

## **THE VICTIMS OF VIOLENT CRIMINALITY IN ROMANIA – EVOLUTIONS AND TENDENCIES –**

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*In Romania, the official police and justice statistics offer few information and data about the intensity of violent crimes and their victims. Only few research projects are trying to explain the causes and motives of crime, as well as the role of the victim in the genesis of crime. This study is trying to focus on the main tendencies in the evolution of violent crimes, on the typology of victims and aggressors in intra and extra familial surrounds, in order to identify solutions to prevent the victimization of persons.*

### **Criminality and violence in the Romanian society**

The evolution of contemporary societies evinces the fact that, despite the intensification of the intervention of social control factors in the prevention of criminality, we witness a recrudescence and amplification of violent and aggressive acts against the life and physical integrity of people, which produce numerous human victims and material losses, generating feelings of fear and social insecurity.

Violent criminality “covers a large specter of behaviors, with a complex etiology” (R.M. Stănoiu *et al.*, 1994), which includes the unlawful acts and crimes committed against the individual (manslaughter, rape, physical aggression of all types, simple or serious battery, physical attack resulting in death etc.), as well as those committed against the individual and their patrimony (robbery, thefts etc). Representing a social problem, with destructive and demoralizing consequences at the level of individuals and social groups, violent crimes and murders become salient by the high degree of social perilousness, as they entail the use of force and physical coercion on individuals, resulting in major material and moral prejudices caused to the victims, most of times irreparable in nature. Having a complex etiology, within which several elements are involved – the author of violence, the violent action and the victim of violence –, violent criminality is sensibly influenced, during the period of transition that the Romanian society is undergoing, by the drop in efficiency of the institutions specialized in social control, the dissolution of community social control and social solidarity networks, as well as the diminution of the prestige and efficiency of the justice system and the police force in the fight against and firm sanctioning of aggressors and effective, moral and material reparations for the victims (D. Banciu *et al.*, 2002). Among the factors that augment the various forms of violent criminality one can enumerate, also, the poverty of the population and the economic difficulties experienced by a series of individuals, lack of education, immorality and violence instated in society, frequent and excessive alcohol consumption, negative influence exerted by some entourages and street gangs, disorganization of the family etc. (S. Rădulescu, 1998)

The studies and researches carried out in various countries, including Romania, exhibit that the violent crimes and murders present certain particularities, such as (D. Banciu *et al.*, 2002):

1. People who commit such violent crimes give into, as a rule, some impulses of the moment or explosive states, not having the capacity of controlling their emotional balance in such moments.

2. Committing violent crimes is augmented by a low level of schooling and culture of the aggressors, as by their deficient integration into family, profession or community.

3. The factors of personality are involved, many times, in the committing of violent crimes, aggressive behavior being often the consequence of some states of personal frustration felt by some individuals.

4. Alcohol consumption, which precedes in many cases violent action, represents an altering criminogenic condition (opportunity).

5. Among the mobiles of the aggressors, the most frequent ones are theft, revenge, jealousy (in the case of manslaughter and robbery), satisfaction of some sexual instincts (in the case of rapes) etc.

On their turn, the *victims* of violent crimes are represented by those people who stand or are made to stand the physical threats of moral constraints and physical aggressions exerted through various means by the aggressors. Function of the degree of involvement in the committing of violent actions, some victims can be *chance* or *accidental* (without having had any previous relations with the aggressor), other can be *provocative*, precipitating the outburst of violent action (through demeanor, language, behavior etc.), while other are weak, from a physical, biological and constitutional point of view, having a high degree of "victim vulnerability" to aggression (children, teenagers, women, elderly people, disabled people) (T. Butoi *et al.*, 2004).

## **Tendencies and evolutions of violent crimes during transition**

During the period of transition, the evolution of criminality in Romania recorded a series of oscillating tendencies as regards the volume, the intensity and the ampleness of the various types of performed crimes. Within the aforementioned, the crimes against the person have had a trend of permanent increase, with the exception of 1996, when they decreased slightly, having the highest share in the ensemble of criminality brought to trial of 29.9% in 2000; for this share to drop to 27.0% in 2002. Among the crimes against the person, the ones of *manslaughter* record annual increasing and decreasing trends, reaching the highest volume in 1997, when 1,472 people were convicted, and during the period of analysis in its entirety, their share from the total crimes against the person has oscillated between 5.8 and 7.4% (*The Statistic Annual of Romania*, 1997-2000). In exchange, with the exception of the period during 1990-1992, when they registered a continuous increase, the crimes of rape have recorded significant decreases, especially after 1996, their share in the ensemble of the crimes against the person, reducing to 5.1% in 1995 and 2.9% in 2002 (*The Statistic Annual of Romania*, 1997-2000).

