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## **OFFICE ON MISSING PERSONS AND FORENSICS EULEX-KOSOVO**

### **SOME PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENTS: SEXUAL ASSAULTS IN KOSOVO**

#### **Presentation**

This document is the first in a series of summaries which serve to track the evolution of violent criminality in Kosovo over the past 5 years. It has the purpose of providing EULEX judges, prosecutors, forensic scientists, police officers and human rights/gender experts with global information on various violent criminal phenomena which are being experienced in Kosovo. Additionally, it aims to set a bench mark from which to measure the impact that relevant legislation put in place to combat this type of offenses may have in the future. Lastly, it seeks to highlight important medico-legal topics which are currently not in the public domain.

Similar documents are being produced about homicide/femicide, suicide, accidental deaths, domestic violence and child abuse.

#### **Sexual Offenses in Kosovo**

Sexual violence destroys lives. All members of society are vulnerable to this crime, regardless of ethnic, age, or social standing. When sexual assault does occur, victims deserve competent and compassionate care. It is known that effective collection of evidence is of paramount importance to successfully prosecute sex offenders. Just as critical is performing sexual assault forensic exams in a sensitive, dignified, and victim-centered manner. For individuals who experience this horrendous crime, having a positive experience with the criminal justice system can contribute greatly to their overall healing.

This document outlines the results of a brief quantitative exploration of sexual assault cases in Kosovo for the period 2003 - 2008. The drive behind this analysis is to establish the minimum extent of this phenomenon. For the victims this includes:

- Determining the demographic profile
- Determining the high risk age groups

Likewise, for offenders:

- Determining the demographic profile
- Determining age groups

The main body of data analyzed comes from the records of the Medical Examiner's Office, a division of the Office on Missing Persons and Forensics (MEO OMPF).

### **Results**

- The study analyzed the data from 401 sexual assault cases examined by MEO OMPF over the period 2003 – 2008 (June)
- The global age range of victims in the study is 4 - 81
- 38% of sexual assault victims are under 16 years of age. This constitutes child abuse as well as sexual assault
- Whilst females of all ages may be victimized, those most at risk are in the 15–16 year old range (22% of the total sample)
- The study revealed that at least one female is sexually assaulted every 3.5 days in Kosovo
- Only 41 perpetrators were brought in for forensic examination for the period under study
- The global age range for perpetrators is 13 - 41
- Of these, 41% are between 21–25 years of age
- The mean number of sexually assaulted females per year is 86.4. This equates to 7.2 / month
- Highest risk month: May (3.3 sexual assaults/week)
- Lowest risk month: November (1 sexual assault /week)
- There are two sexual assault “activity peaks”: May and September
- Highest sexual assault incidence season: Spring (35%)
- Lowest sexual assault incidence season: Autumn (16%)
- Sexual assaults increase by 64% from Winter to Spring
- Municipality with the highest incidence of sexual assault: Prishtinë/ Priština
- Prishtinë/ Priština (54%)
- Incidence of sexual assault: Rural vs. Urban Prishtinë/ Priština: 56% vs. 44%
- Municipality with lowest incidence of sexual assault: Gjakovë/ Đakovica (5%)

The true extent of sexual assault in Kosovo remains unknown. The data presented should be seen as a minimum reflection of a larger phenomenon. A small pilot survey carried out by the author this year revealed that 70% of respondents had suffered some form of sexual assault. The vast majority had been victimized by a male relative. None of them reported it to the authorities.

A detailed report is currently being prepared. Readers are encouraged to contribute with input to complement this series. Detailed statistics, tables and graphs are available on request. Please contact:

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