsivity					
General self-regulation problems	0.37	0.26, 0.48	22.85	2,411 (15)	A
Impulsivity, recklessness	0.25	0.06, 0.43	5.35	775 (6)	B
Employment instability	0.22	0.13, 0.30	20.88	5,357 (15)	A
Poor cognitive problem solving	0.22	0.05, 0.40	4.90	1,274 (4)	B, E
Resistance to rules and supervision					
Childhood behavior problems	0.30	0.16, 0.43	7.11	1,996 (8)	B
Noncompliance with supervision	0.62	0.45, 0.79	5.86	2,159 (3)	B
Violation of conditional release	0.50	0.34, 0.65	16.55**	2,151 (4)	B
Grievance/hostility	0.20	0.09, 0.31	13.58	3,139 (11)	B, C, E
Negative social influences	0.26	0.08, 0.44	2.66	1,736 (7)	B, E



## Ask yourself.....

- Besides of being empirically proven risk factors
- do they also represent criminogenic needs as a result of an individual case theory?

## Measuring Needs

- Stable 2000 / Stable 2007
- Karl R. Hanson
- born 1957
- Senior research scientist with Public Safety Canada
- Adjunct research professor at Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada



## Stable-2007

- Risk assessment instrument for **dynamic risk factors in sexual offenders**
- Has moderate to good predictive validity
- Has incremental validity to the Static-99

**1. Significant Social Influences . . . . .**  
(See Page 7 of Stable coding manual for instructions)

**2. Intimacy Deficits**

- Lovers/Intimate Partners
- Emotional Identification with Children
- Hostility toward Women
- General Social Rejection/Loneliness
- Lack of Concern for Others

**3. Sexual Self-regulation**

- Sex Drive/Pre-occupation
- Sex as Coping
- Deviant Sexual Interests

~~**4. Attitudes Supportive of Sexual Assault**~~

- ~~Sexual Entitlement~~
- ~~Rape Attitudes~~
- ~~Child Molester Attitudes~~

**5. Co-operation with Supervision . . . . .**

**6. General Self-regulation**

- Impulsive Acts
- Poor Cognitive Problem Solving Skills
- Negative Emotionality/Hostility

## Assessment of stable risk factors

- Not simple the existence of a risk factor
- But ***„does this risk factor set the offender on risk given he would be released right away?“***
  - ➔ is the result of an individual assessment process taking into account the idiosyncratic relationship between the risk factor and the individual case hypothesis

## Possible flaws

- Factors falsely identified as risk factors (as criminogenic) → because of a wrong theory of delinquency
- → e.g. alcohol consumption
- → you treat the alcohol problem → no change in risk

## Possible flaws

- Factors not identified as individual risk factors (as criminogenic) → because of a wrong theory of delinquency
- → e.g. depression
- → empirically (statistically) not a risk factor, but in die individual case a risk factor



BUNDEMINISTERIUM  
FÜR JUSTIZ

German version

# Dynamic Risk Assessment in Sexual Offenders Using STABLE-2000 and the STABLE-2007: An Investigation of Predictive and Incremental Validity

Sexual Abuse: A Journal of  
Research and Treatment  
XX(X) 1–24

© The Author(s) 2011

Reprints and permission: <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav>

DOI: 10.1177/1079063211403164

<http://sax.sagepub.com>

 SAGE

Reinhard Eher<sup>1,2</sup>, Anna Matthes<sup>3</sup>, Frank Schilling<sup>1</sup>,  
Tanja Haubner-MacLean<sup>1</sup>, and Martin Rettenberger<sup>1</sup>

Reinhard Eher, Risk and Need Assessment WS, EUPORIS, 12-23 Oct 2017

## German Version of the Stable-2007

- Moderate to good predictive validity
- AUC = 0.71 for sexual reoffense

**Table 2.** Predictive Accuracy of the SORAG, STATIC-99, STABLE-2000, STABLE-2007 (ROC Analyses)

	SORAG		STATIC-99		STABLE-2000		STABLE-2007	
	AUC	95% CI	AUC	95% CI	AUC	95% CI	AUC	95% CI
Sexual reoffense	0.72***	0.64-0.80	0.75***	0.66-0.84	0.62*	0.51-0.73	0.71***	0.61-0.81
Violent reoffense	0.75***	0.68-0.82	0.73***	0.66-0.80	0.54	0.45-0.62	0.67***	0.59-0.74
Violent reoffense— Prison sentence	0.76***	0.69-0.83	0.73***	0.65-0.80	0.56	0.47-0.66	0.69***	0.61-0.78
Any reoffense	0.77*	0.71-0.83	0.71*	0.65-0.78	0.55*	0.48-0.62	0.68*	0.62-0.75
Any reoffense— Prison sentence	0.79***	0.73-0.85	0.74***	0.67-0.80	0.59*	0.51-0.67	0.71***	0.64-0.78

