



A photograph of a bicycle completely covered in a thick layer of snow. The bicycle is the central focus, with its frame, wheels, and handlebars almost entirely obscured by the white snow. A red rear light is visible on the back of the bicycle. In the background, there are bare, snow-laden branches and a red building with a window. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day in winter.

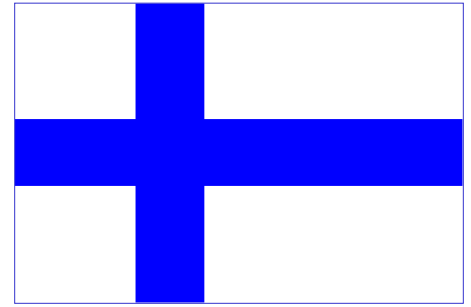
# Cross-Nordic studies in cancer epidemiology

**Eero Pukkala**

Finnish Cancer Registry – Institute for Statistical and Epidemiological Cancer Research  
University of Tampere

# Finland

- Northernmost population of the world (5.6 million)
- 0.6 million lakes
  - 0.3 lakes per family
- 1.3 saunas per family
- Best schools
- Least corrupted
- Happiest people
- Cleanest air (WHO)
- Makes most good to other nations
- *Paradise of epidemiology*



# Cross-Nordic studies in cancer epidemiology

- Examples of Nordic research types
- What should be checked and understood?
- Brain storming exercises
  
- Tomorrow: **Utilization of multigenerational data**

# Outline

- How to **perform** the analyses

# Outline

- What should be done **before starting** the analysis
  - Relevant a priori research question => study desing
  - Understand the data you are going to use
  - Are you really ustilising all relevant data sources?
  
- How to **perform** the analyses

# Outline

- What should be done **before starting** the analysis
  - Relevant a priori research question => study desing
  - Understand the data you are going to use
  - Are you really ustilising all relevant data sources?
- How to **perform** the analyses
- Correct **interpretation** of the results?

# Nordic Summer School in Cancer Epidemiology

(-30°C)

NEXT COURSE 2019-20: APPLY SOON

4 2 2006





VALDUNA • TALLINN • TARTU  
A. Le Coq  
PREMIUM  
PILSENER BEER  
4.5% vol  
PILSNER BEER  
VALDUNA • TARTU

## Eero Pukkala:

# Top cited research 12 Sep 2018

1. Environmental and Heritable Factors in the Causation of Cancer — Analyses of Cohorts of Twins from Sweden, Denmark, and Finland. Aug 2000 · New England Journal of Medicine. Paul Lichtenstein & al (2883 citations)
  3. Human Papillomavirus Infection as a Risk Factor for Squamous-Cell Carcinoma of the Head and Neck. May 2001 · New England Journal of Medicine. Jon Mork & al (723 citations)
716. Nordic Cancer Registries – an overview of their procedures and data comparability. Feb 2018 · Acta Oncologica. Eero Pukkala & al (55 citations)

# Genetic susceptibility to cancer and lifestyle risk factors in the elderly

Danish Cancer Society  
November 6, 2016

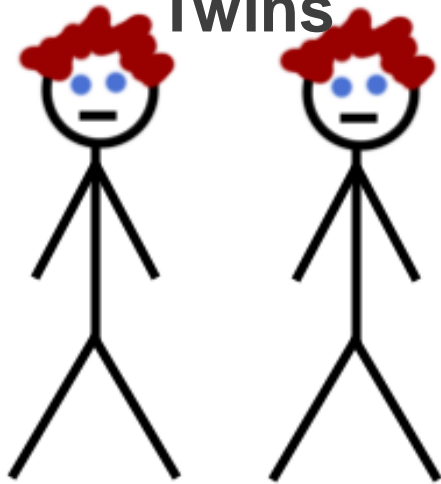
Jaakko Kaprio, MD, PhD  
Director, FIMM

# Familial aggregation of cancer

- › Many cancers are known to run in families and family history is a risk factor for such cancers
- › Family history may reflect inheritance of ‘cancer genes’ or familial aggregation of risk factors/exposures (or both).
  - For example exposure to radon at home
  - Dietary, alcohol use or smoking patterns learnt in childhood
- › Twin studies can be used to distinguish between genetic factors and environmental exposures and experiences shared by family members.
- › So far, twin studies of cancer risk have rarely examined differences in familial and genetic risk by age (mostly due to lack of power)

# Why study twins?

## Monozygotic (MZ) Twins



Share 100% of genes

### Familial aggregation

- If concordance MZ  $\gg$  DZ: Genetic effects
- If concordance MZ = DZ: Shared environment
- If aggregation in MZ and DZ twins is low: Nonshared environment

## Dizygotic (DZ) Twins



Share ~50% of  
segregating genes

## Finnish Twin Cohort



Jaakko Kaprio

Eero Pukkala

Tellervo Korhonen

Kauko Heikkilä



Axel Skytthe

Jacob Hjelmborg

Thomas Scheike

Niels Holms

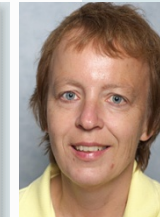
## Danish Twin Registry

## Swedish Twin Registry



Kamila Czene Mikael Hartman Juni Palmgren Nancy Pedersen

# The NorTwinCan Team



Jennifer Harris Gunn Brandt

Thomas Nilsen

## Norwegian Twin Registry

Funding from  
Ellison  
Foundation, US  
and Nordic  
Cancer Union



Lorelei Mucci

Hans-Olov Adami

Kathryn Penney

David Havelick

Peter Kraft

Harvard School of Public Health

# Estimation of twin concordance and heritability in same-sex pairs

**Table 1. Characteristics of the NorTwinCan Cohort of 203 691 Individual Twins With Follow-up for Cancer Incidence**

	Denmark	Finland	Norway	Sweden	Total
Birth cohort date range	1870-2004	1875-1957	1915-1979	1886-2000	
No. of individual twins	68 320	24 661	23 683	87 027	203 691
Individual twins, No. (%)					
Same-sex dizygotic	43 534 (64)	16 949 (69)	12 993 (55)	49 906 (57)	123 382 (61)
Monozygotic	24 786 (36)	7712 (31)	10 690 (45)	37 121 (43)	80 309 (39)
Female	33 330 (49)	12 410 (50)	12 749 (54)	45 762 (53)	104 251 (51)
Follow-up					
First date	January 1943	February 1974	January 1964	April 1961	
End date	December 2009	December 2010	December 2008	December 2009	
Median (IQR), y	41.6 (26.8-41.8)	34.7 (29.4-34.7)	27.9 (16.1-28.5)	25 (5.0-37.0)	32.2 (15.5-37.0)
Age at start, median (IQR), y	12.3 (0-25.7)	32.1 (24.4-45.8)	29.8 (23.4-41.2)	32.1 (21.4-42.4)	26.4 (14.9-38.9)
No. of incident cancers	8904	4049	2805	11 398	27 156

Abbreviations: IQR, interquartile range; NorTwinCan, Nordic Twin Study of Cancer.

Mucci LA, Hjelmborg JB, Harris JR, Czene K, Havelick DJ, Scheike T, Graff RE, Holst K, Möller S, Unger RH, McIntosh C, Nuttall E, Brandt I, Penney KL, Hartman M, Kraft P, Parmigiani G, Christensen K, Koskenvuo M, Holm NV, Heikkilä K, Pukkala E, Skytthe A, Adami HO, Kaprio J. JAMA 2016

Nordic Twin Registers as a basis for  
studies on cancer causes and control

-

400,000 twins, 13 million person-years  
and 40,000 prospective cancers

Eero Pukkala

Finnish Cancer Registry

**NorTwinCan Project**



# Starting point

- **Numerous published papers based on Twin Register cohorts**
- **Standard description of data in the manuscript**
  - *”Twin Registers covered all twins during years X-Y from population in country Z”*
- **Standard questions by the reviewers:**
  - *How population representative are these subjects?*
  - *Selection?*
- **Needed: reference article that describes the cohorts and gives answers to above questions**

**ORIGINAL ARTICLE**

**Nordic biological specimen banks as basis for studies of cancer causes and control – more than 2 million sample donors, 25 million person years and 100 000 prospective cancers**

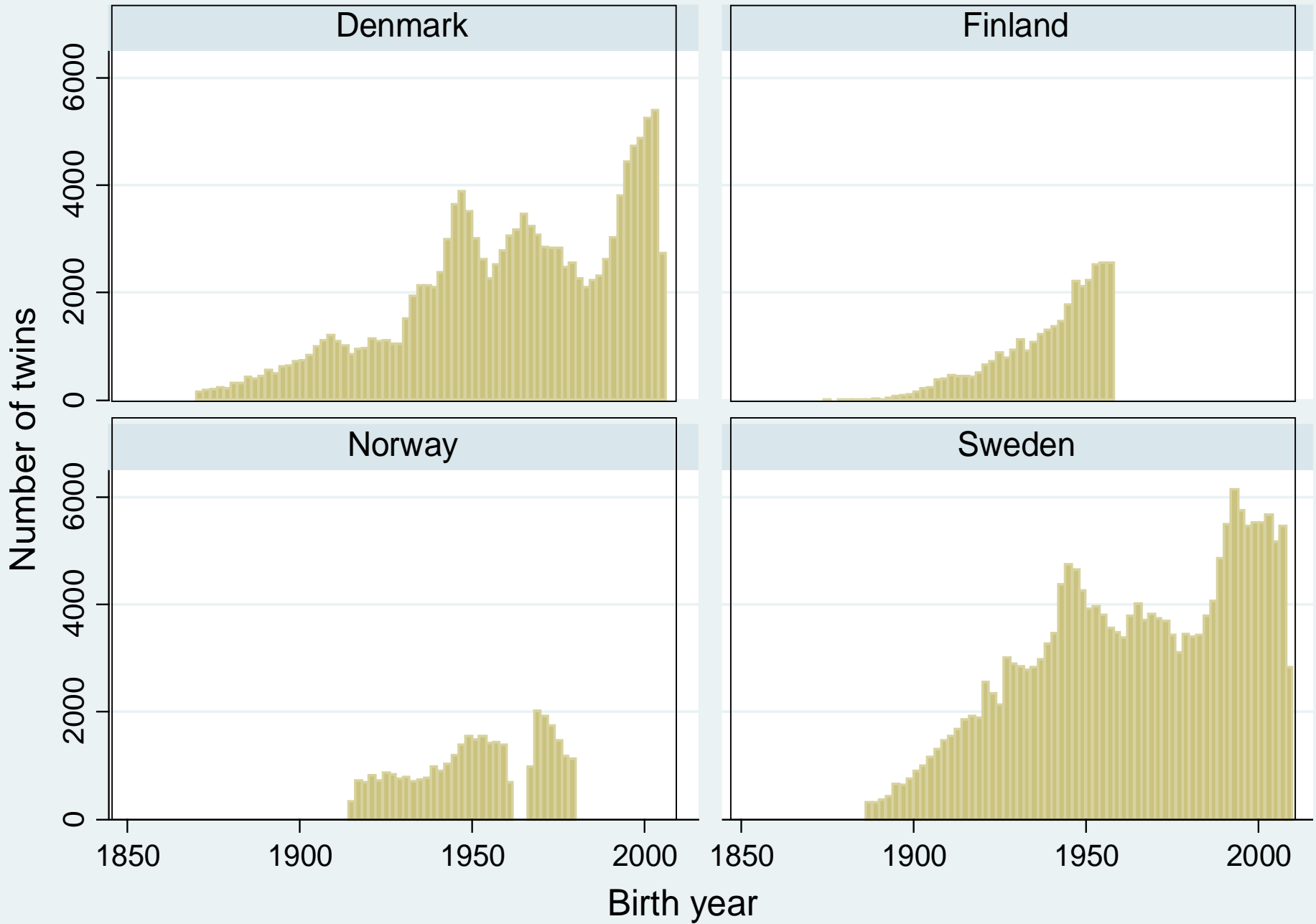
EERO PUKKALA<sup>1,2</sup>, AAGE ANDERSEN<sup>3</sup>, GÖRAN BERGLUND<sup>4</sup>, ... OSS<sup>3</sup>,  
VILMUNDUR GUDNASON<sup>5</sup>, GÖRAN ...  
PEKKA JOUSILA ...  
PER LENNER<sup>10</sup>, ...  
HELGA ÖGMUN ...  
LAUFHEY TRYGG ...  
ANDERS WIDELI ...

Skytthe, A., Harris, J.R., Czene, C., Mucci, L.A.,  
Adami, Christensen, K., Hjelmborg, J., Holm, N.V.,  
Nilsen, T., Kaprio, J., Pukkala, E.: **Cancer incidence  
and mortality in 260,000 Nordic twins with  
30,000 prospective cancers. Submitted to Twin  
Res. Hum. Genet. (November 2018).**

<sup>1</sup>Finnish Cancer Registry, ...  
<sup>2</sup>Public Health, University of Tam ...  
<sup>3</sup>Oslo, Norway, <sup>4</sup>Malmö D ...  
<sup>5</sup>Iceland, <sup>6</sup>Department of F ...  
<sup>7</sup>Institute of Clinical Biochemistry, Rikshospitalet University Hospital, Oslo, Norway, <sup>8</sup>National Public Health Institute, Helsinki and Oulu, Finland, <sup>9</sup>Social Insurance Institution, Helsinki and Turku, Finland, <sup>10</sup>Cancer Registry of Northern Sweden and Department of Radiation Sciences, Umeå University Hospital, Umeå, Sweden, <sup>11</sup>Department of Medical ...  
<sup>12</sup>Medical ...

# Database Quality

Bring Quality Assurance methods of other types of best cohort studies to NorTwinCan network