At the same time, the evolution of violent crimes committed against the person point to a series of sensible differences function of a series of indicators, such as: gender, age or area of residence of the persons convicted for such crimes.

### **a) Gender**

It represents a significant indicator for the etiology and typology of violent crimes against the person (see Table 1).

The result is that *men* hold the overwhelming share in these types of violent crimes, compared to the very low share of women, with the exception of manslaughter, where women have a slightly higher share. This distribution raises the problem of placing the etiology of violence

in the area of the individual's heredity (the so-called theory of innate violence), or in the one of their basic personality (the theory of frustration-violence), or in the one of the social environment where the individual lives (the theory of socialization-violence).

**Table 1.** The average share of the persons condemned for crimes against the person function of gender, during 1990-2000

Type of crime	Men (%)	Women (%)
Manslaughter	93.0	7.0
Death-causing injuries	96.7	3.3
Serious battery	96.4	3.6
Rape	99.8	0.2
Robbery	96.4	3.6

Source: *Criminological study regarding the state of criminality during 1989-2000*, The Office of Criminology of the Prosecuting Magistracy of the High Court of Cassation and Justice, Bucharest, 2000, 110.

### b) Age

In the ensemble of violent criminality, the persons having a *relatively young age* hold the highest shares, compared to the adult or elderly individuals (see Table 2).

It can be noticed that, in an average proportion of approx. 50%, the people convicted for violent crimes against the person belong to the group of *young age* (21-34 years) who, due to some difficulties of social adaptation, lack of culture and education and the negative influence of the entourage, commit mostly robbery, rape, death-causing injuries, being convicted to a heavy sentence in prison, with rather reduced chances of re-socialization and social reinsertion. Although, in the ensemble of such types of crimes, the minors do not hold significant shares, they are involved more in committing rapes and robberies.

**Table 2.** The average share of the persons condemned for crimes against the person function of age, during 1990-2000

Type of crime	Age group				
	Minors (%)	Between 18-20 years (%)	Between 21-34 years (%)	Between 35-34 years (%)	Over 55 years (%)
Manslaughter	4.6	8.0	41.1	34.6	11.7
Death-causing injuries	4.2	9.2	50.6	29.8	6.1
Serious battery	5.0	9.1	42.9	28.6	8.2
Rape	13.0	23.7	49.8	11.5	1.0
Robbery	18.0	19.0	48.8	13.3	0.9

Source: *Criminological study regarding the state of criminality during 1989-2000*, The Office of Criminology of the Prosecuting Magistracy of the High Court of Cassation and Justice, Bucharest, 2000, 110.

### c) Area of residence

From the perspective of this indicator, a series of significant differences emerge, regarding the number and share of the persons convicted for crimes against the person (see Table 3).

It can be observed that, aside from robbery, the share of persons from the *rural* area convicted for manslaughter, rape, serious battery and death-causing injuries is superior to the

one held by persons residents in the urban area, as in average, the record is of 55-60% crimes committed with violence in the rural area and only 40-45% in the urban area. This distribution points to the fact that, in the period of transition, the rural area, considered as “traditional”, “conservatory” and the “keeper” of customs, norms and social practices of social control, has undergone a profound transformation, being “aggresed” on its turn, by a series of negative phenomena, such as poverty, inflation, lack of jobs, dissolution of communities etc., which aided to the proliferation of violent crimes among the inhabitants from the rural area.

These statistic data, rather curtailed and incomplete, represent merely the *descriptive* support for violent criminality in Romania, as they cannot provide certain causal connections between the various economic, demographic, social and cultural factors that can influence the etiological explanations. Nevertheless, on this basis one can prove that, behind a global dynamics of violent criminality in the Romanian society, certain tendencies and individual “rhythms” can be identified, which are specific to each of these types of crimes, function of the gender and person of the aggressor, age, and level of schooling, residential environment etc.