Note: AUC = area under the curve, 95% CI = 95% confidence interval.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

## Predictive Validity of Needs Assessment

- Less predictive as static risk factors
- Usually acceptable after proper training
- Informs about relevant treatment targets

## If risk category IV or V

- Include comprehensive clinical assessment!



# How to measure risk relevant change?

## Mark E. Olver

Associate Professor  
Director of Clinical  
Psychology  
at the University of  
Saskatchewan





BUNDESMINISTERIUM  
FÜR JUSTIZ

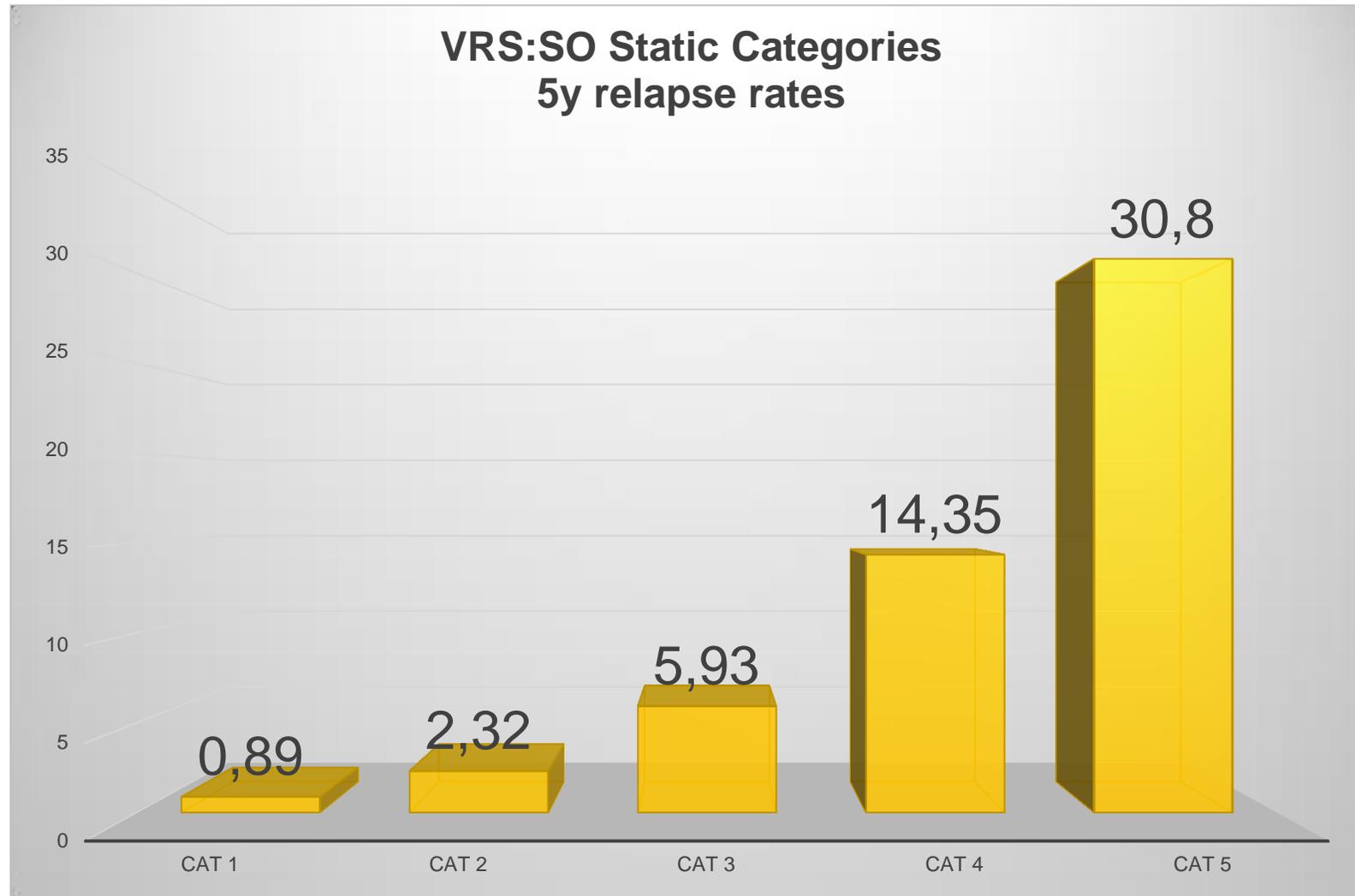
# Violence Risk Scale: Sexual Offender Version