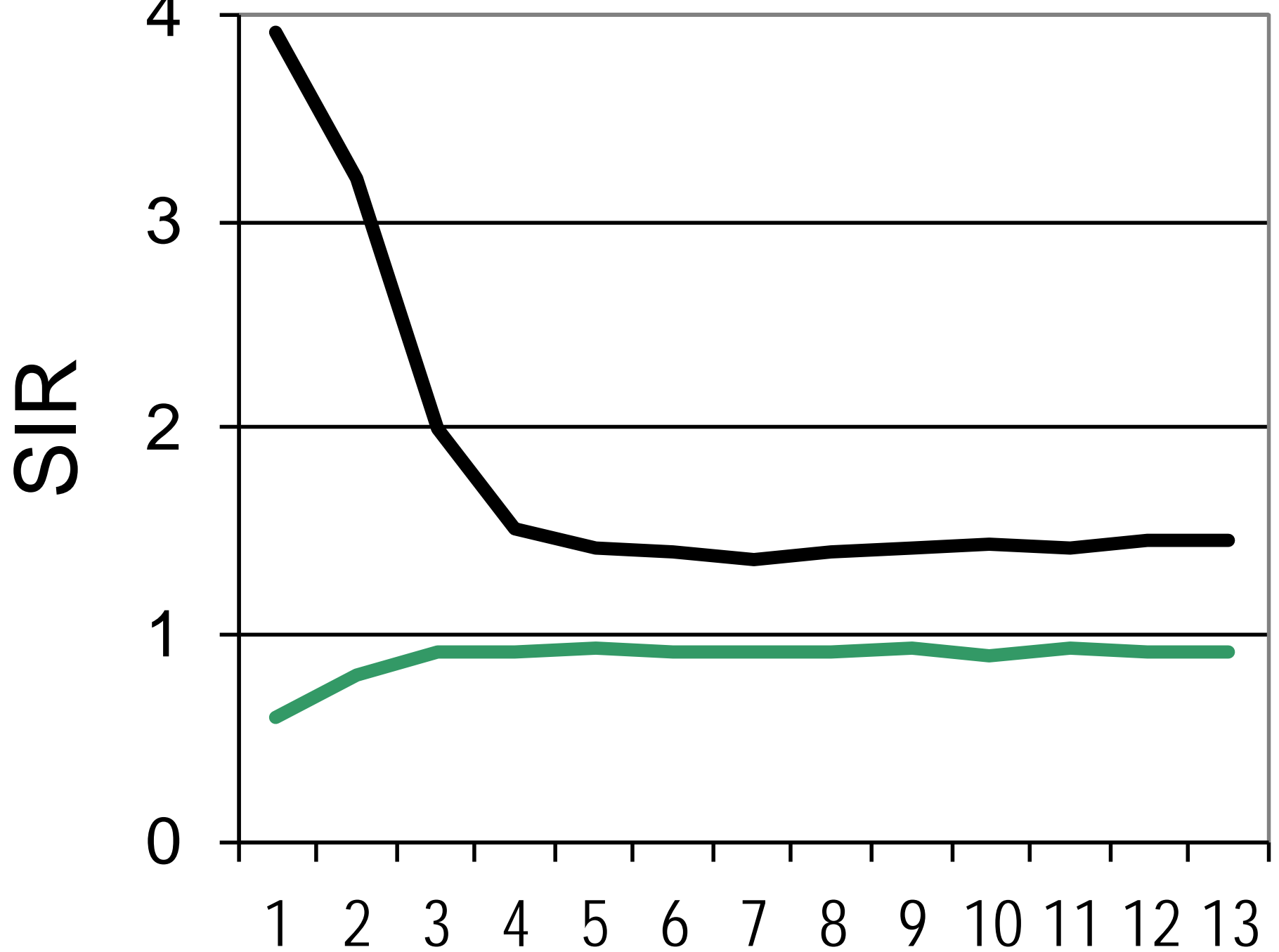


# Estimated SIRs and 95% confidence intervals: all sites, males TABULATION BEFORE QA

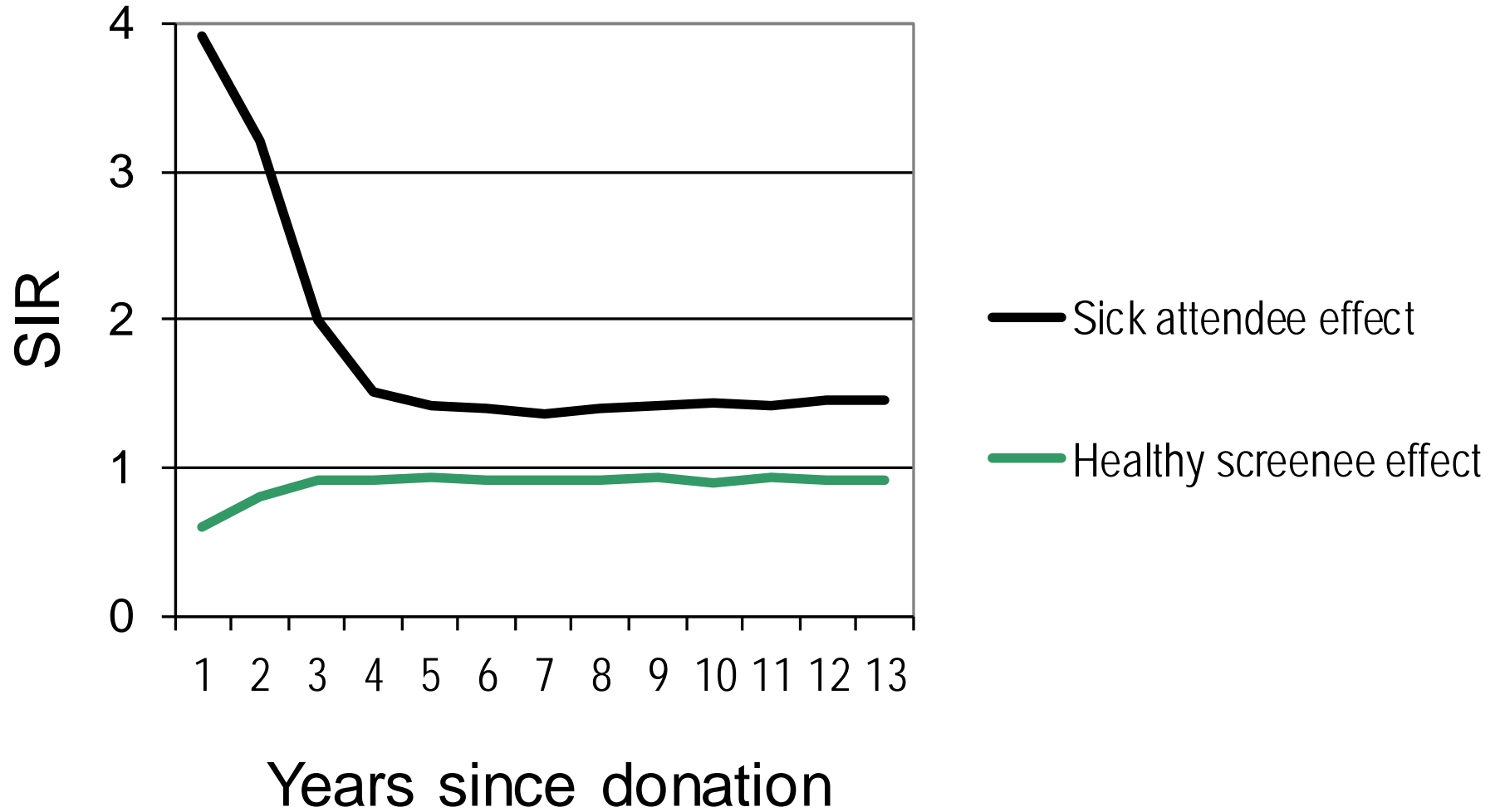
Country	zyg	O	E	SIR	Lower	Upper
Denmark	MZ	1273	1425.64	<b>0.8929</b>	<b>0.8452</b>	<b>0.9434</b>
Denmark	DZ	2576	2722.5	0.9462	0.9103	0.9834
Denmark	UZ	382	420.6	0.9082	0.8216	1.004
Denmark	OS	1327	1425.76	0.9307	0.882	0.9822
Finland	MZ	630	594.59	1.0596	0.98	1.1456
Finland	DZ	1351	1376.96	0.9811	0.9302	1.0349
Finland	UZ	350	400.41	<b>0.8741</b>	<b>0.7872</b>	<b>0.9707</b>
Norway	MZ	673	747.18	0.9007	0.8352	0.9714
Norway	DZ	1005	1212.15	<b>0.8291</b>	<b>0.7794</b>	<b>0.882</b>
Norway	OS	19	18.51	1.0266	0.6548	1.6095
Sweden	MZ	1964	2009.38	0.9774	0.9351	1.0216
Sweden	DZ	3199	3414.99	0.9368	0.9048	0.9698
Sweden	UZ	564	577.54	0.9765	0.8992	1.0606
Sweden	OS	17487	18835.42	<b>0.8734</b>	<b>0.8374</b>	<b>0.9109</b>

# Reasons for low SIRs

- The cohort members really have lower cancer incidence than the reference population
  - Reason for this should be understood
- Selection bias related to the cohort collection
  - Temporal or constant?



# Biases related to the indication of serum donation

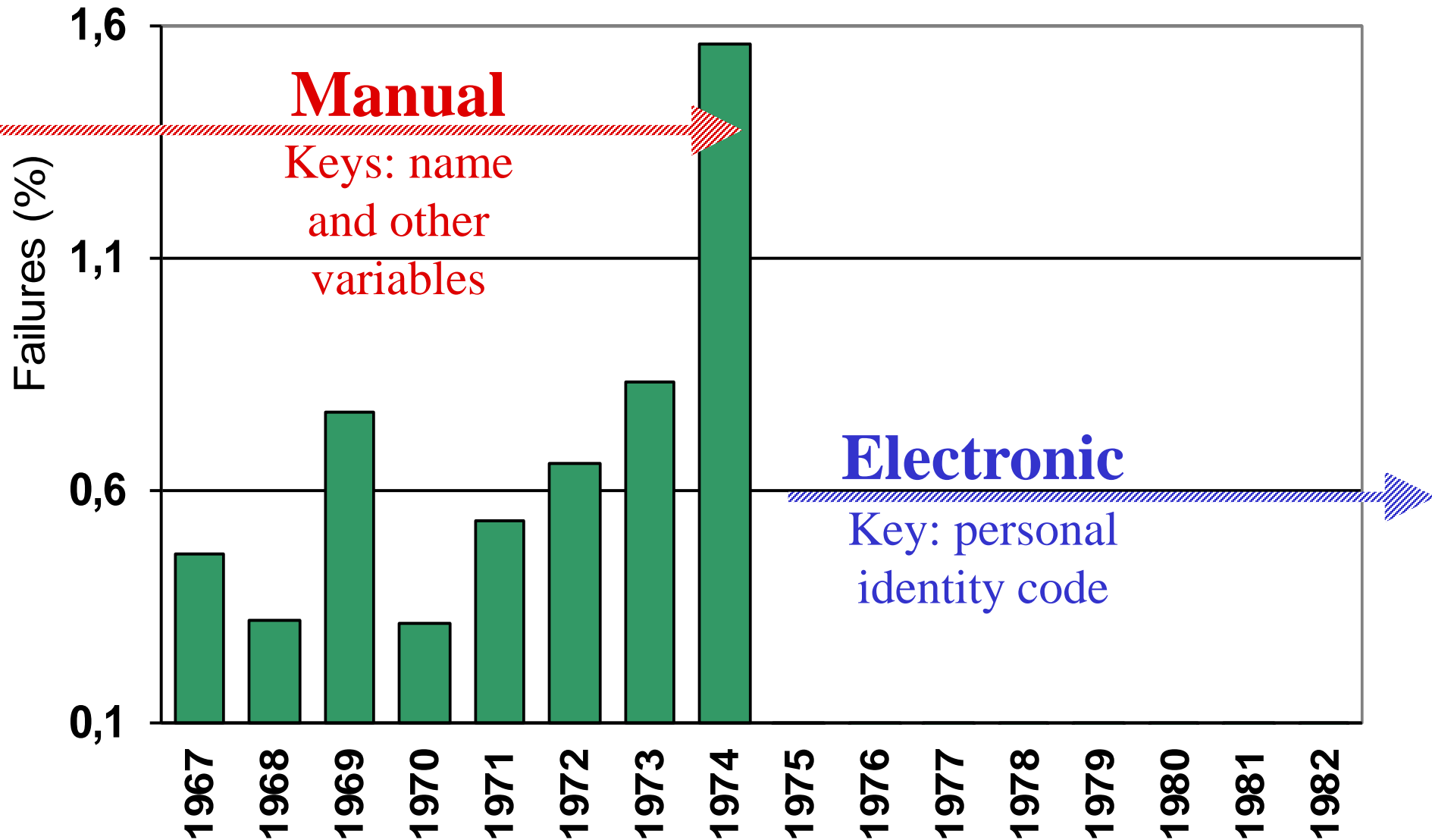


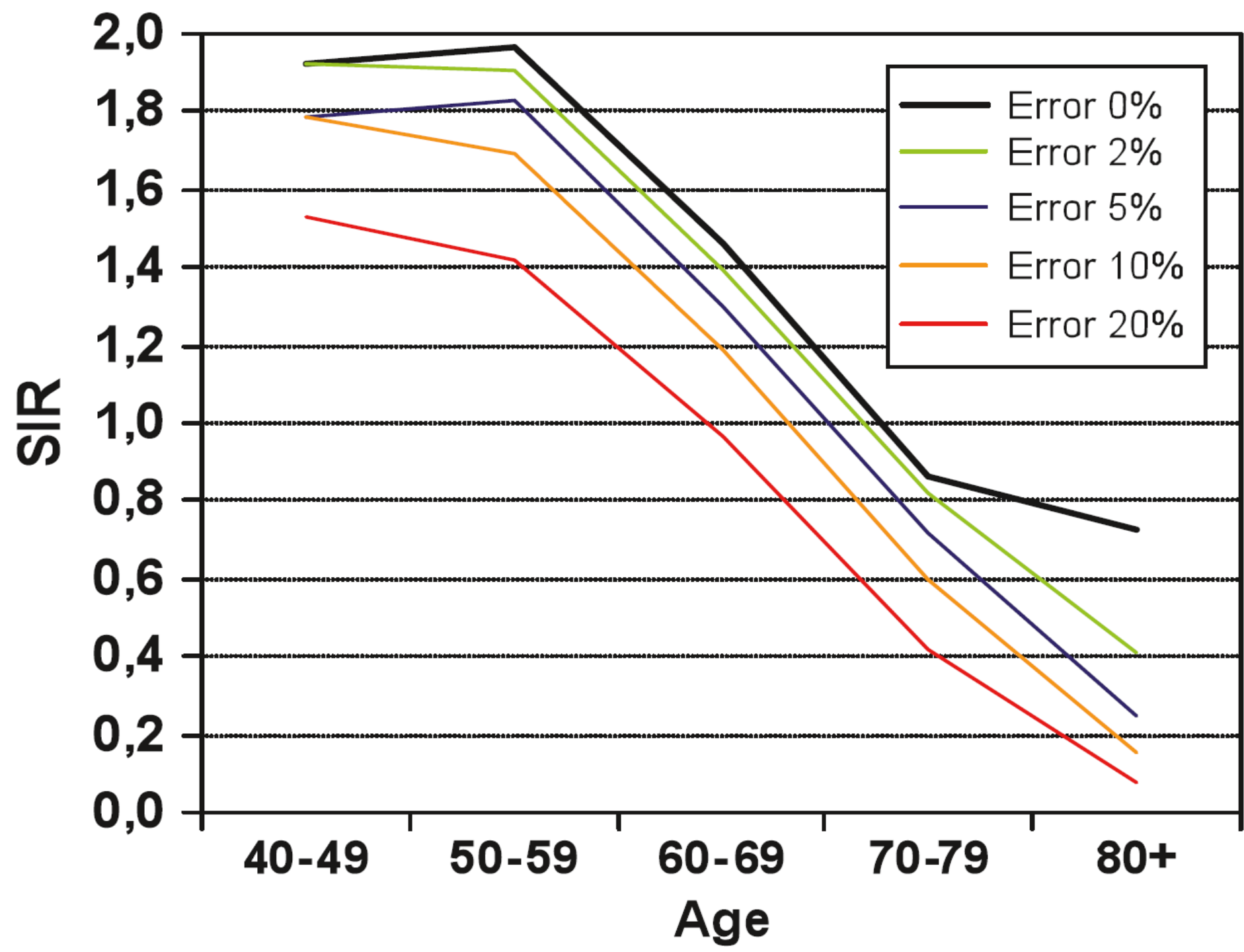


# Reasons for low SIRs

- Technical: study cohorts (especially collected long time ago) include cumulated problems that lead to too low cancer risk estimates
  - Need for systematic updates; e.g. those who are not known to have died/emigrated should be identified alive in Population Register
  - Linkage key incomplete (pre-PID period?)

# Failures in record linkage between Finnish Cancer Registry and death certificate data





# Effect of errors in linkage key:

Cancer risk among **asbestos mine workers**,  
age category 80+ (old cohort, long follow-up)

Error %	Obs	Exp	SIR	95% CI
0	100	80	1.25	1.02-1.51

# Effect of errors in linkage key:

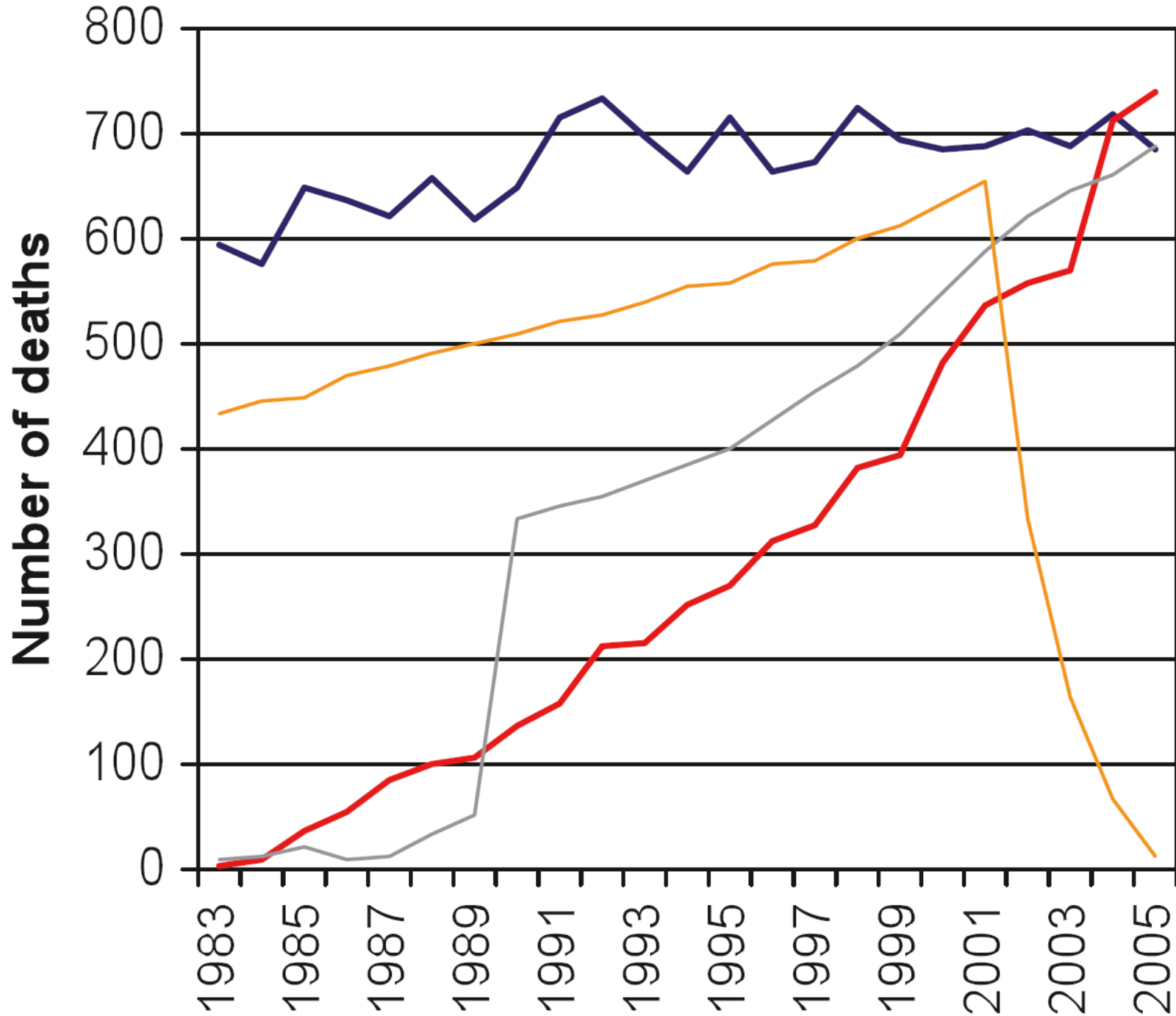
Cancer risk among **asbestos mine workers**,  
age category 80+ (old cohort, long follow-up)

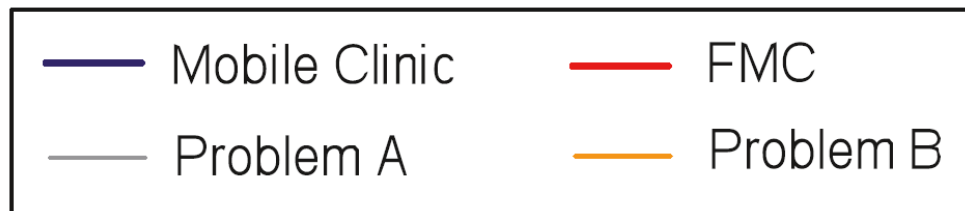
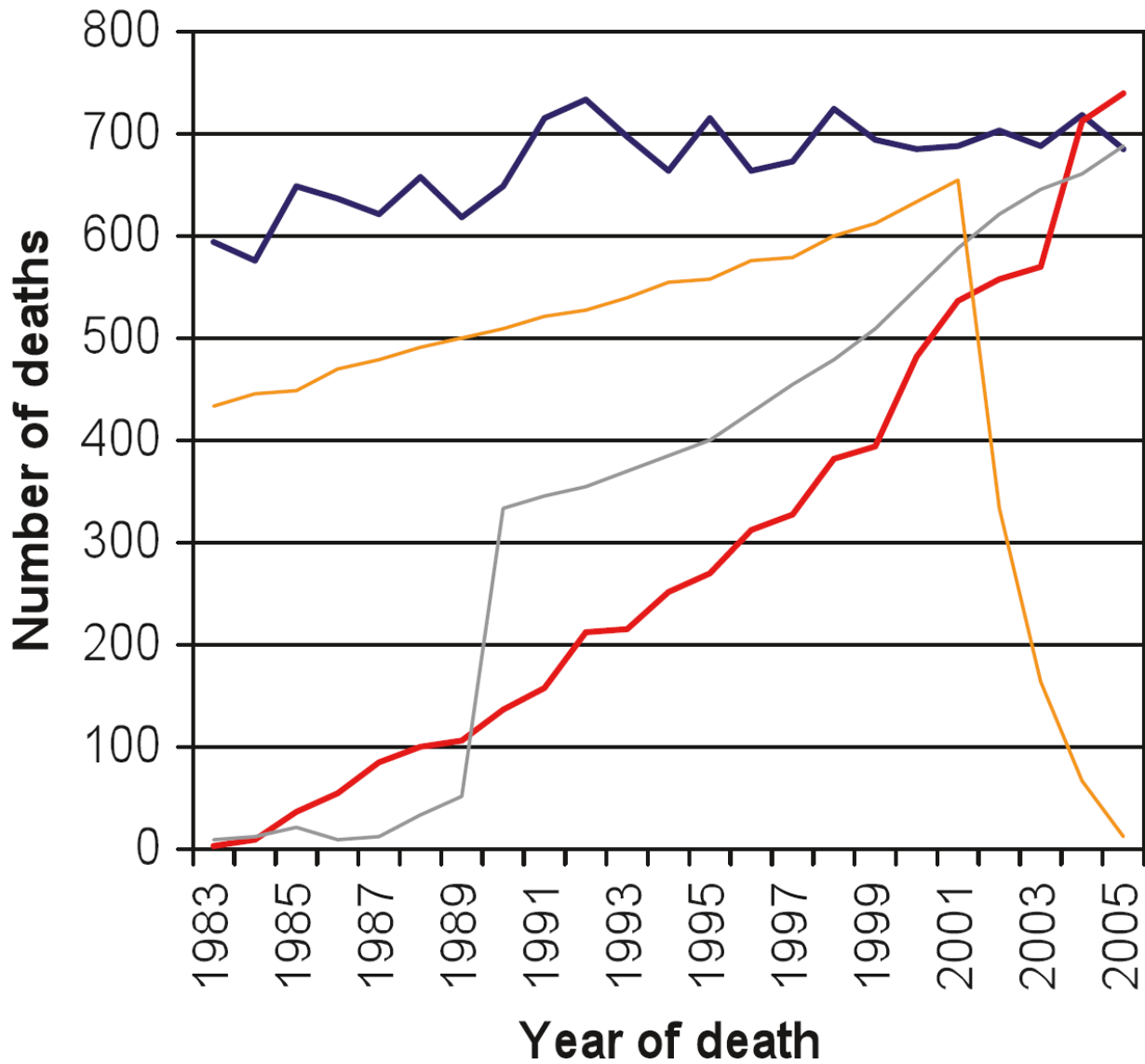
Error %	Obs	Exp	SIR	95% CI
0	100	80	1.25	1.02-1.51
2	98	128	0.77	0.62-0.93