**Table 3.** The average share of the persons condemned for crimes against the person function of residential area, during 1990-2000

Type of crime	Residence area	
	Urban (%)	Rural (%)
Manslaughter	38.8	61.2
Death-causing injuries	42.3	57.7
Serious battery	40.0	60.0
Rape	45.0	55.0
Robbery	51.4	48.6

Source: *Criminological study regarding the state of criminality during 1989-2000*, The Office of Criminology of the Prosecuting Magistracy of the High Court of Cassation and Justice, Bucharest, 2000, 110.

### ***Actual tendencies in the evolution of victims of violent crimes***

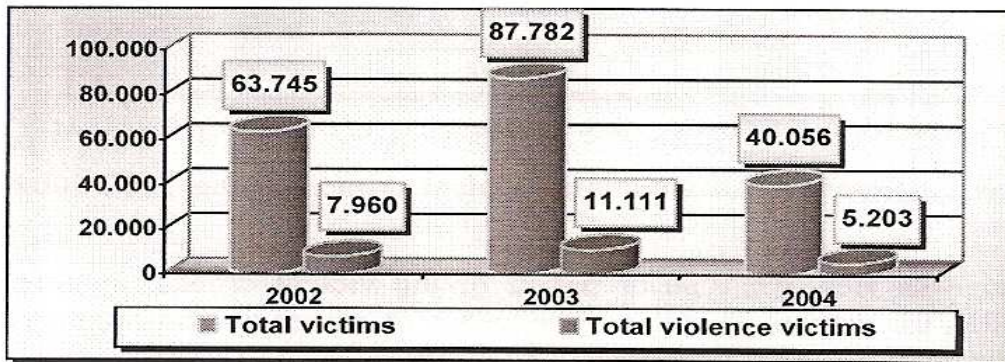
The recent studies and researches in Romania have focused mainly on the analysis of violent crimes and their authors and very little on the victims of such crimes. Lately, the increase in the number of victims and the awareness of the phenomenon of victimization within the public opinion have concretized in some inquiries and studies of *victimology* performed by various institutions and research centers or governmental and nongovernmental organizations of Romania. Aside from theoretical contributions and relevant data and information, the sociological and criminological concrete researches in this area are yet scarce.

Trying to supply for the scarcity of researches in this area, the study at hand, which uses some statistical data provided by the Institute for the Research and Prevention of Criminality, tries to demonstrate that certain *correlations* can be established between the level and scope of violent criminality and the number of injured and prejudiced victims of the various violent actions. These correlations were made through the comparative analysis of the evolution in the number of victims of violent crimes within the family or outside it and the number of underage victims of the same crimes in the intra- or extra-familial environment.

## The dynamics of the victims of violent crimes from outside the familial environment

During the period under analysis (01.01.2002 – 06.30.2004), from the various crimes discovered by the police, 191,583 victims resulted, out of which 24,274 suffered mental, physical and moral trauma (see Graphic 1).

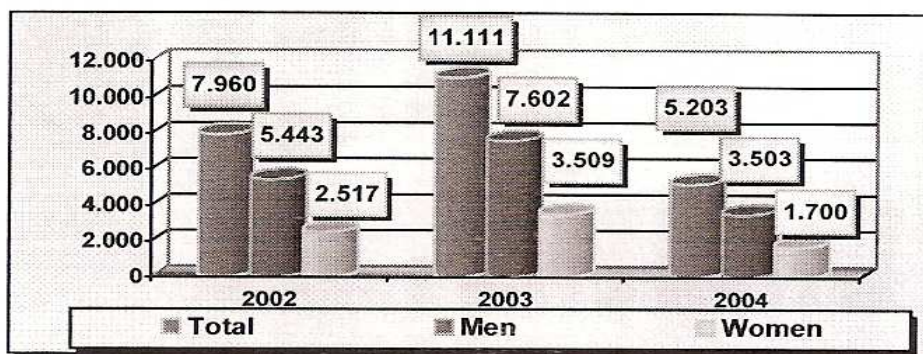
The number of victims from violent crimes (manslaughter, murder attempt, death-causing injuries, battery and violence, physical injuries, rape, robbery etc.) has undergone a continuous growth in the analyzed period, on the background of the annual increase in the number of victims in general, so that their share in the ensemble of recorded victims reaches approx. 13%.



