

# Nuisance Calls: A Comparative Policy Study

Claire Milne

[cbm@antelope.org.uk](mailto:cbm@antelope.org.uk)

LAP/MAAWG Voice Telephony Abuse  
session, 11 June 2015

# The study

- Believed to be the first of its kind
- Commissioned and used by StepChange Debt Charity; full report available at [www.stepchange.org/got\\_their\\_number.aspx](http://www.stepchange.org/got_their_number.aspx)
- Help from LSE with research and publicity
- Many other people helped, including some LAP members

Thanks to everyone above!

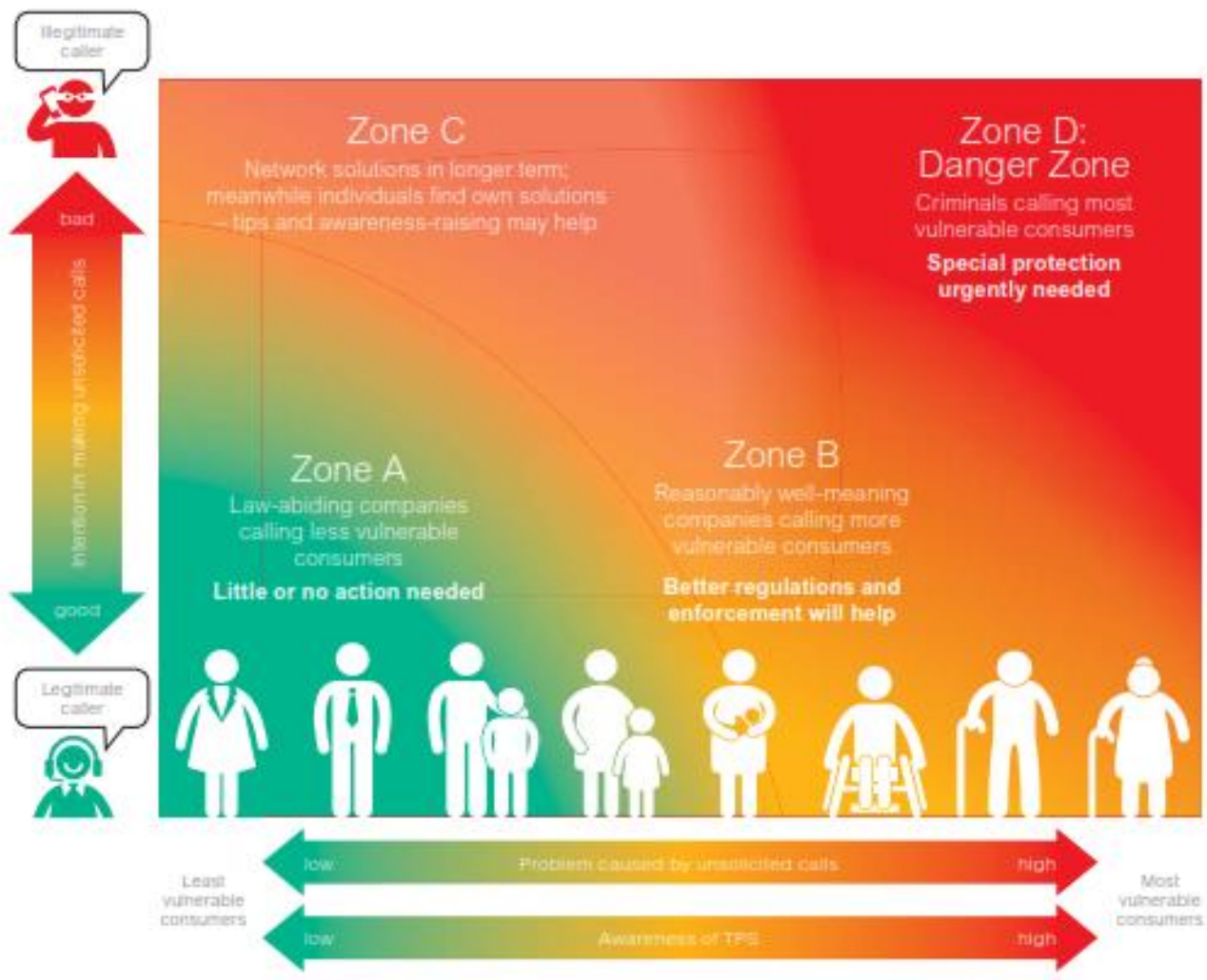
# Country coverage

- Full case studies: Australia, Germany, India and Pakistan, UK, USA.
- Smaller case studies: Canada, Netherlands and Norway.
- See [appendix volume](#) for details.
- Also some information from several other countries.
- Would like more! **LSE/LAP study extension?**

# High level findings

- **Similar and often growing problems all over**, including developing countries (mainly SMS spam).
- Some countries suffer worse than others, but lack of statistics (and absence of comparable statistics) makes **comparison hard**.
- **Good practices** in some countries could be considered for wider adoption.
- **International co-operation** is key to progress.