# Effect of errors in linkage key:

Cancer risk in an old cohort with long follow-up,  
age category 80+

Error %	Obs	Exp	SIR	95% CI
0	100	80	1.25	1.02-1.51
2	98	128	0.77	0.62-0.93
10	90	245	0.37	0.30-0.45

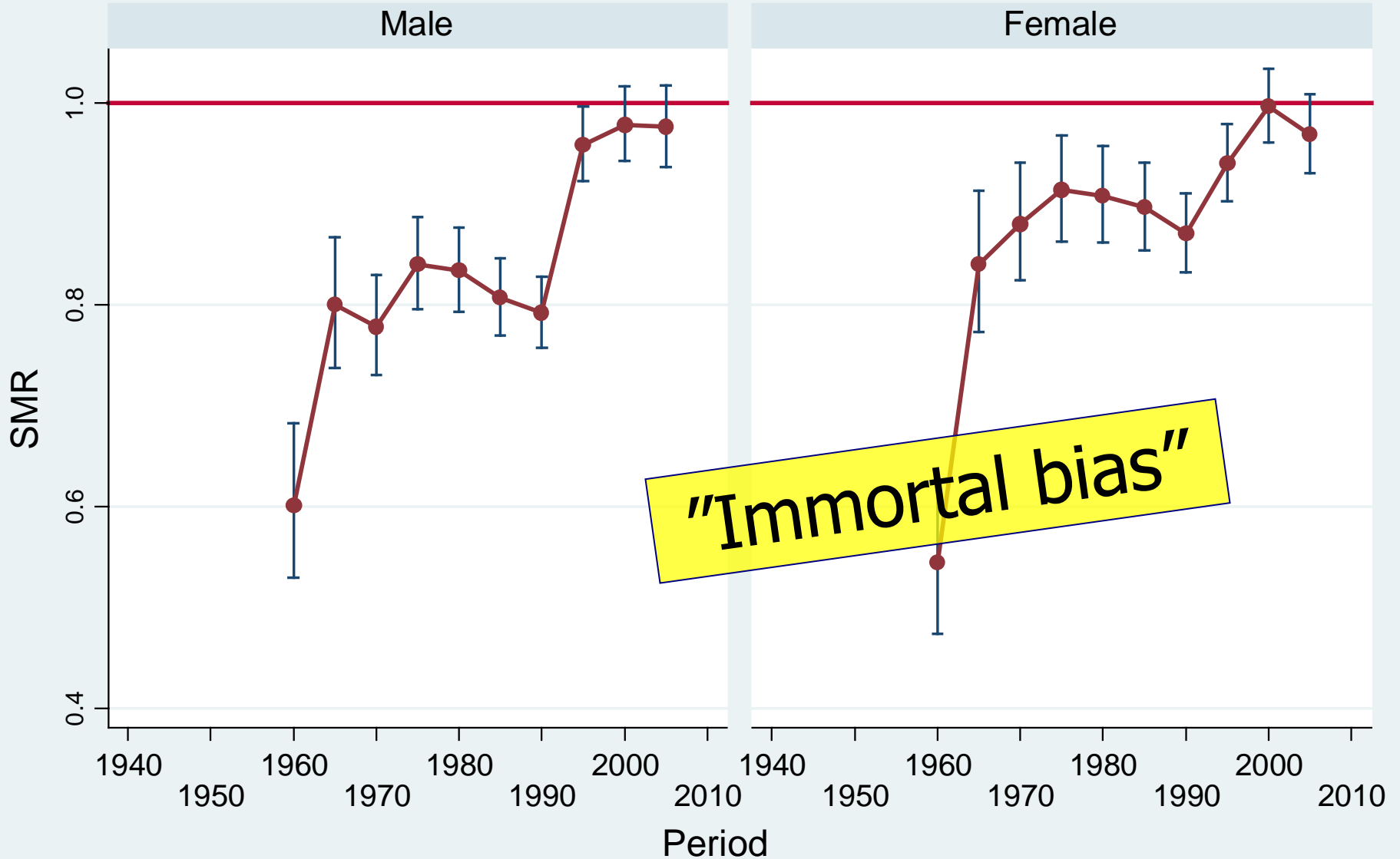






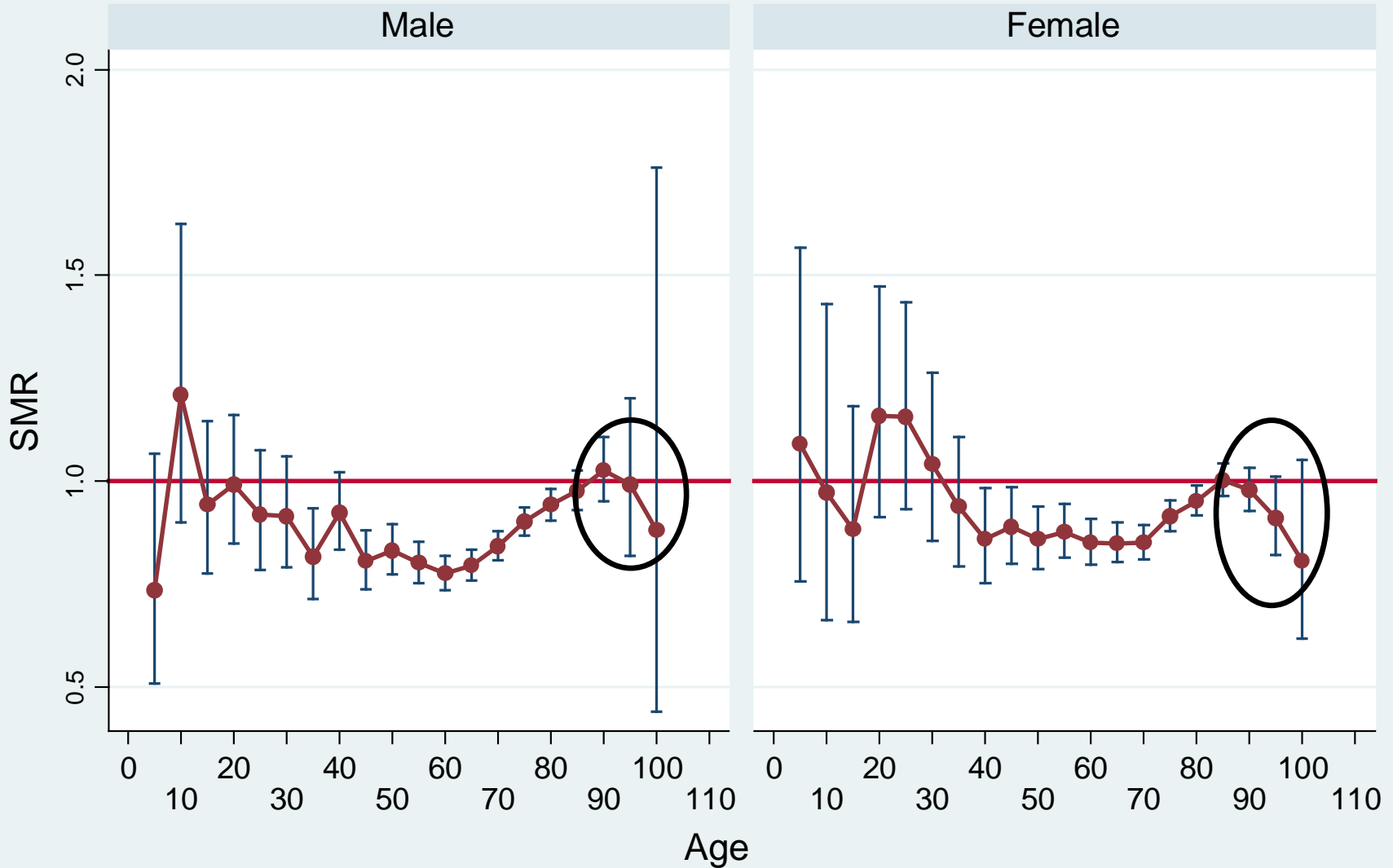
# All-cause mortality

## SMR - Sweden



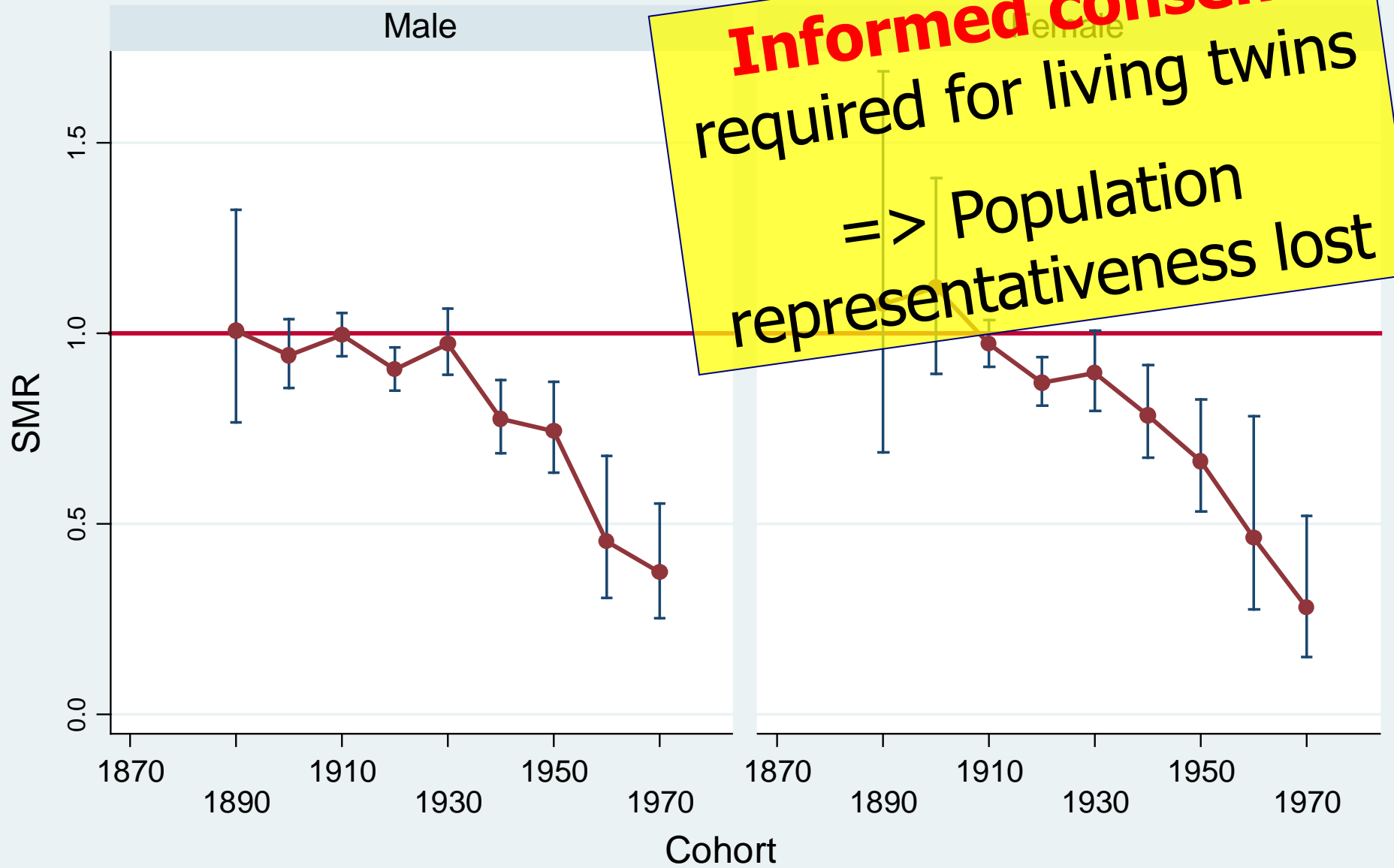
# All-cause mortality

## SMR - Sweden



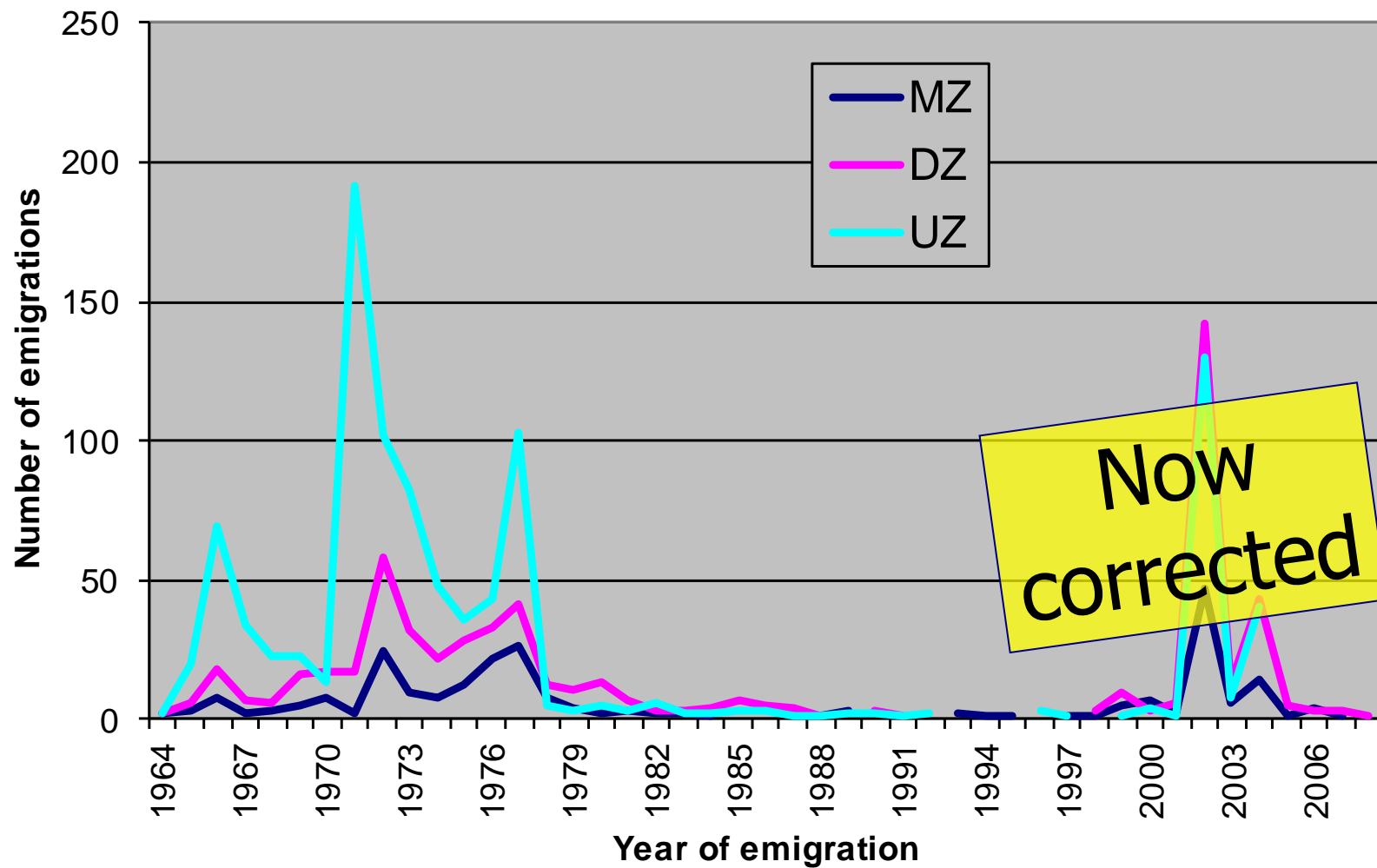
# All-cause mortality

SMR - Norway



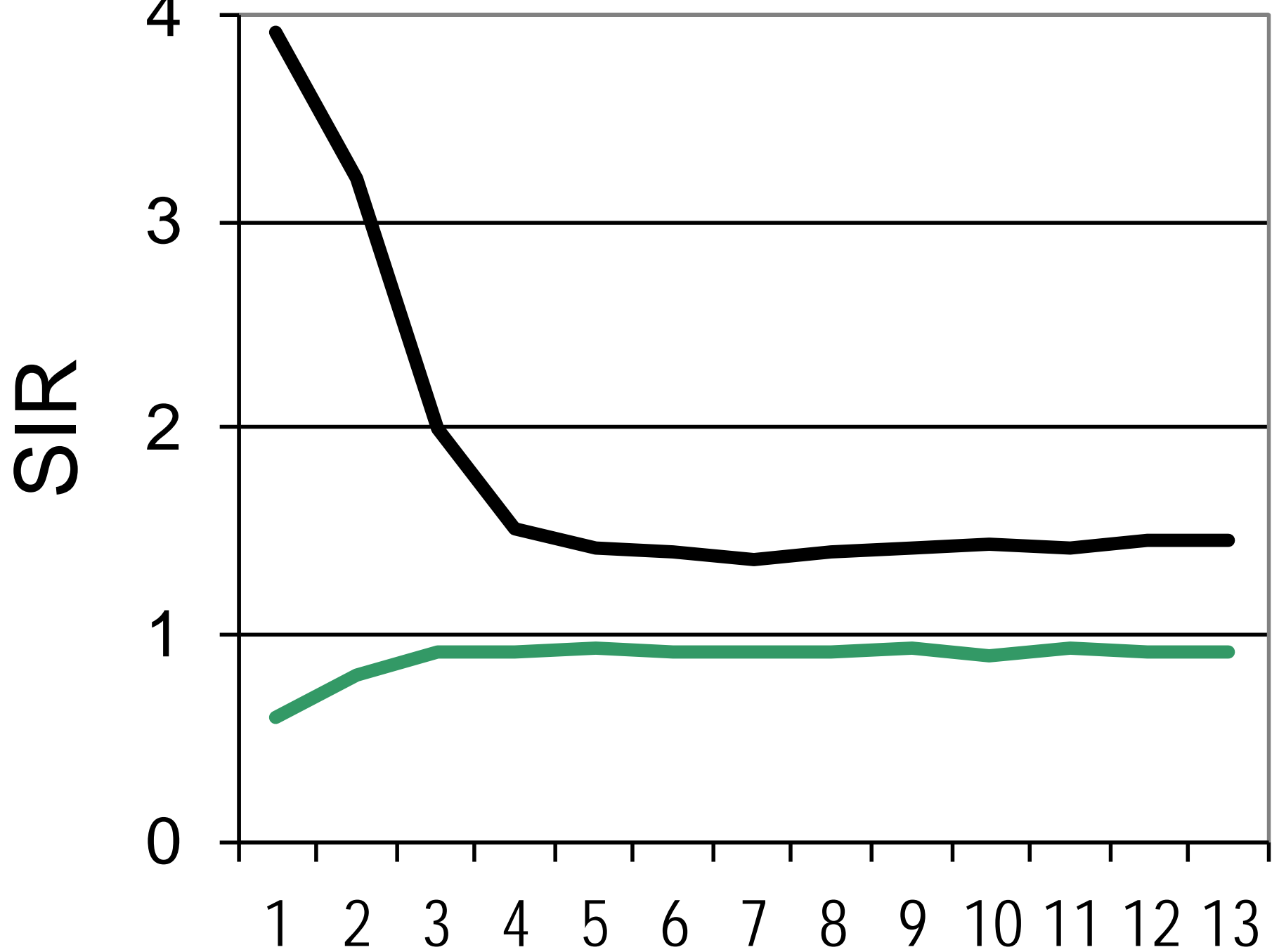
# EMIGRATIONS

## FINNISH TWINS



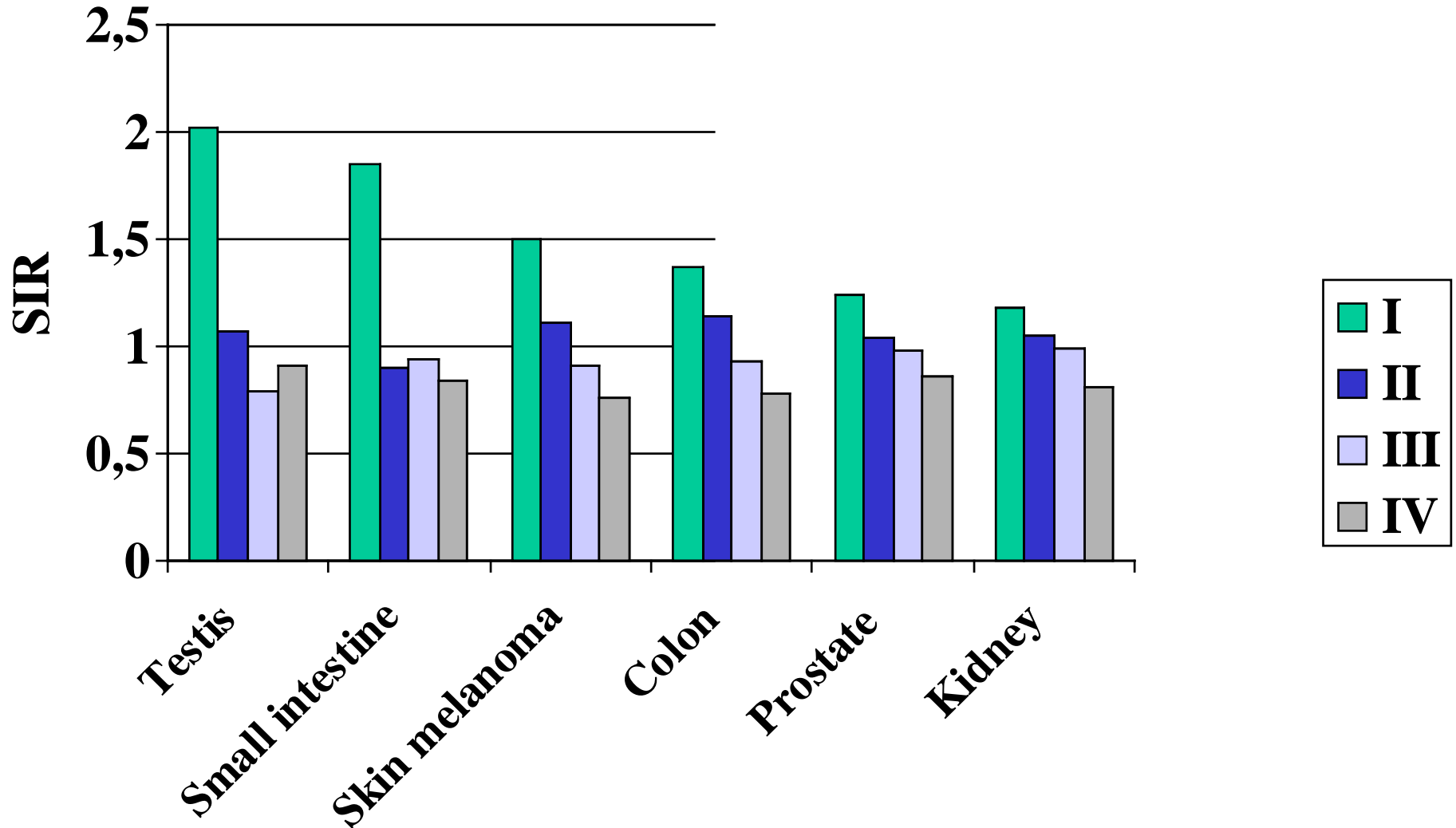
# Correct date of beginning of unbiased follow-up (BOF) in Twin Registers?

- Twins selected from a register
  - If the register only includes persons alive on day X, BOF cannot be before X
  - If linkage to cancer registry or vital statistics is based on person IDs, BOF cannot be before the date when that key has been used in all registers (before that manual linkage possible => errors)