VRS:SO

# Violence Risk Scale - SO

- VRS:SO risk assessment tool with 7 static & 17 dynamic variables
- Very similar domains to the Static-99 and Stable-2007
- Has a “Change Scale”
- Has good predictive validity (AUC from 0.75-0.80)

Eher, 2017:  
Five risk  
categories based  
upon VRS:SO  
static risk factors





## Predicting Reoffense in Pedophilic Child Molesters by Clinical Diagnoses and Risk Assessment

Reinhard Eher

Federal Evaluation Center for Violent and Sexual Offenders,  
Vienna, Austria, and University of Ulm

Mark E. Olver

University of Saskatchewan

Isabelle Heurix and Frank Schilling

Federal Evaluation Center for Violent and Sexual Offenders,  
Vienna, Austria

Martin Rettenberger

Johannes Gutenberg-University Mainz and Centre for  
Criminology, Wiesbaden, Germany

**Eher et al., 2015**

**VRS:SO  
validation of the  
German version**

**AUC: 0,76**

*A Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)*–based diagnosis of pedophilia has so far failed to predict sexual reoffense in convicted child molesters, probably because of its broad and unspecific conceptualization. In this study, therefore, we investigated the prognostic value of the subtype exclusive pedophilia and a series of customary risk assessment instruments (SSPI, Static-99, Stable-2007, VRS:SO) and the PCL-R in a sample of prison released pedophilic sexual offenders. First, we examined the convergent validity of risk assessment instruments ( $N = 261$ ). Then, we calculated the predictive accuracy of the measures and diagnosis for sexual recidivism by ROC analyses and subsequent Cox regression ( $N = 189$ ). Also, predictive values with more clinical immediacy were calculated (sensitivity, specificity, PPV and NPV). The VRS:SO, the SSPI, and the Static-99 significantly predicted sexual recidivism, as did a diagnosis of exclusive pedophilia. Also, the VRS:SO predicted sexual reoffense significantly better than the Stable-2007, the Static-99/Stable-2007 combined score, and the PCL-R. When used combined, only the VRS:SO and a diagnosis of exclusive pedophilia added incremental validity to each other. Our findings support that the clinical diagnosis of an exclusive pedophilia based on DSM criteria and VRS:SO defined risk factors can reliably discriminate higher from lower risk offenders, even within the select subgroup of pedophilic child molesters.

*Keywords:* pedophilia, risk assessment, VRS:SO

## The Violence Risk Scale:SO

- ***Dynamic risk factors*** = idiosyncratic criminogenic needs, which are related to the individual risk according to the individual delinquency theory
- ***Change of the dynamic risk factors*** according to the  
→ Stages of Change Model → is captured by the change score

- **Pre-contemplation**: denial of problem, no insight.
- **Contemplation**: acknowledges problem but no relevant action taken
- ===== **all talk no walk** =====
- **Preparation**: acknowledges problems, **observable and relevant changes in behavior** but lapses likely quite frequent - and/or changes relatively recent.
- **Action**: **taking consistent action** to make relevant changes which have been stable over extended period of time relative to lifetime functioning.
- **Maintenance**: **maintaining changes, doing relapse prevention over significant period of time relative to lifetime functioning**



# The Validity and Reliability of the Violence Risk Scale—Sexual Offender Version: Assessing Sex Offender Risk and Evaluating Therapeutic Change

## VRS:SO construction study

Mark E. Olver  
University of Saskatchewan

Stephen C. P. Wong  
Regional Psychiatric Centre of the Correctional Service of  
Canada and the University of Saskatchewan