# Two problem dimensions

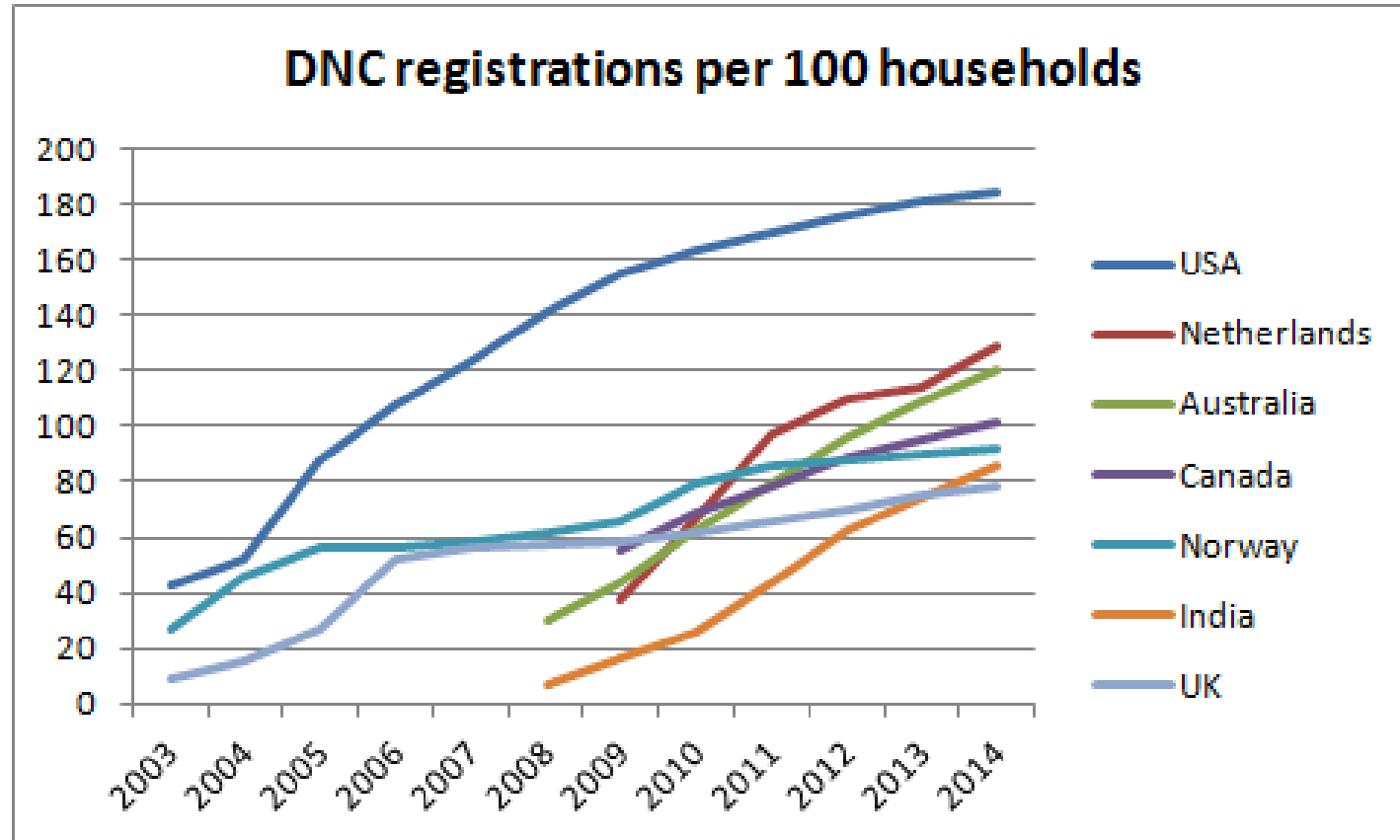


# Robinson staircase



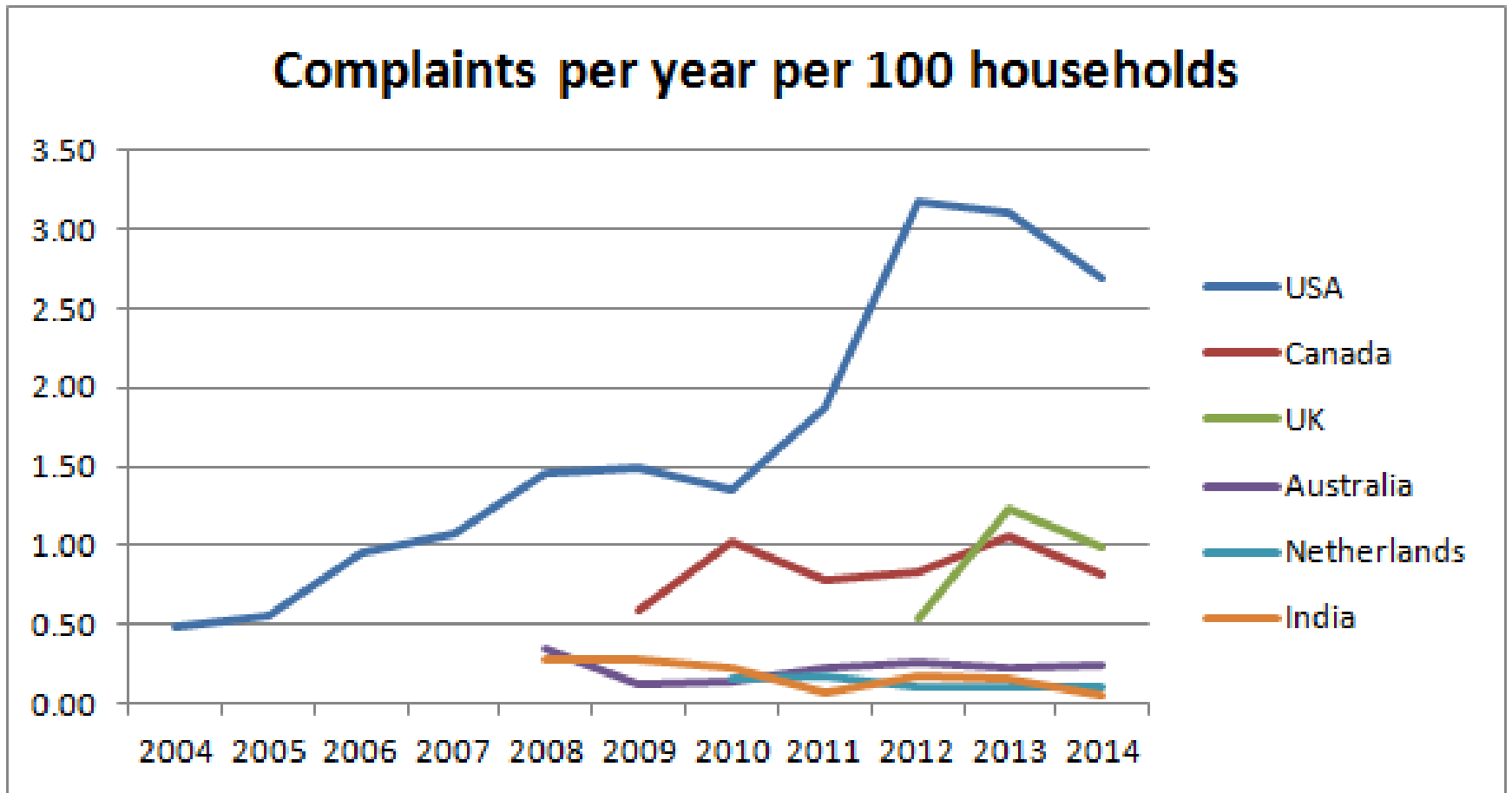
| Country     | Year | Authority    | Scope of authority                  |
|-------------|------|--------------|-------------------------------------|
| UK          | 1999 | Ofcom, ICO   | Communications, privacy             |
| USA         | 2003 | FTC, FCC     | Consumer protection, communications |
| Spain       | 2003 | AEPD         | Privacy                             |
| Germany     | 2004 | BNetzA       | Networks, communications            |
| Ireland     | 2005 | Comreg, ODPC | Communications, privacy             |
| Australia   | 2006 | ACMA         | Communications                      |
| India       | 2007 | TRAI         | Communications                      |
| Canada      | 2008 | CRTC         | Communications                      |
| Hong Kong   | 2009 | Ofca         | Communications                      |
| Netherlands | 2009 | ACM          | Consumer protection                 |
| Pakistan    | 2009 | PTA          | Communications                      |
| Italy       | 2010 | MED, GPDP    | Communications, privacy             |
| France      | 2011 | MEF          | Consumer protection                 |
| Belgium     | 2012 | SPFE         | Economy, disputes                   |
| Singapore   | 2014 | PDPC         | Privacy                             |

# Do Not Call registrations





# Complaint statistics



# Worth thinking about – each country

- Plan **next step up Robinson staircase** (based on proper study of those making and receiving calls).
- Simple regulatory structure with **adequate resource** (Canada).
- Relate fines to **severity of offence**, unconstrained by putting firm out of business (USA).
- **Restrict validity of contracts** made over the phone (Netherlands, Norway).
- **Boost consumer awareness** of DNC option (India).
- **Advanced low cost network blocking** options (France) and easy complaints (under development).

# Worth thinking about - together

- Share statistical metadata, to enable **meaningful comparisons** between countries.
- Measure **incidence of unwanted calls** as well as complaints (as in UK).
- Joint study of enforcement focus – weigh **probability of detection** vs **consequences if detected**.
- **More collaboration** on caller ID, international investigations and enforcement, honeypots, etc.

# Conclusion

- Thanks for your time and attention.
- Comments/questions welcome – any time today.
- And do get in touch later if you want to discuss any of this – [cbm@antelope.org.uk](mailto:cbm@antelope.org.uk).