- Zygosity status
  - If based on questionnaires => BOF for MZ/DZ categories cannot be before date of response (follow-up before that belongs to UZ category)
  - "Healthy responder effect"
    - Temporal selection bias during the first years of follow-up in MZ/DZ category **ALWAYS**
    - Possible permanent selection bias



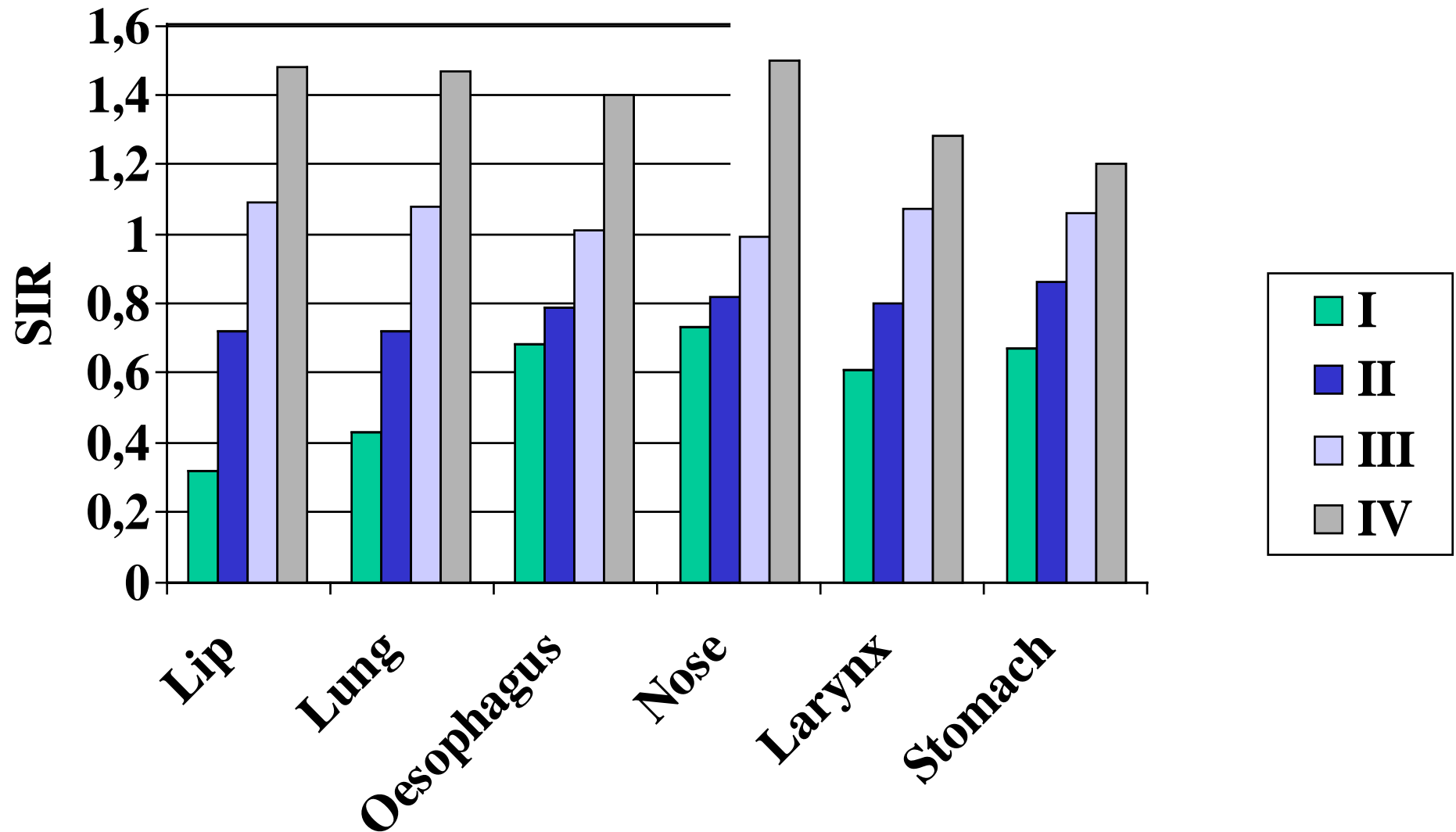
# Cancers of HIGH social class, men

Finland 1991-1995



# Cancers of LOW social class, men

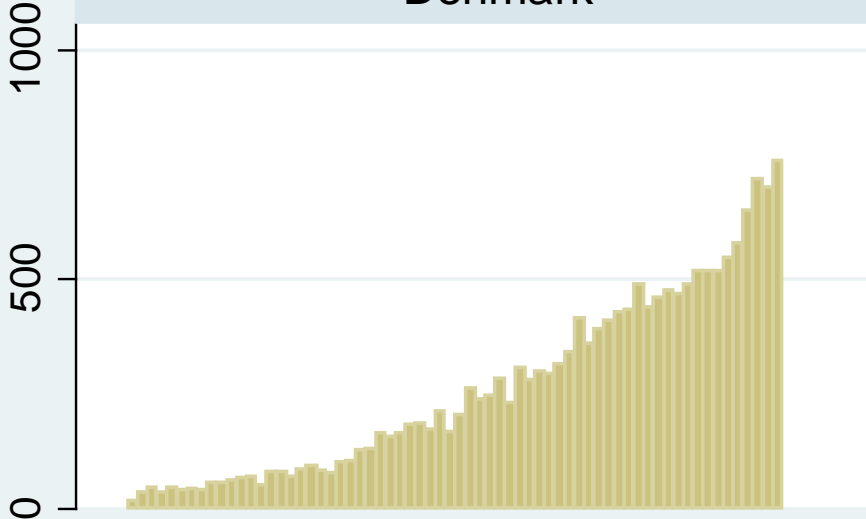
Finland 1991-1995



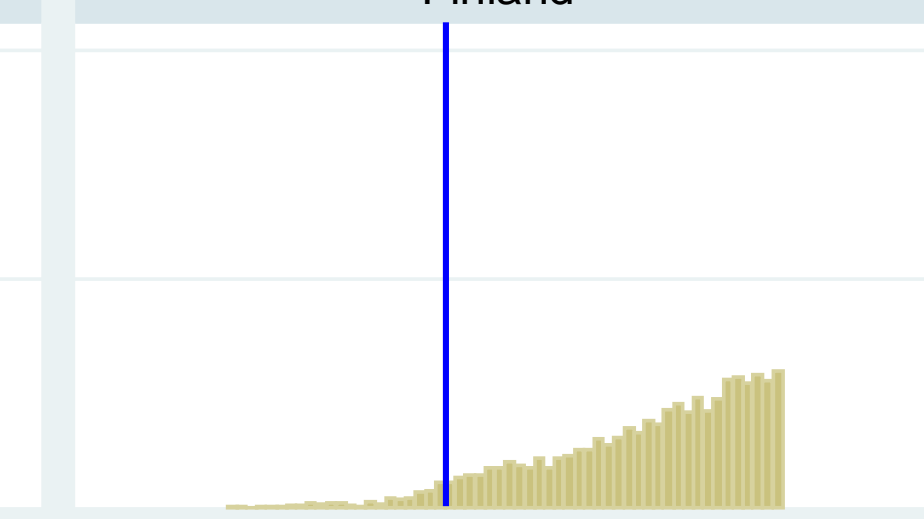


Number of cancers

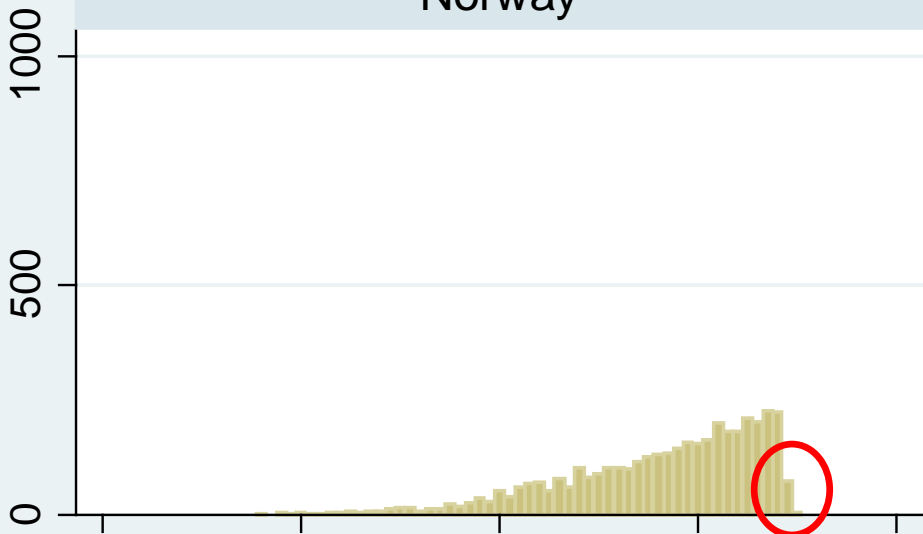
Denmark



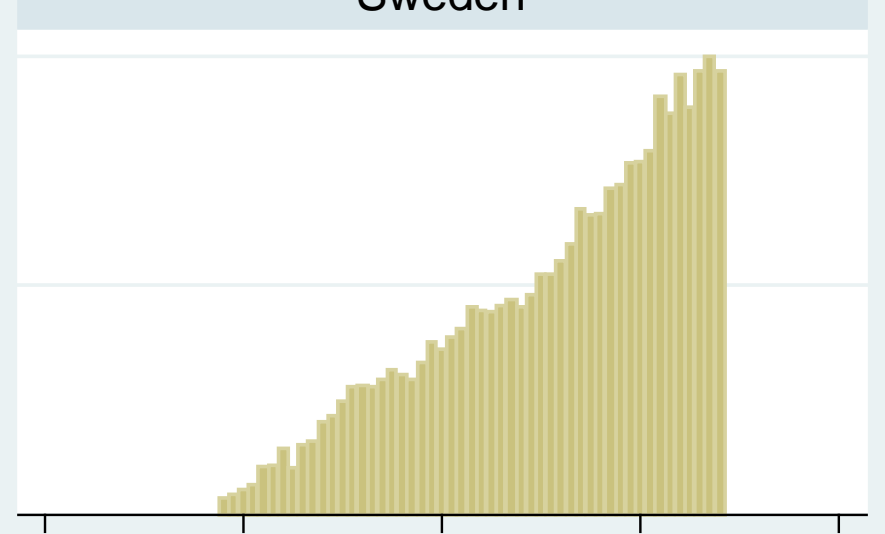
Finland



Norway



Sweden



1940 1960 1980 2000 2020 1940 1960 1980 2000 2020

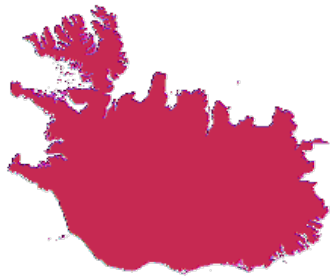
Year of diagnosis

Graphs by Country

# NORDCAN

Association of the  
Nordic Cancer  
Registries

[www.ancr.nu](http://www.ancr.nu)