Terry Nicholaichuk and Audrey Gordon  
Regional Psychiatric Centre of the Correctional Service of Canada

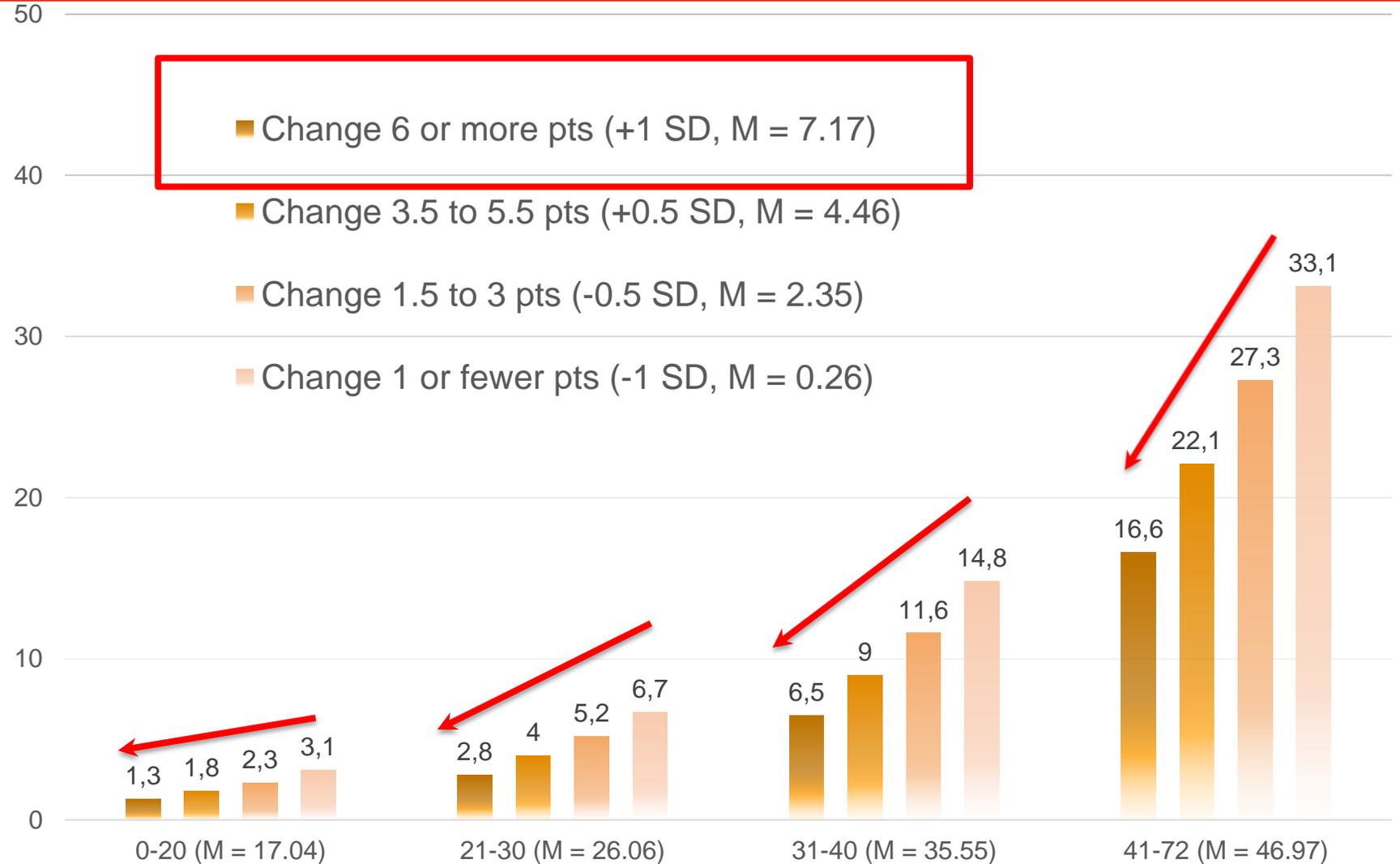
Change of 1 point in the change scale  
means 8% reduction of risk

**Decrease of risk as a function of change in all four VRS:SO risk categories**

**The higher change, the lower the risk**

Five-years relapse rates (sexual reoffense)

N = 945





## Don't hesitate to contact me

- [reinhard.eher@justiz.gv.at](mailto:reinhard.eher@justiz.gv.at)