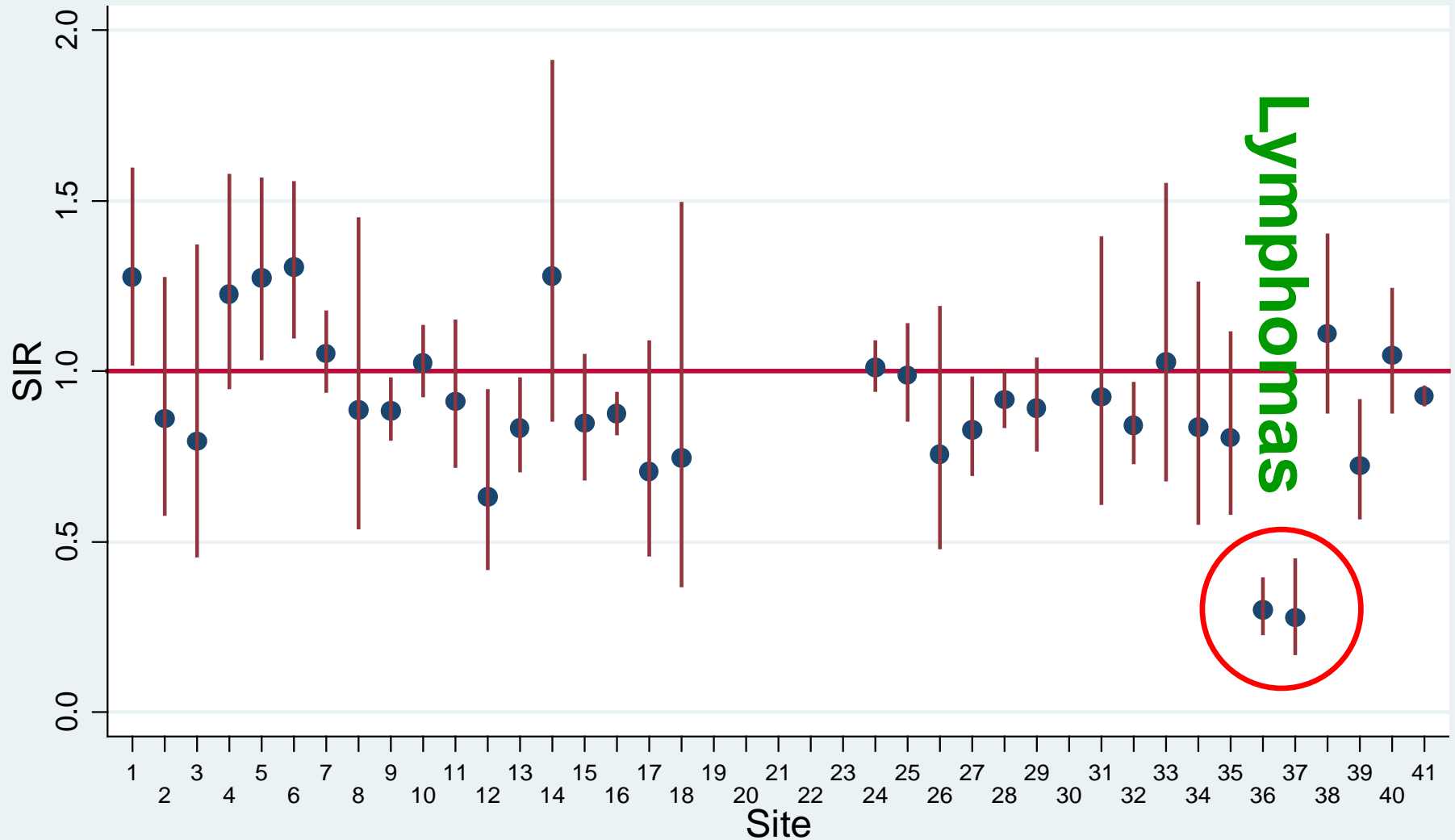




# The NORDCAN Cancer Groups

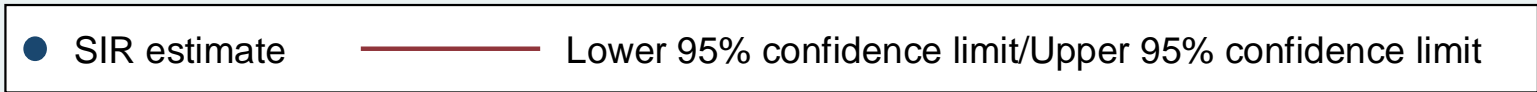
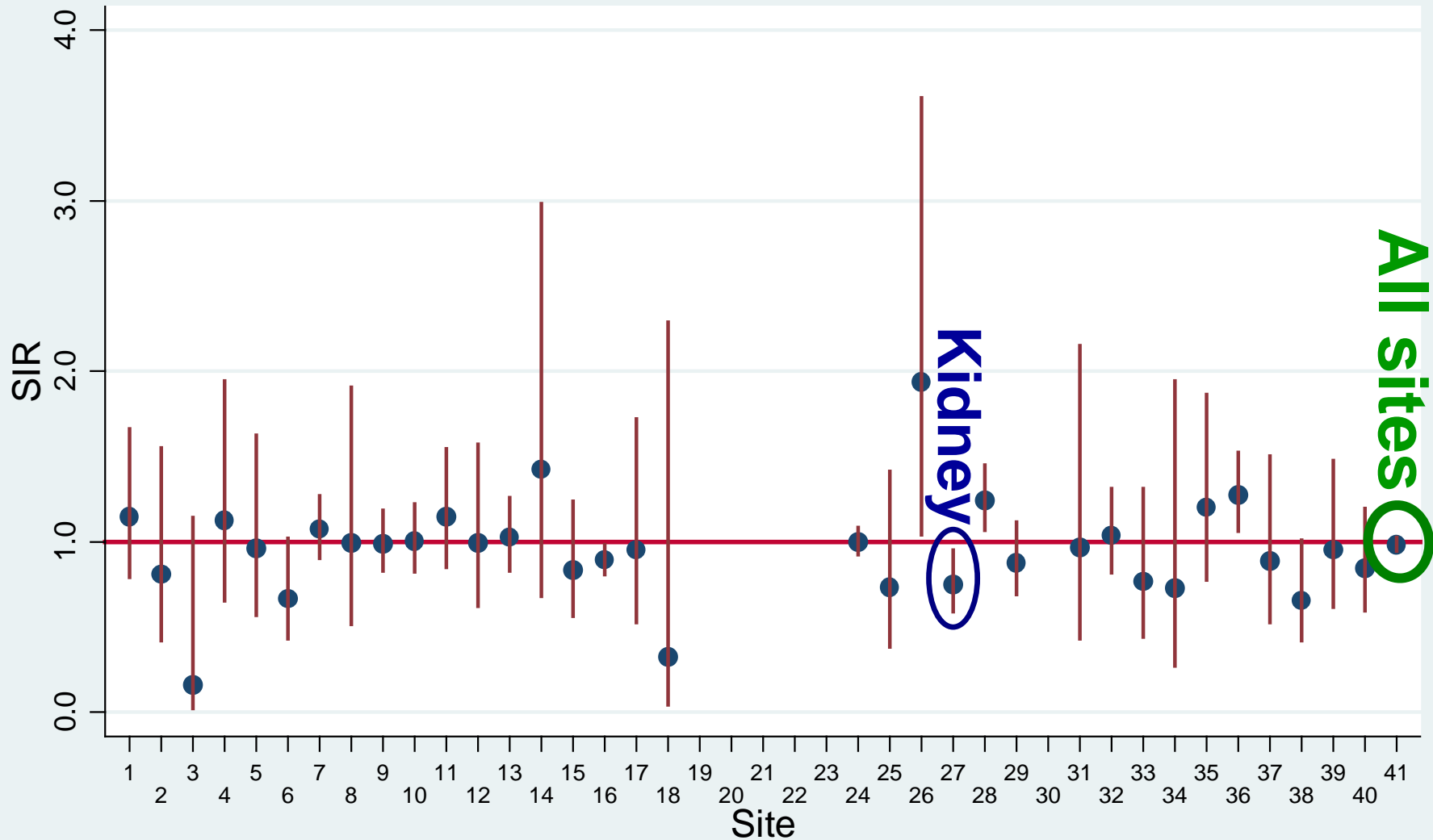
- 1 Lip
- 2 Tongue
- 3 Salivary glands
- 4 Mouth
- 5 Pharynx
- 6 Oesophagus
- 7 Stomach
- 8 Small intestine
- 9 Colon
- 10 Rectum and anus
- 11 Liver
- 12 Gallbladder and extrahepatic bile ducts
- 13 Pancreas
- 14 Nose, sinuses
- 15 Larynx
- 16 Lung (incl. trachea and bronchus)
- 17 Pleura
- 18 Breast
- 19 Cervix uteri
- 20 Corpus uteri
- 21 Uterus, other
- 22 Ovary and uterine adnexa
- 23 Other female genital organs
- 24 Prostate
- 25 Testis
- 26 Penis and other male genital organs
- 27 Kidney
- 28 Bladder and other and unspecified urinary organs
- 29 Melanoma of skin
- 30 Skin, non-melanoma
- 31 Eye
- 32 Brain, central nervous system
- 33 Thyroid
- 34 Bone
- 35 Soft tissues
- 36 Non-Hodgkin lymphoma
- 37 Hodgkin's disease
- 38 Multiple myeloma
- 39 Acute leukaemia
- 40 Other leukaemia

## Denmark - Men



Lymphomas

# Finland - Men



# Kidney cancer among Nordic twins

	Gender	N cases	SIR	95% CI
<b>Finland</b>	M	69	0.74	0.59-0.94



# Kidney cancer among Nordic twins

	<b>Gender</b>	<b>N cases</b>	<b>SIR</b>	<b>95% CI</b>
<b>Finland</b>	M	69	0.74	0.59-0.94
	F	45	0.70	0.52-0.93
<b>Denmark</b>	M	135	0.81	0.68-0.96
	F	88	0.77	0.62-0.95
<b>Sweden</b>	M	177	0.65	0.56-0.75
	F	156	0.76	0.65-0.89
<b>Norway</b>	M	57		
	F	33		

# After this exercise & baseline article

- **Quality assurance** tools
  - Continue the **improved way of thinking** that data-related QA is important
  - Continue utilisation of the **instruments developed to identify errors**
  - Remember what we have learned about the **population representativeness** (short-term and long-term selection)

Extremely precise estimates on cancer risk among twins.



# **Nordic Cancer Registries – similarities and differences**

Eero Pukkala

on behalf of the ANCR Board

SPECIAL ARTICLE



## Nordic Cancer Registries – an overview of their procedures and data comparability

Eero Pukkala<sup>a,b</sup>, Gerda Engholm<sup>c</sup>, Lise Kristine Højsgaard Schmidt<sup>d</sup>, Hans Storm<sup>c</sup>, Staffan Khan<sup>e</sup>, Mats Lambe<sup>f,g</sup>, David Pettersson<sup>e</sup>, Elínborg Ólafsdóttir<sup>h</sup>, Laufey Tryggvadóttir<sup>h,i</sup>, Tiina Hakanen<sup>a</sup>, Nea Malila<sup>a,b</sup>, Anni Virtanen<sup>a,j</sup>, Tom Børge Johannesen<sup>k</sup>, Siri Larønningen<sup>k</sup> and Giske Ursin<sup>k</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Finnish Cancer Registry, Institute for Statistical and Epidemiological Cancer Research, Helsinki, Finland; <sup>b</sup>Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Tampere, Tampere, Finland; <sup>c</sup>Danish Cancer Society, Copenhagen, Denmark; <sup>d</sup>Danish Cancer Registry, The Danish Health Data Authority, Copenhagen, Denmark; <sup>e</sup>Swedish Cancer Registry, the Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare, Stockholm, Sweden; <sup>f</sup>Regional Cancer Centre Uppsala-Örebro, Uppsala, Sweden; <sup>g</sup>Department of Medical Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden; <sup>h</sup>Icelandic Cancer Registry, Icelandic Cancer Society, Reykjavik, Iceland; <sup>i</sup>Faculty of Medicine, University of Iceland, Reykjavik, Iceland; <sup>j</sup>Department of Pathology, University of Helsinki and HUSLAB, Helsinki University Hospital, Helsinki, Finland; <sup>k</sup>Cancer Registry of Norway, Oslo, Norway

# Why?

- Repeated need for documentation on the similarities and dissimilarities of the Nordic Cancer Registries, e.g.,
  - for joint study planning purposes
    - Are variables needed for a study similarly accessible from each Nordic country?
  - as a reference when writing manuscripts based on Nordic Cancer Registry data
    - "All Nordic countries have similar population-based high accuracy cancer registries ."
- How comparable are the cancer statistics in NORDCAN in the national publications?
  - Why the differences?

# Data sources (baseline data collection)

	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Sweden
public hospitals	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
private clinicians	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
dentists	yes	yes	no	no	no
laboratories, pathological samples	2004+ *	yes	yes	yes	yes
laboratories, haematological samples	no	yes	yes	no	yes
laboratories, cytological samples	no	yes	yes	yes	yes
death certificates	yes	yes	yes	yes	no
inpatient registry	2004+	2016+ ?	1999+	2000+	no
radiotherapy data (from all machines)				1997+	

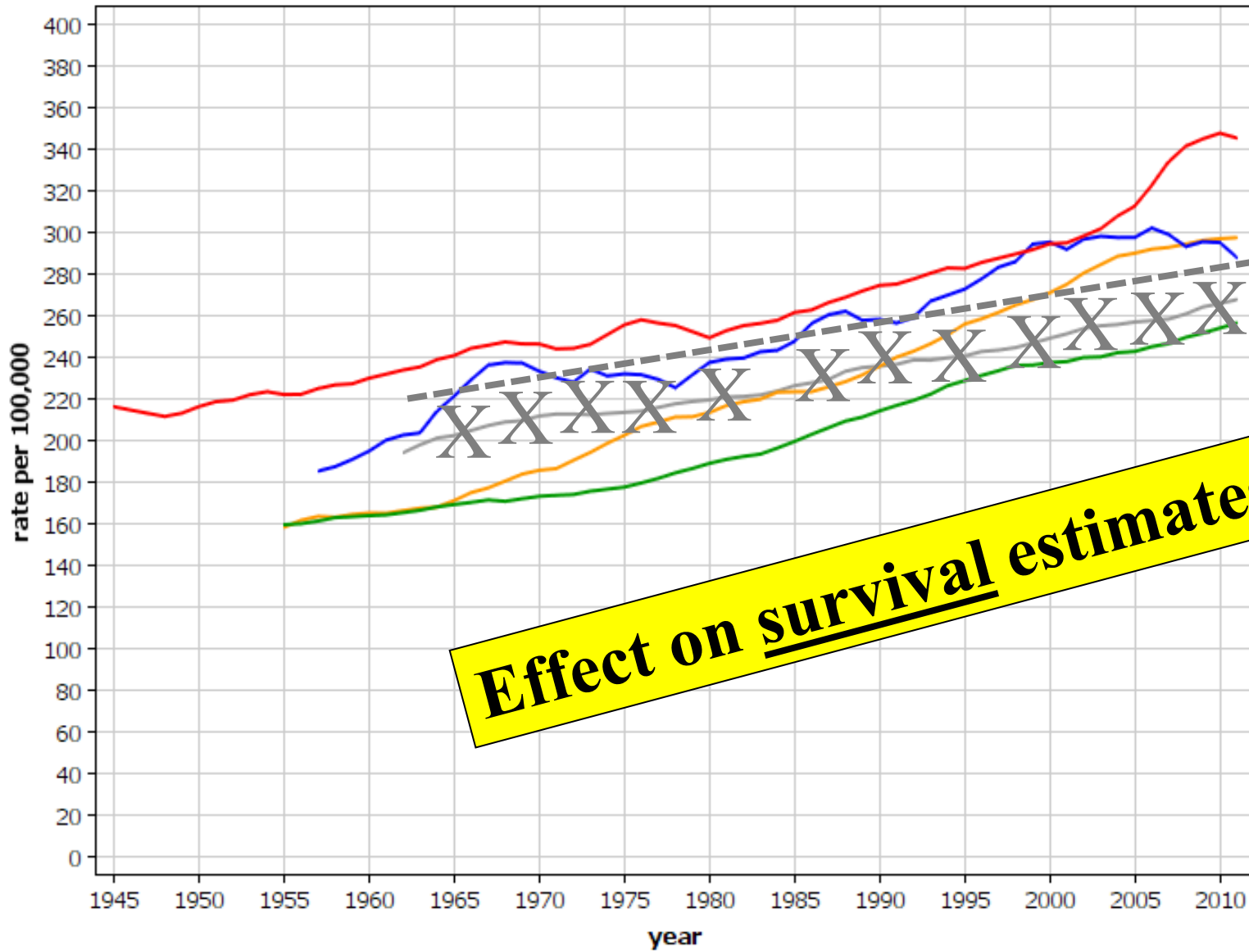
*\* Used for cases that have been coded since 2004.*

# Death certificate initiated cases

- In Sweden **4% underregistration of incident cases** because the Swedish system does not use death certificates as a source of information.
- In addition to the cases which would be based on death certificate only (DCO), those cases which actually are diagnosed before death but which could only be traced starting from the death certificate information are also missed in Sweden.
- In other Nordic countries there is a follow-back system (inquiries sent to the treating hospitals) which finds additional information for most of the cases first known through death certificates.

*Mattsson B (1984). Cancer registration in Sweden. Studies on completeness and validity of incidence and mortality registers.*

All sites  
Incidence: ASR (World), Female age 0-85+



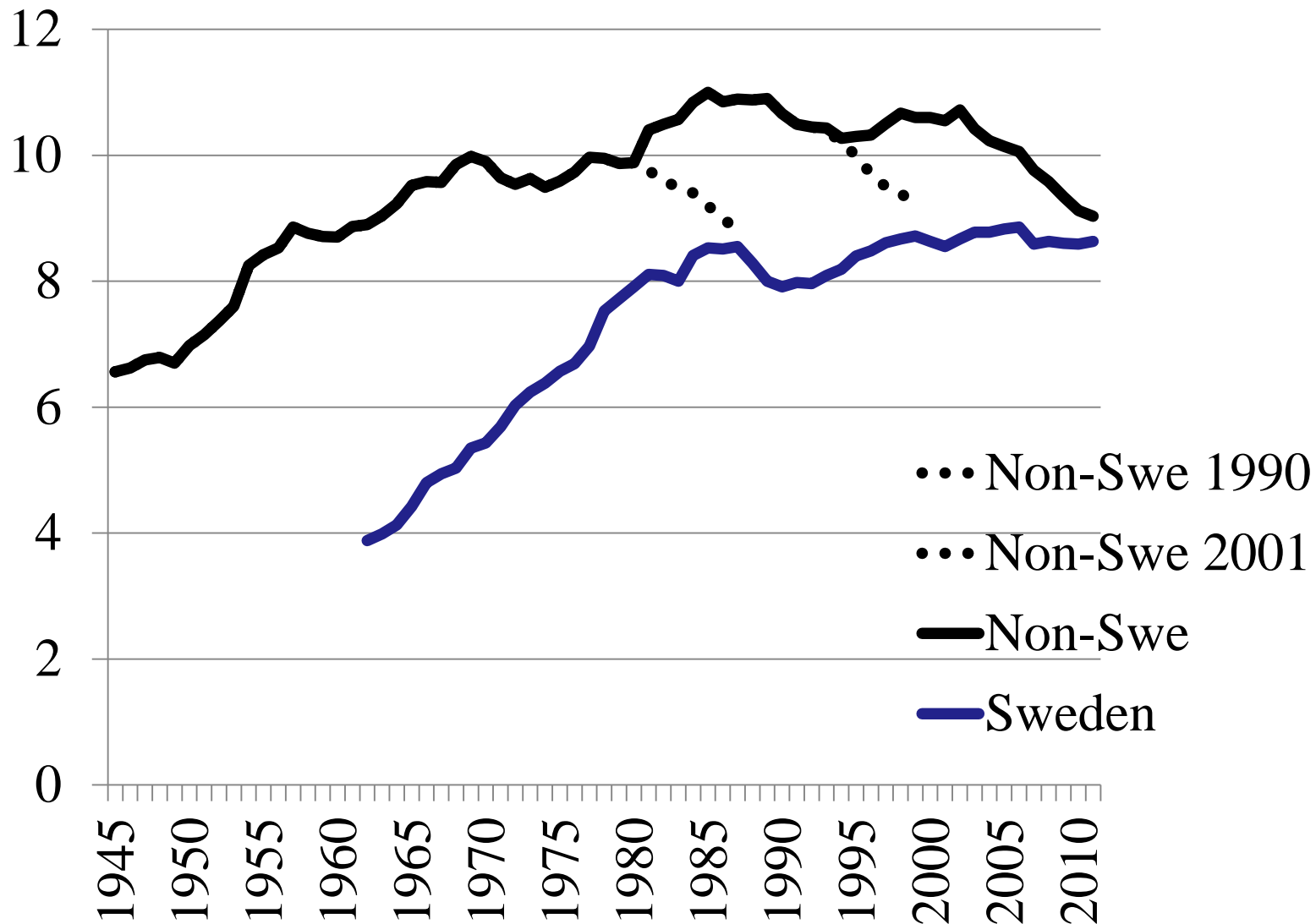
**Effect on survival estimates?**

# Death certificate initiated cases

- **The underregistration in Sweden is highest in leukaemia (18%).**

*Mattsson B (1984). Cancer registration in Sweden. Studies on completeness and validity of incidence and mortality registers.*

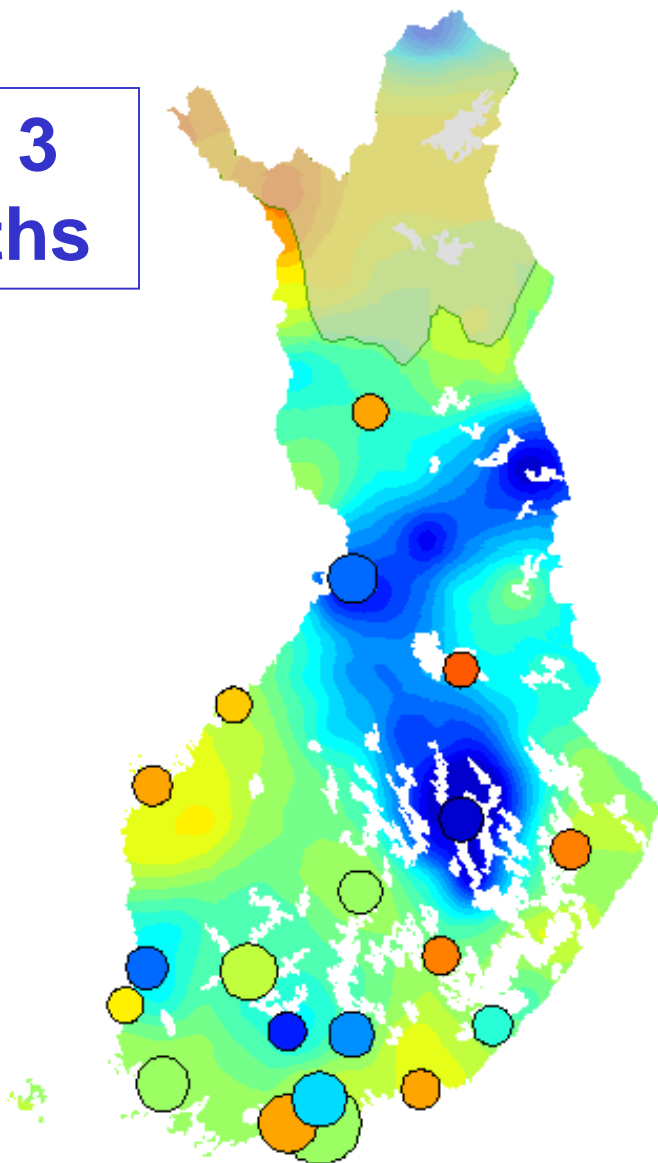
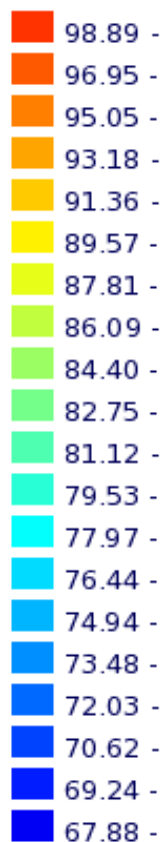
# Leukaemia (incidence / 100,000)





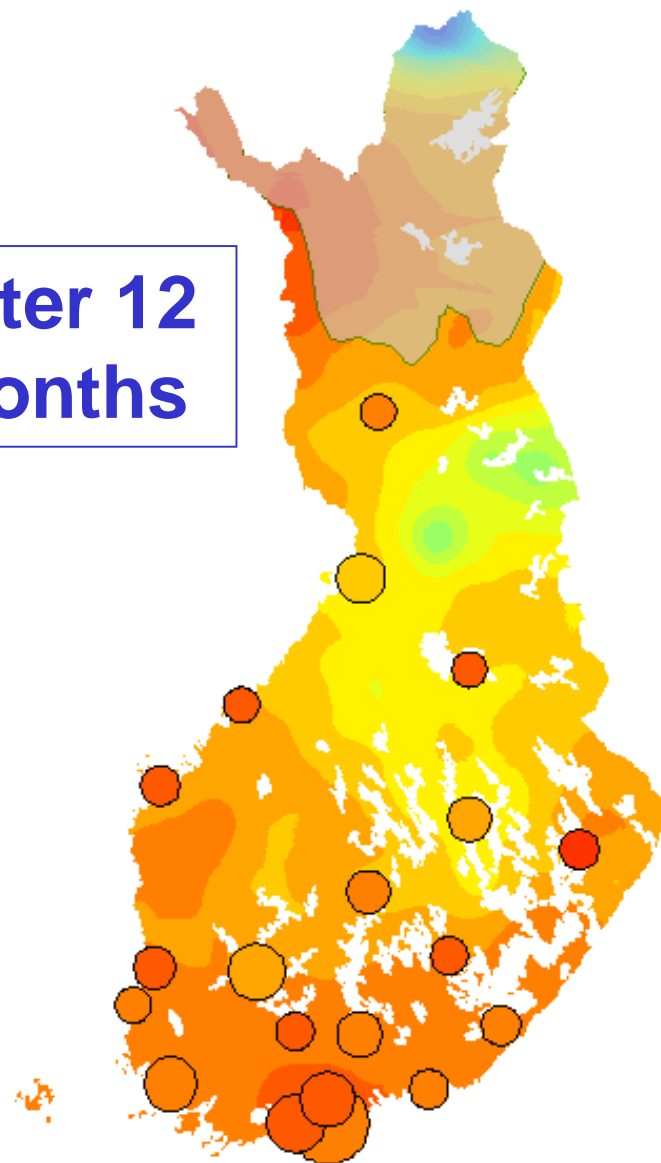
# Percentage of cancers registered to Finnish Cancer Registry (2001)

After 3 months



After 12 months

Finnish Cancer Registry 29.08.2006

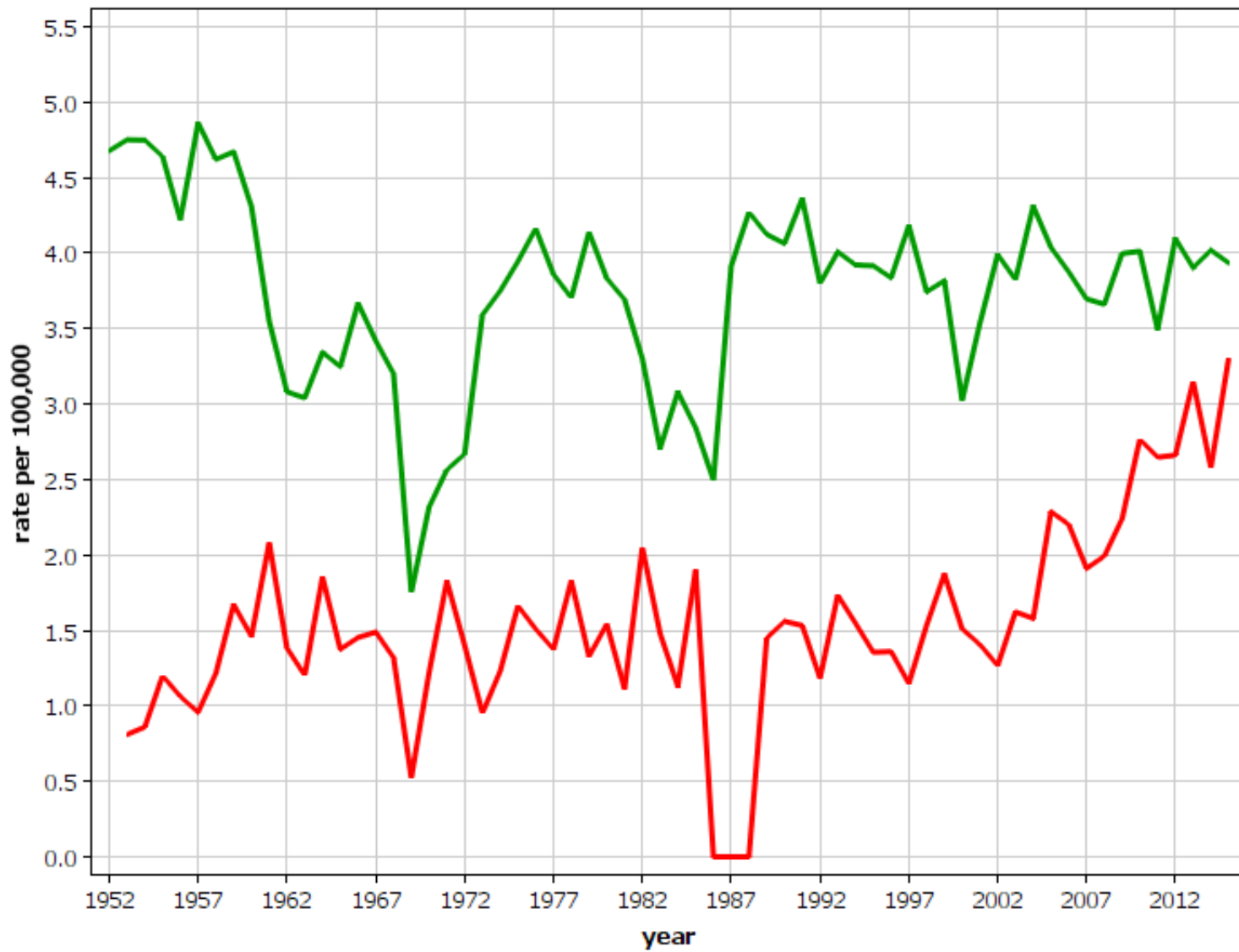


Finnish Cancer Registry 29.08.2006

# Could we get same results with cancer mortality statistics?

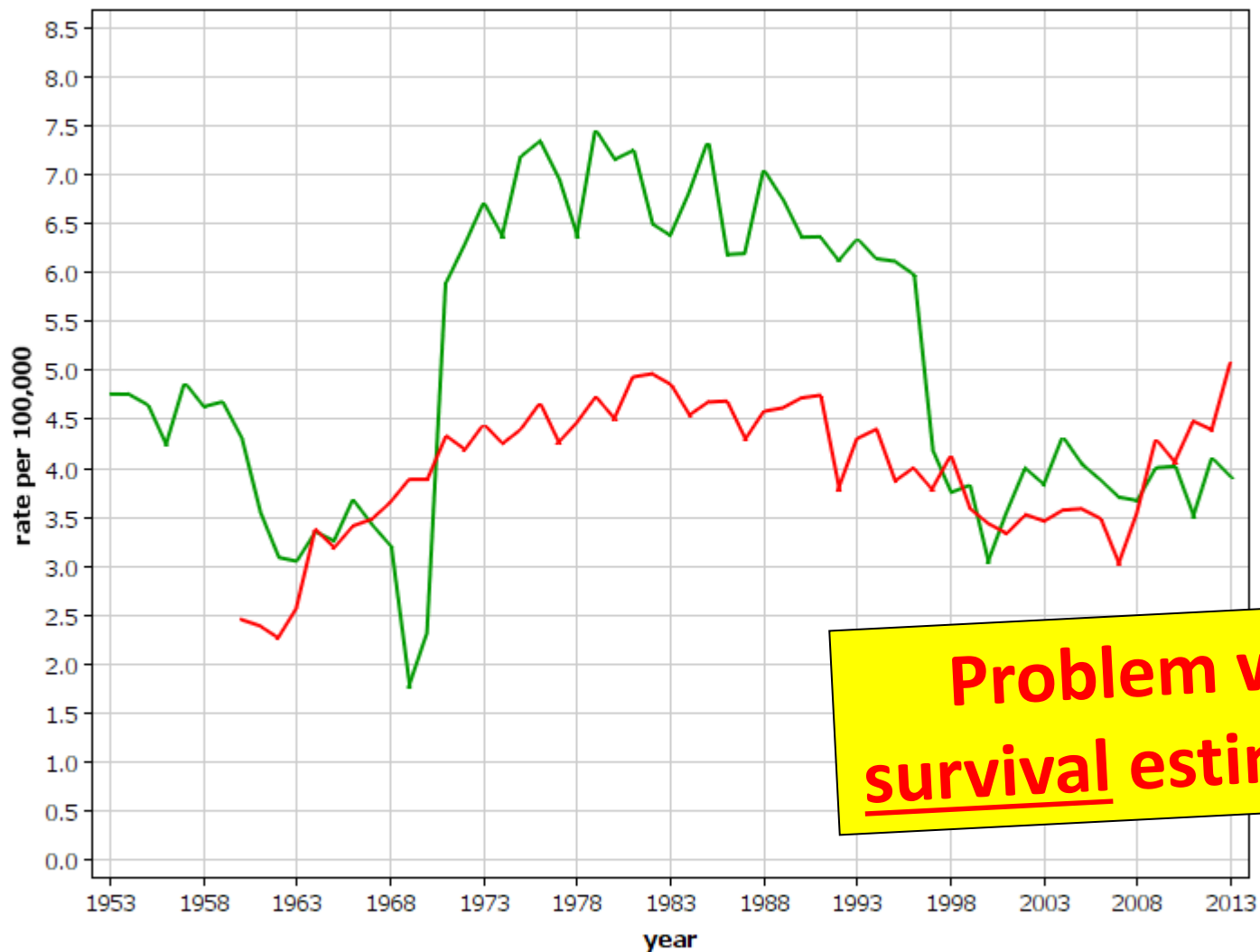
- Wrong topography in cause of death  
(liver, lung, brain, ...)

# Liver Mortality: ASR (World), Male age 0-85+



■ Norway ■ Sweden

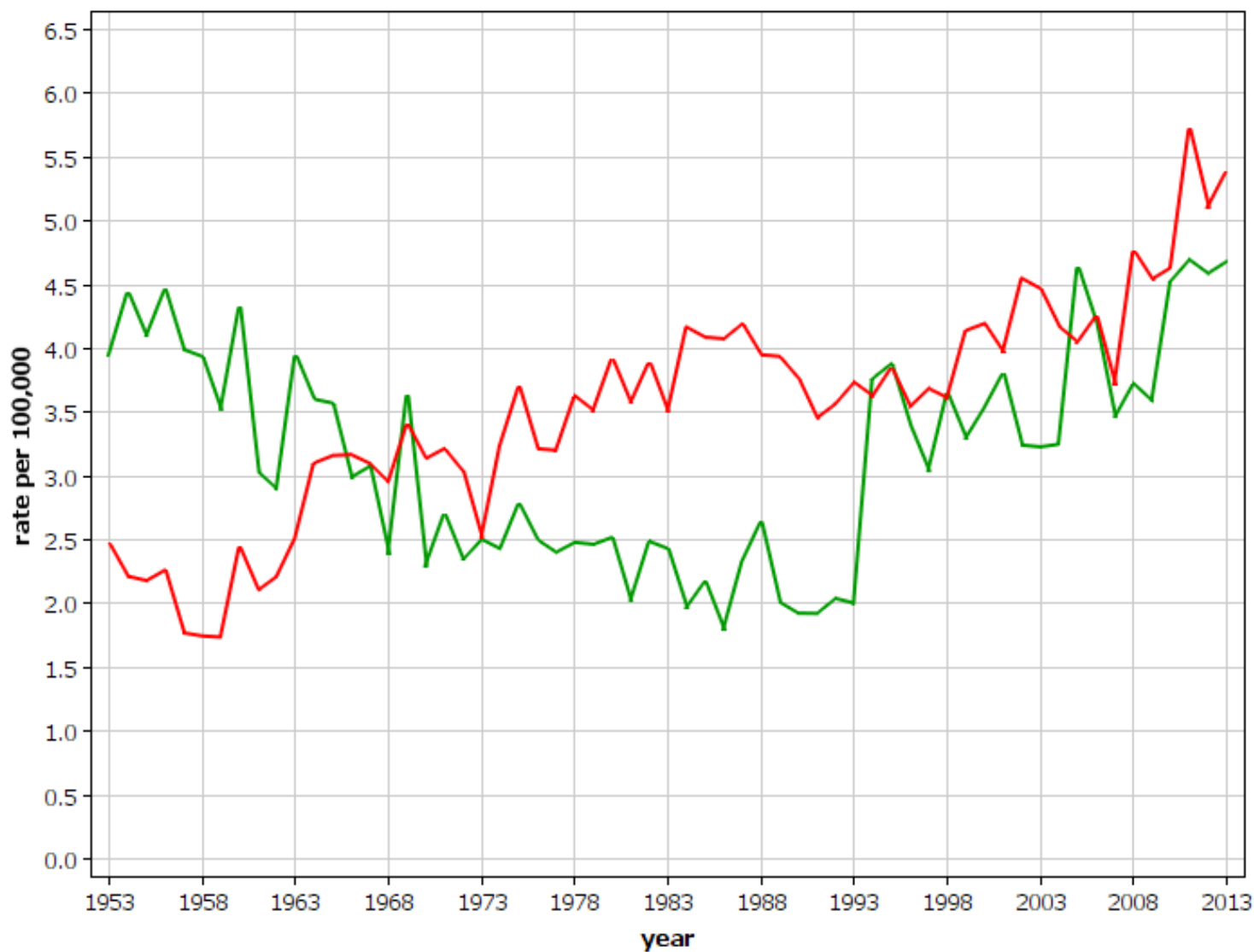
Sweden  
Liver  
ASR (World), Male age 0-85+



**Problem with survival estimates?**

■ Incidence: ■ Mortality:

Denmark  
Liver  
ASR (World), Male age 0-85+



■ Incidence: ■ Mortality:

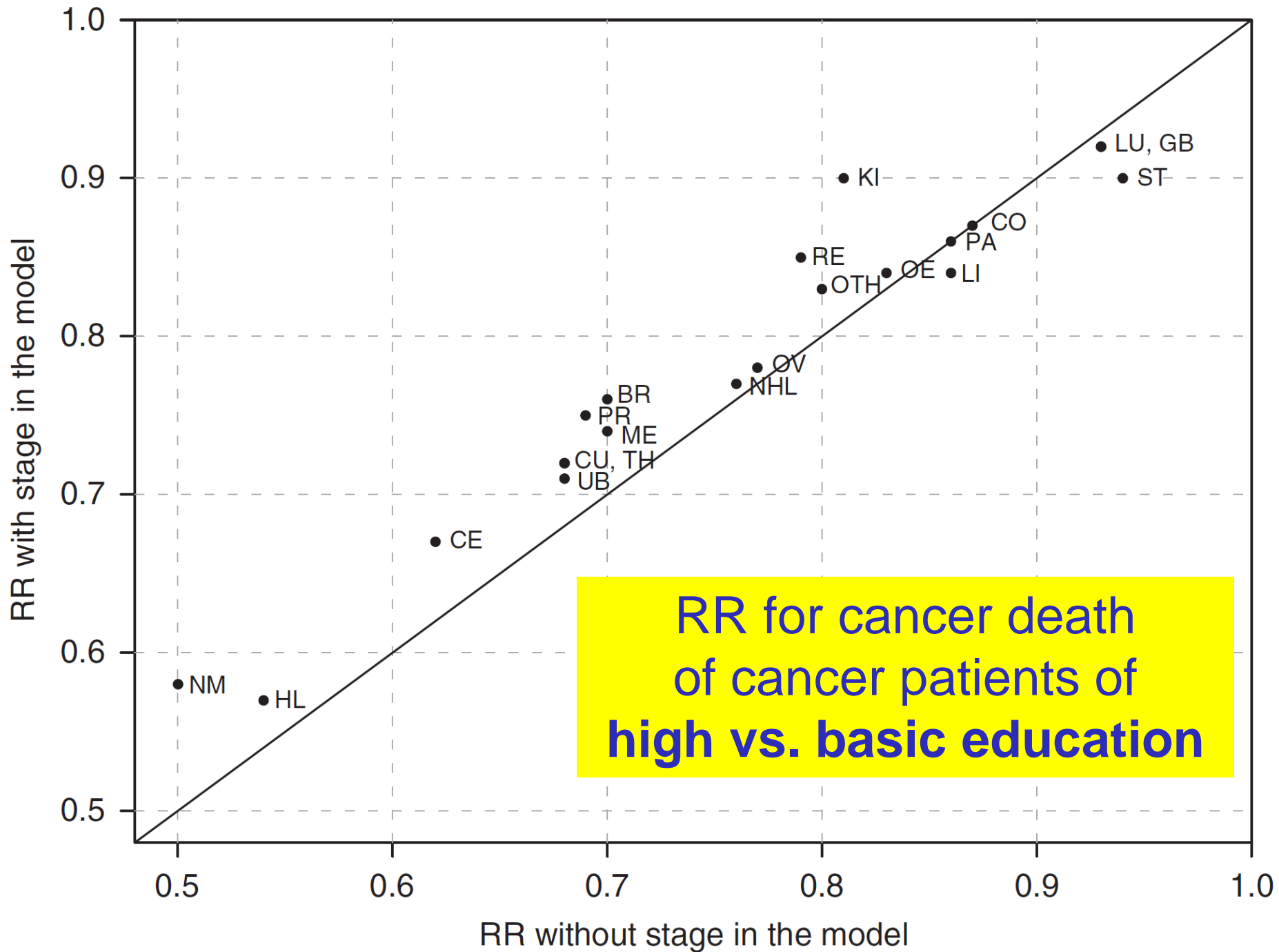
# Could we get same results with cancer mortality statistics?

- Wrong topography in cause of death (liver, lung, brain, ...)
- No morphology information
- Different survival between categories?

# Education, survival and avoidable deaths in cancer patients in Finland

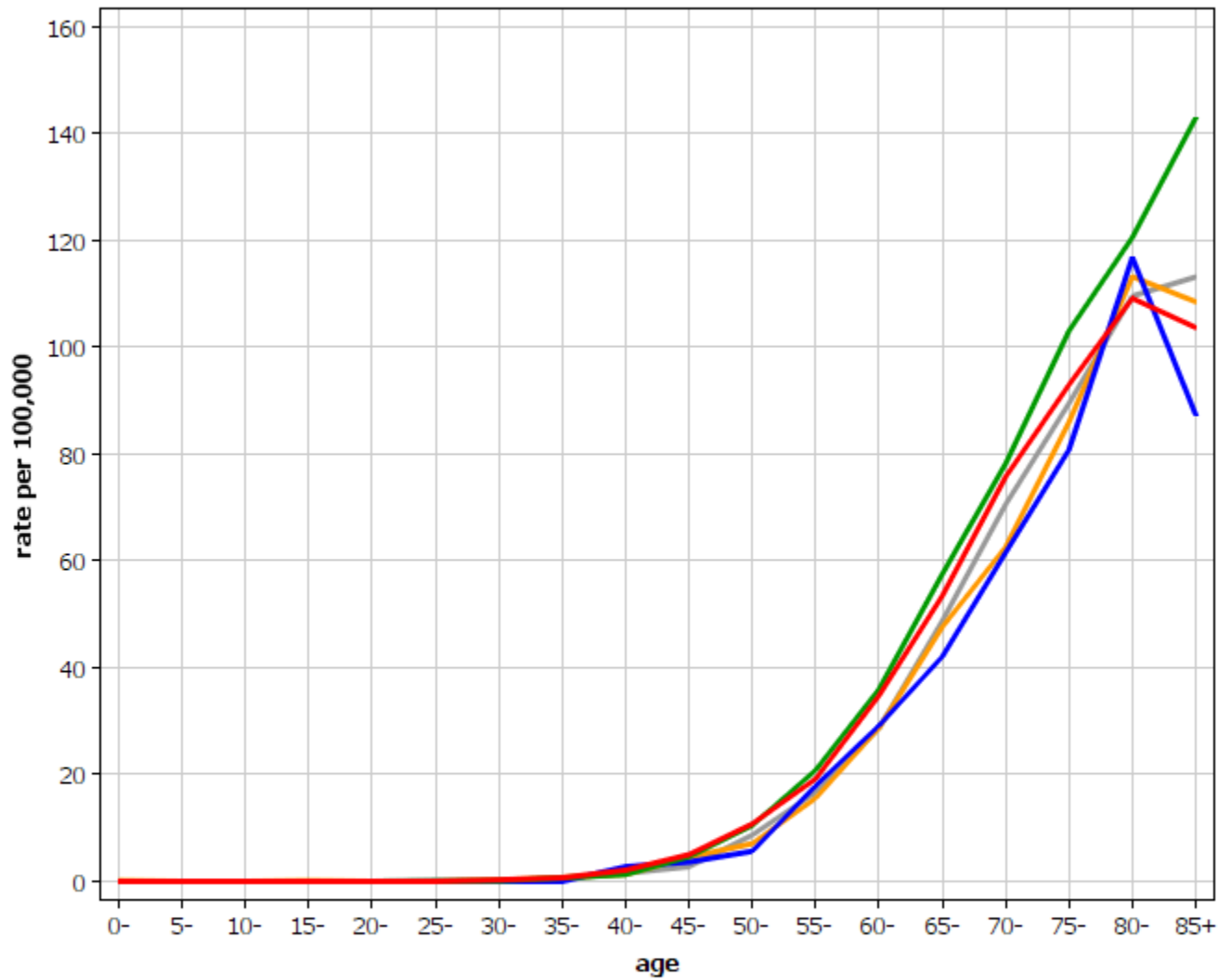
**A Pokhrel<sup>\*,1</sup>, P Martikainen<sup>2</sup>, E Pukkala<sup>1</sup>, M Rautalahti<sup>3</sup>, K Seppä<sup>1</sup> and T Hakulinen<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Finnish Cancer Registry, Institute for Statistical and Epidemiological Cancer Research, Pieni Roobertinkatu 9, FI-00130, Helsinki, Finland; <sup>2</sup>Department of Sociology, FI-00014 University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland; <sup>3</sup>Cancer Society of Finland, Pieni Roobertinkatu 9, FI-00130, Helsinki, Finland



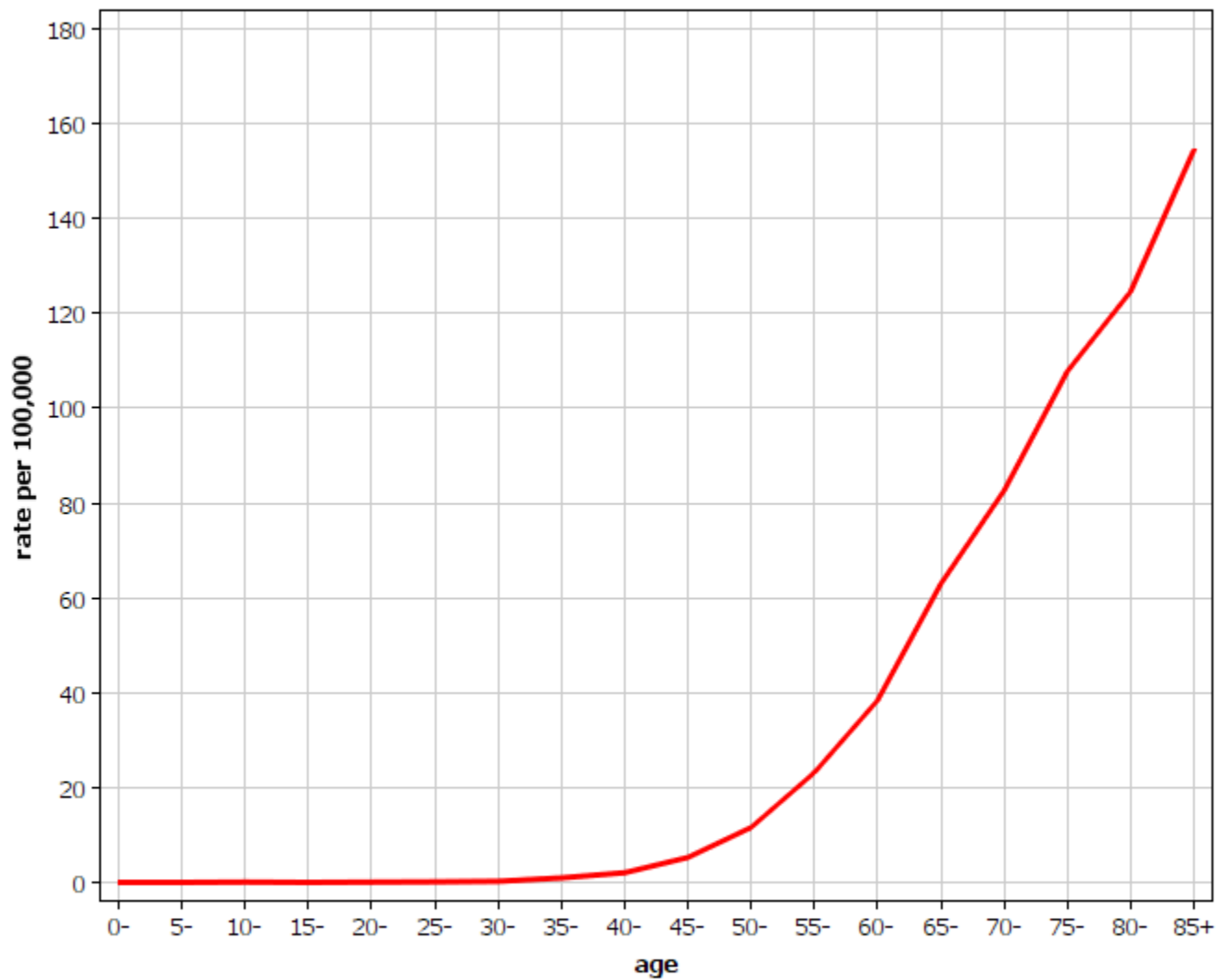


# Mortality (2006-2015) Pancreas: Male

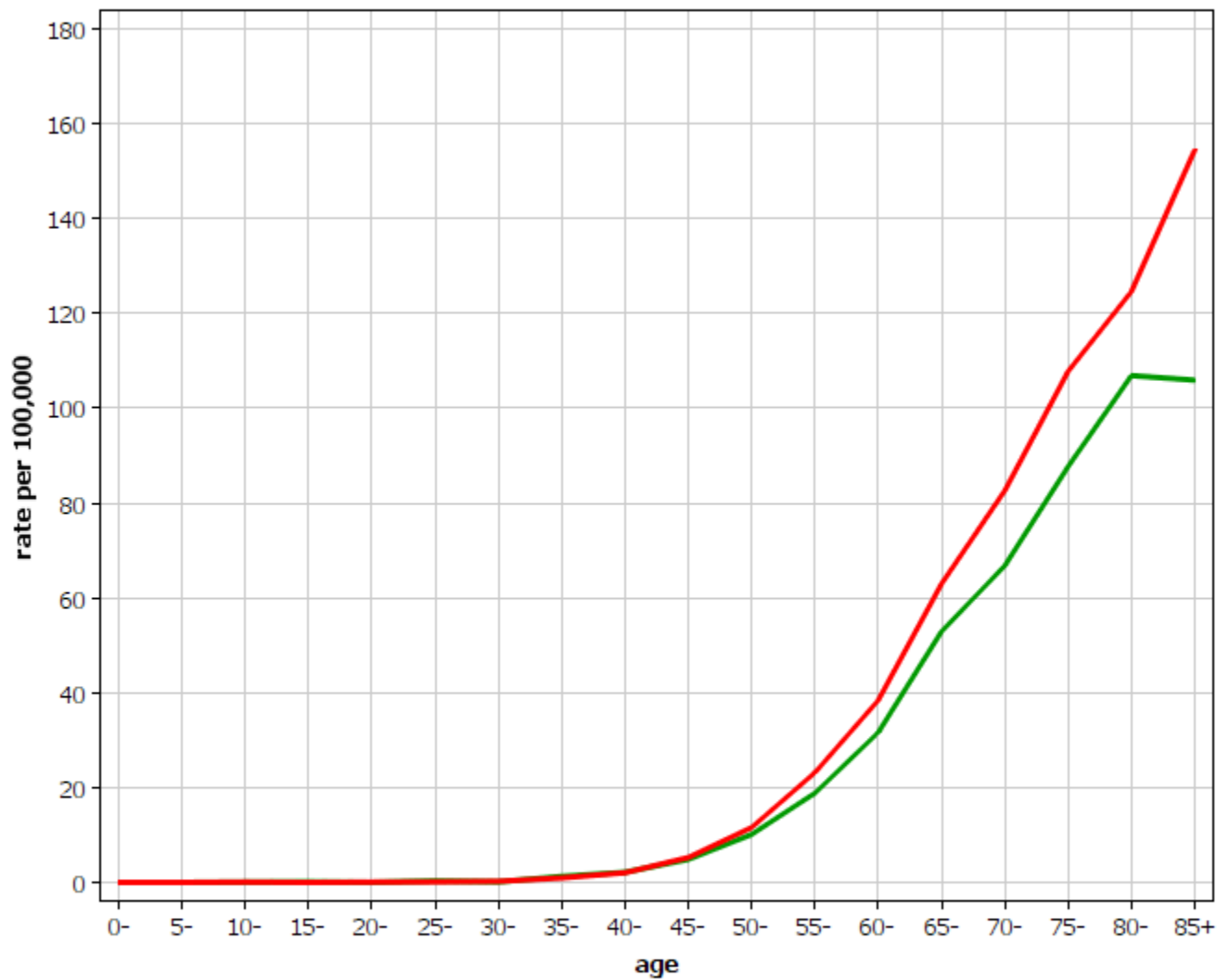


Denmark: Finland: Iceland: Norway: Sweden

# Finland-Incidence (2006-2015) Pancreas: Male

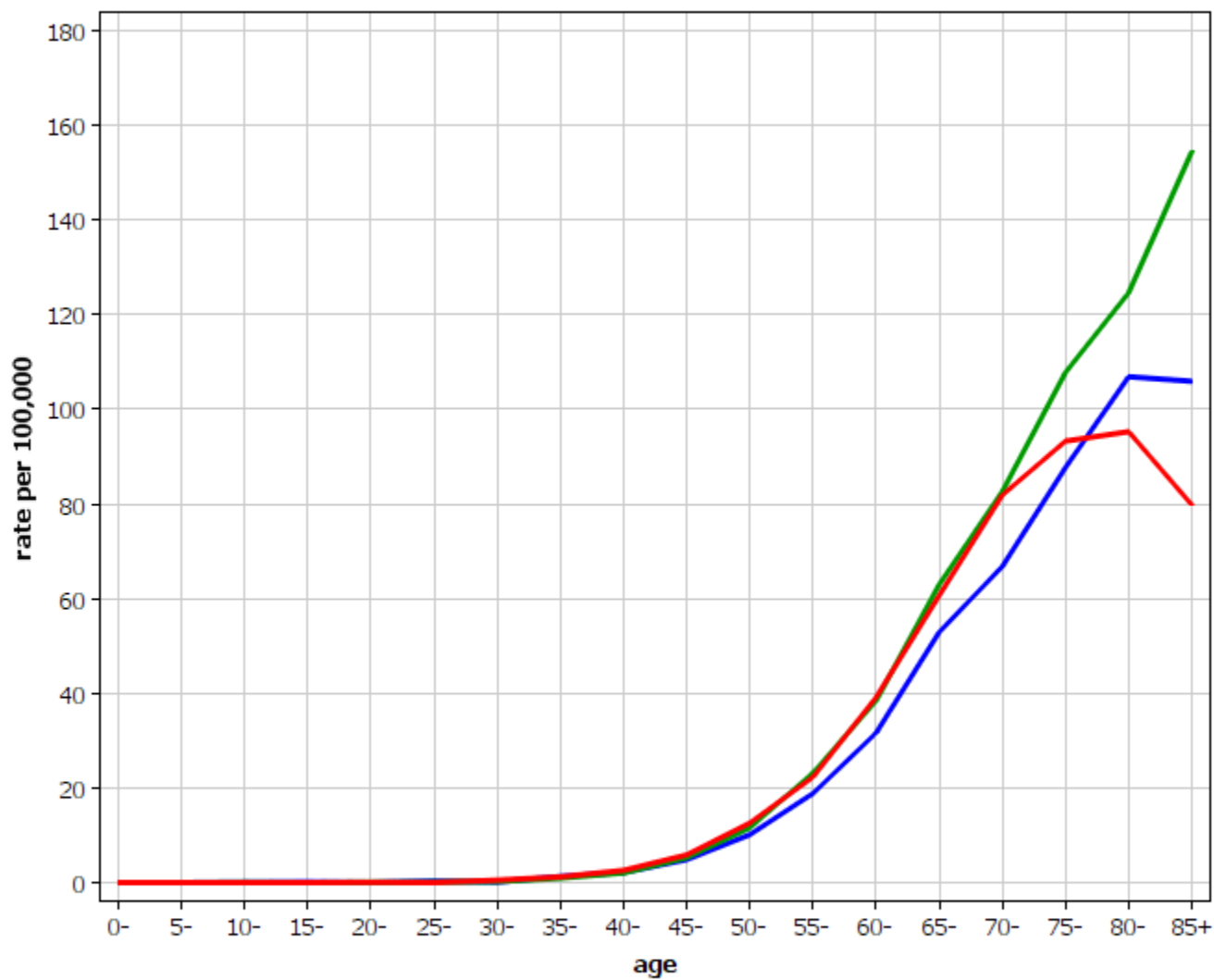


# Incidence (2006-2015) Pancreas: Male



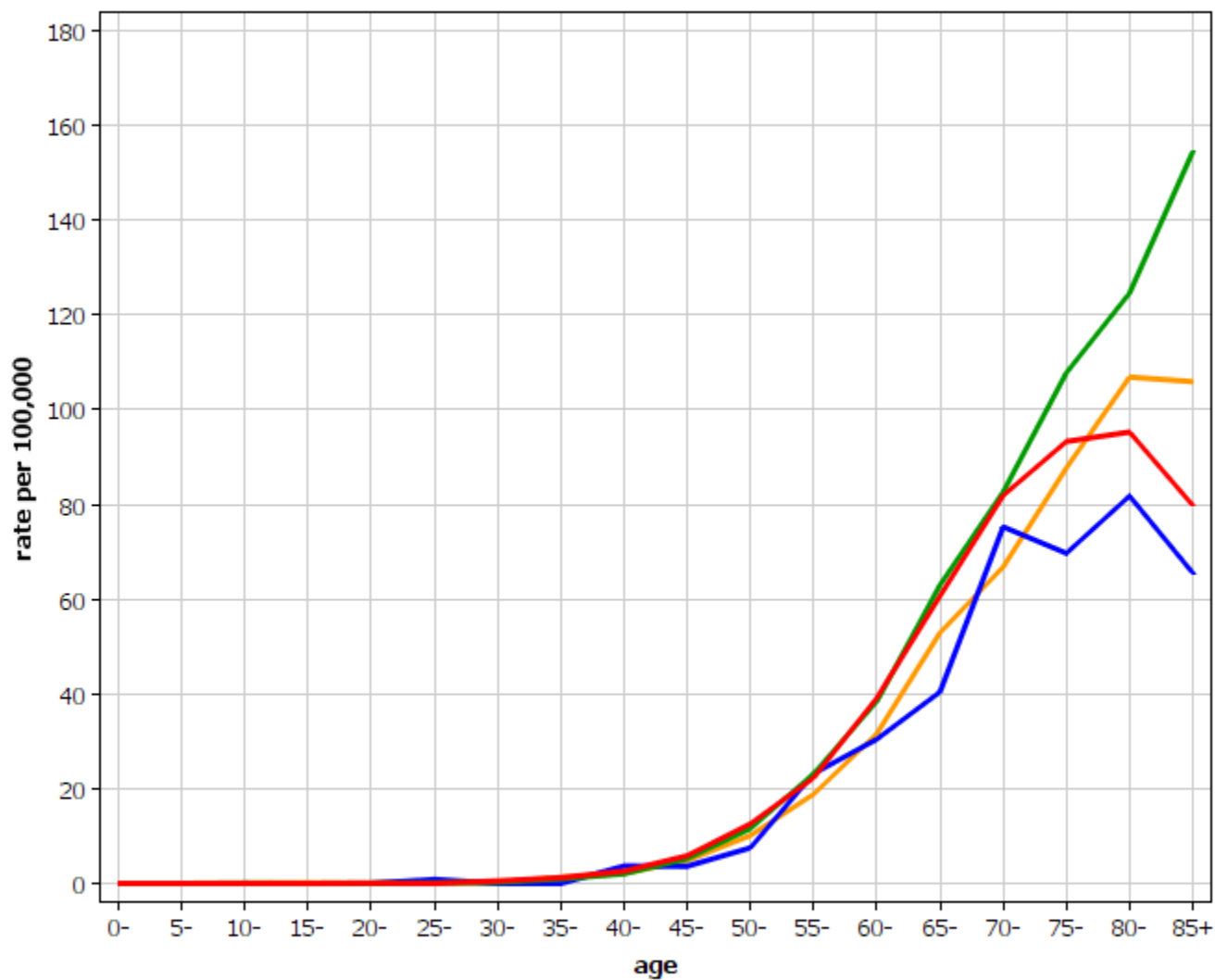
■ Finland ■ Norway

# Incidence (2006-2015) Pancreas: Male



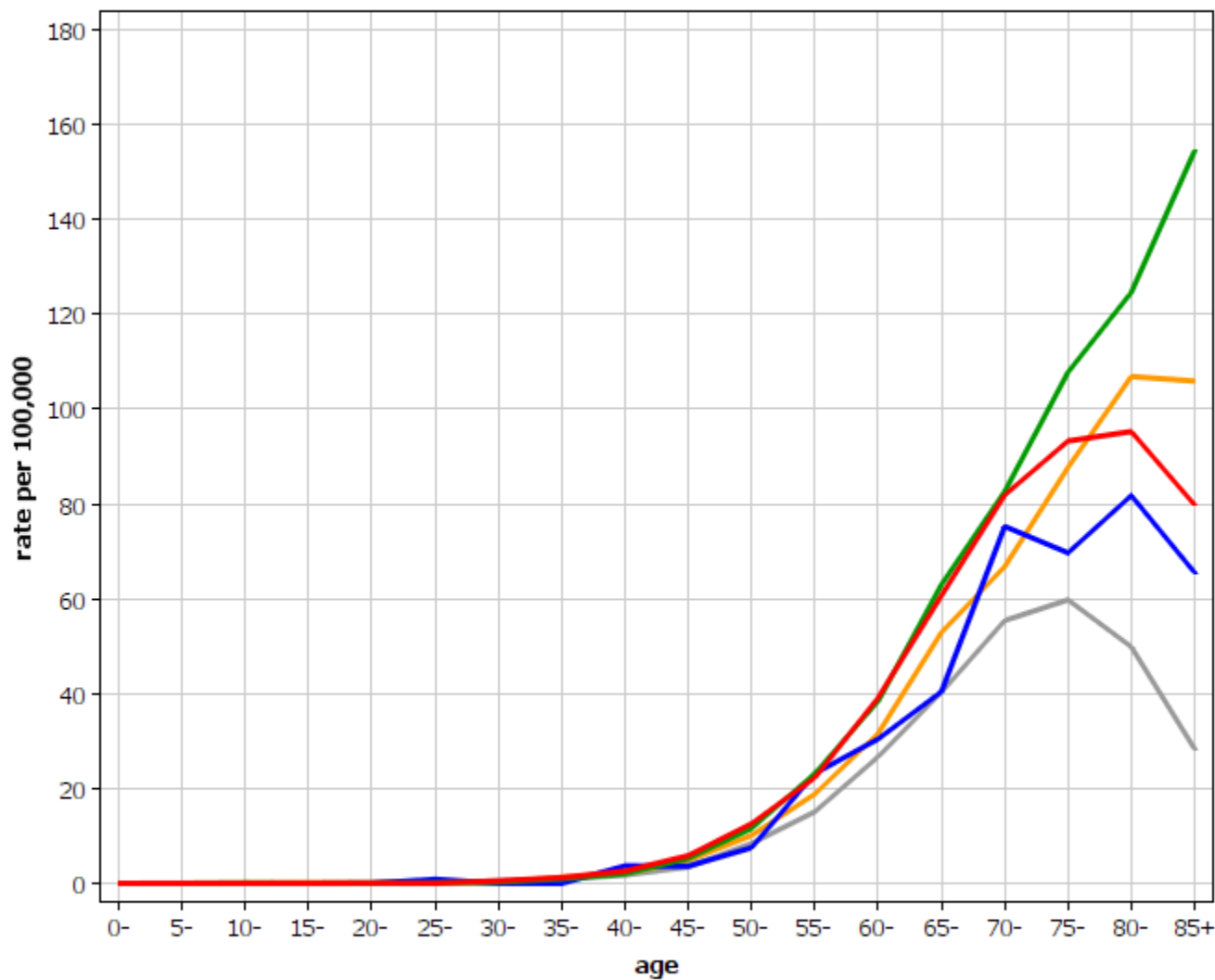
Denmark: Finland Norway

# Incidence (2006-2015) Pancreas: Male



Denmark: Finland: Iceland: Norway

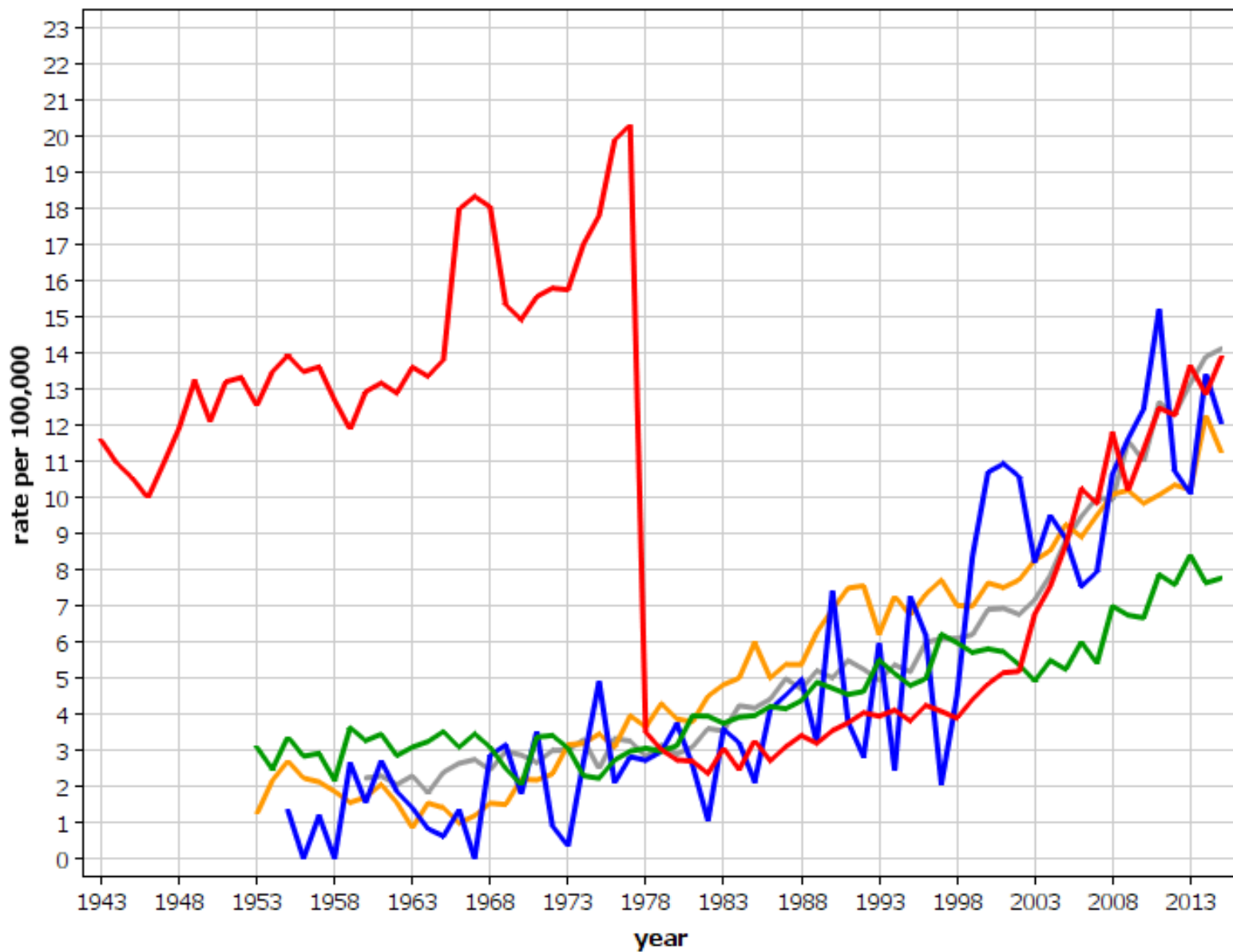
# Incidence (2006-2015) Pancreas: Male



Denmark: Finland: Iceland: Norway: Sweden

Does it matter  
(in SIR estimates)?

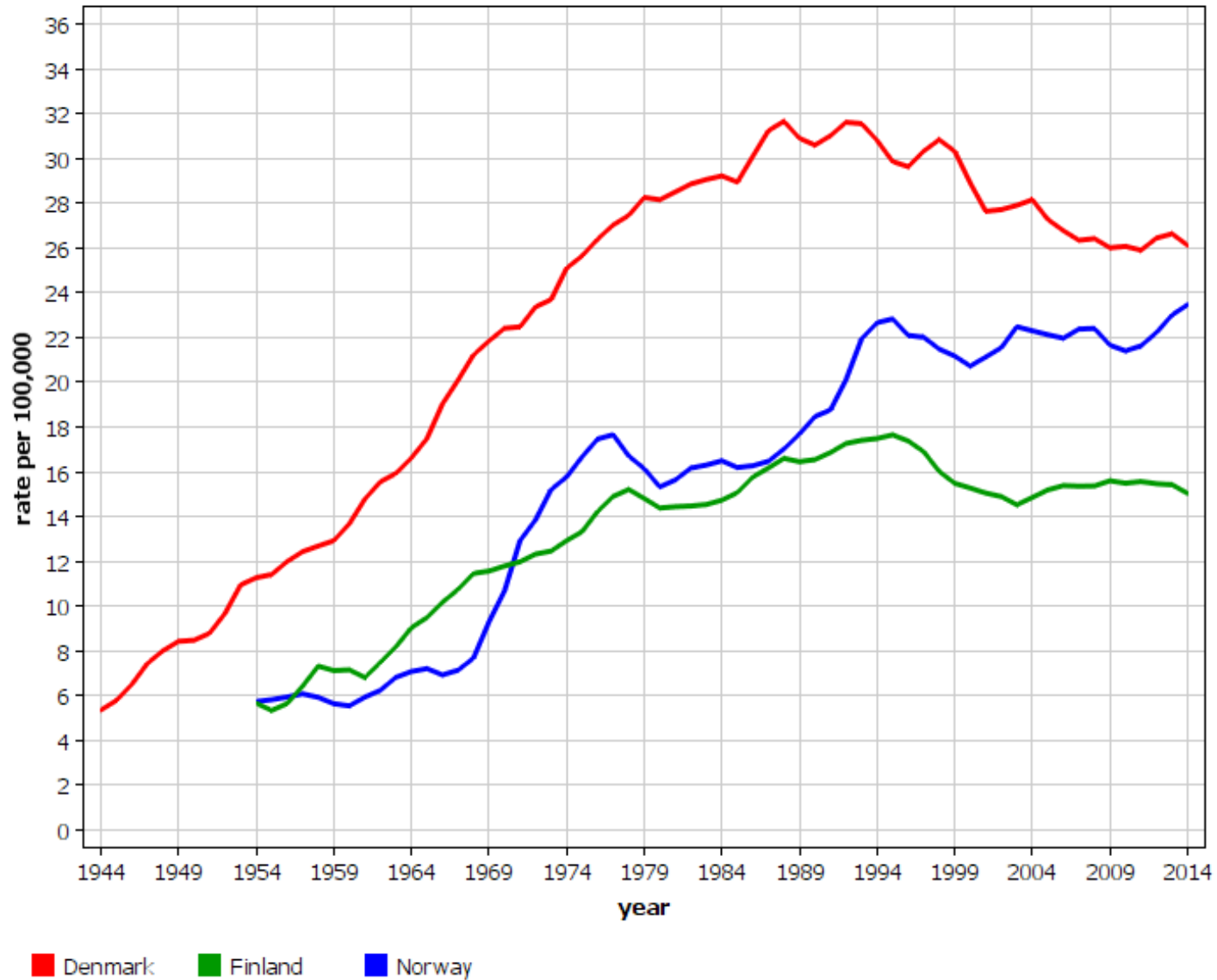
Skin, non-melanoma  
Incidence: ASR (World), Female age 0-85+



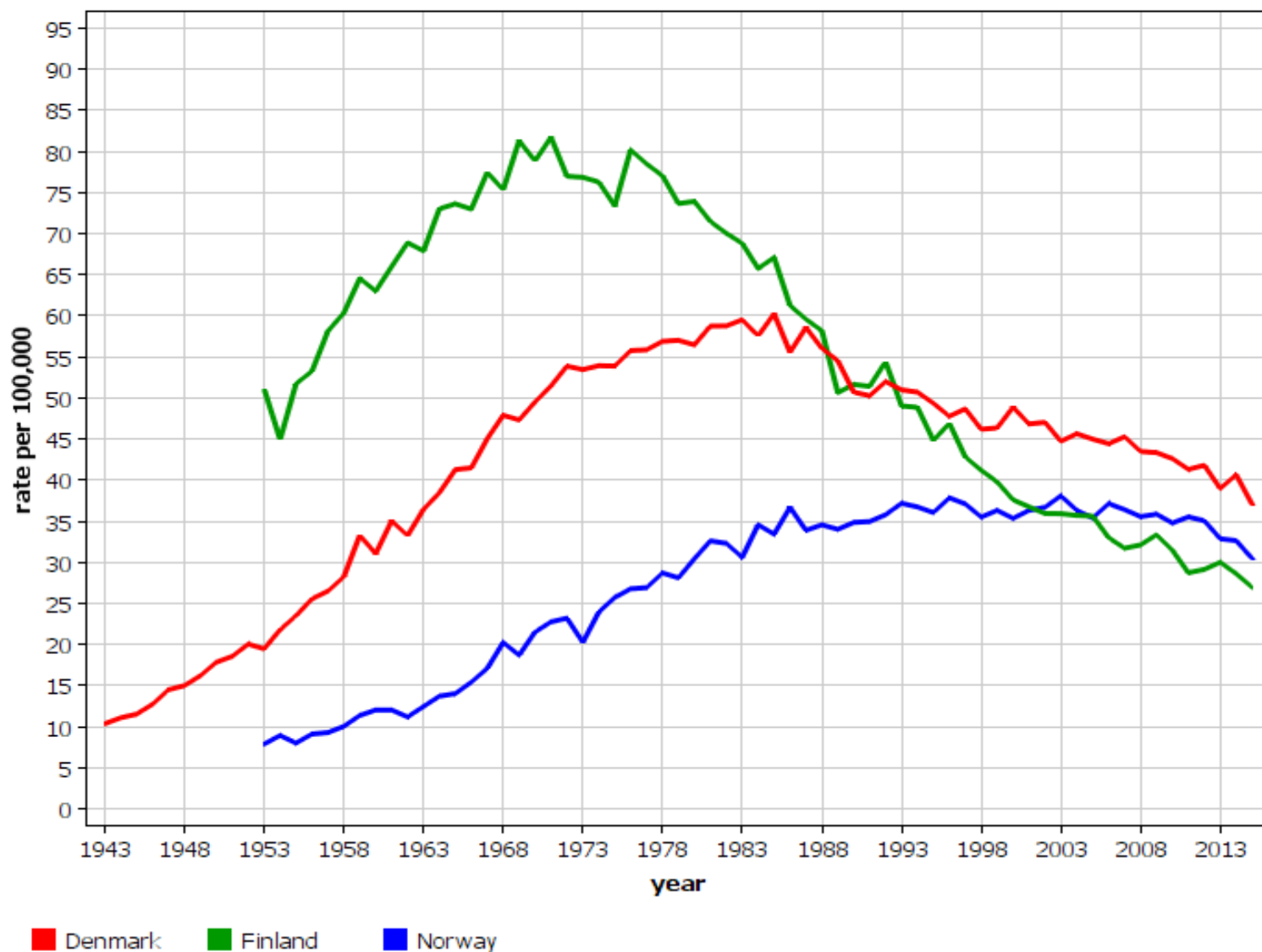
Denmark Finland Iceland Norway Sweden



# Bladder etc. Incidence: ASR (World), Male age 0-85+



# Lung Incidence: ASR (World), Male age 0-85+



Effect of primary prevention:

# Anti-Smoking Policy

(1990s +)

Lung cancer, Nordic **men**

Effect of primary prevention:

# Anti-Smoking Policy

(1990s +)

Lung cancer, Nordic **women**

# Conclusion

Are the Nordic cancer registries similar?

**YES**

**NO**

# EXERCISES

# Practicals:

designing your own register-based study on a given topic

## Purpose

### – thinking

- Is a design that "all others have used" the best one?

### – realities

- What can and what can not be done?

### – creativity in design

- Epidemiology is *arts*.

# Requirements for a register-based record linkage study

- Idea => hypothesis
- Register/file of exposed persons & exposures
- Data indicating when the persons were at risk
- Register of outcome events
- Data on confounders (from another register?)
- Linkage key
- Permissions
- Money
- Epidemiological skills
- Imagination, creativeness, fearlessness

epidemiology is arts



# Main data sources

(computerised and linkable)

Whole population

Population sample

Social Insurance Institute

\* reimbursable diseases

\* reimbursement of health care

\* other data

Institute

ational

(H)

of persons

exposed to

carcinogens (ASA)

\* numerous cohorts

of exposed persons

Usually not true:  
"This cannot be done."

Statistics Finland

\* Longitudinal

1950

-1980

occupational

SES, p

\* cause

Cancer

Registry

\* cancer incidence 1953+

\* cancer screenings 1963+

Population Register  
Center (VRK) 1967+

\* complete ID

\* place of birth

\* residential history

\* living coordinates

\* living conditions

\* parent-child links

\* PIDs of children

\* immigration/emigration date

\* date of death

National Research and  
Development Centre for  
Welfare and Health  
(Stakes)

\* hospital discharges

\* birth parameters

\* malformations

\* Finnish Information Centre

for Register Research

(RETKI)

2009: THL

Public Health  
Institute (KTL)

\* Survey data (Mini  
Finland 1967, FinRisk  
1972+, Adult

Population Health  
Survey 1978+): life  
habits (smoking,  
alcohol, diet, BMI,  
physical exercise etc)

\* Blood sera  
(maternity cohort etc.)

# Cohort study or case-control study?

- ✓ Text books: cohort studies are expensive
- ✓ This is not quite true in Nordic countries: register-based cohort studies are
  - ✓ cheap
  - ✓ rapid
  - ✓ powerful
- ✓ They are also qualitatively good, if
  - ✓ registers are non-selective
  - ✓ accuracy of the data is good
  - ✓ there are people who understand the pitfalls
- ✓ Case-control approach is justified
  - ✓ if routine registers offer low-quality data
  - ✓ if additional data need to be collected
  - ✓ if laboratory tests etc. are required



# Exercise: plan a register-based study

1. Does asbestos at work cause peritoneal mesothelioma (very rare cancer, cannot be studied in normal work place cohorts)?
2. Does living close to dump areas cause cancer?
3. Does baldness medication (prescription drug with some hormonal effects) increase risk of male breast cancer?
4. Do jetlags increase your cancer risk?