Source: Institute for the Research and Prevention of Criminality, Bucharest

**Graphic 1.** The share of victims of violent crimes from the total number of victims of the crimes during 2002-2004

From the point of view of the vulnerability of the victim, the majority of the persons subjected to violent and aggressive acts were men (16,548), while the number of women victims of the same crimes was of 7,726 (see Graphic 2).



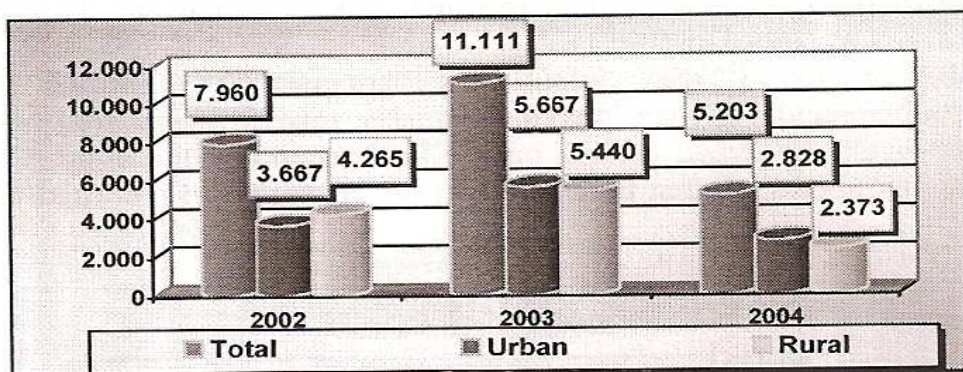
Source: Institute for the Research and Prevention of Criminality, Bucharest.

**Graphic 2.** The dynamics of the victims of violent crimes during 2002-2004, function of gender

The result is that, in the period under analysis, the share of men who became victims ensuing the various violent crimes outside the familial environment was 68.1%, compared to the far lower share of women victims, of only 31.9%.

From the total of victims of violent crimes, in a proportion of 46.9% they were married people, while 42.9% were unmarried, the rest being divorced, widowed etc.

Having in view the *residential environment* (urban-rural), equal shares are noted regarding the number of victims from the two areas, in the sense that the victims dwelling in the urban represent 50.1% from the total of the victimized ones, while 49.9% of them had their residence in the rural area (see Graphic 3).

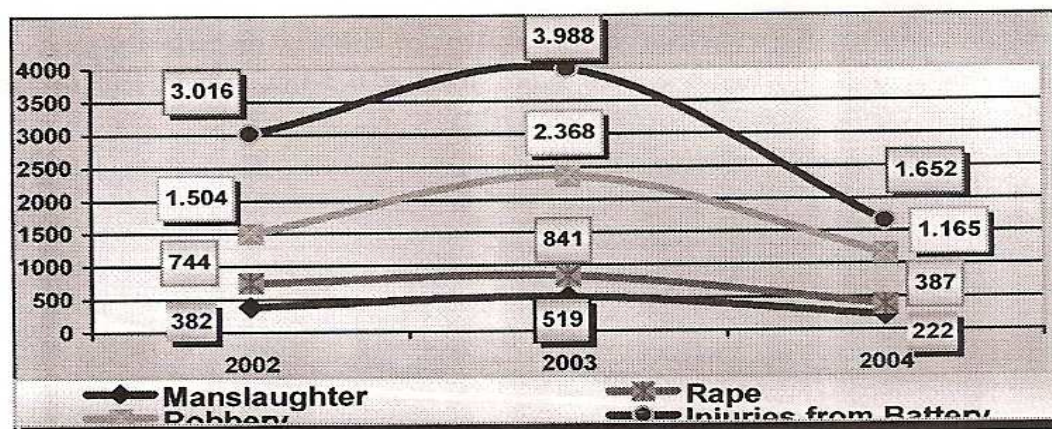


Source: Institute for the Research and Prevention of Criminality, Bucharest

**Graphic 3.** The dynamics of the victims of violent crimes during 2002-2004, function of residential area

If we have in view the type or nature of the violent crimes, in an overwhelming proportion of 70%, the victims were the consequence of crimes of manslaughter, rape, simple and serious battery, robbery (see Graphic 4).

As share, the first are the victims that suffered simple and serious *injuries* from battery (35.6%), followed by the ones that were the target of *robbery* acts (20.7%), *rape* (9.7%) and *manslaughter* (4.65).



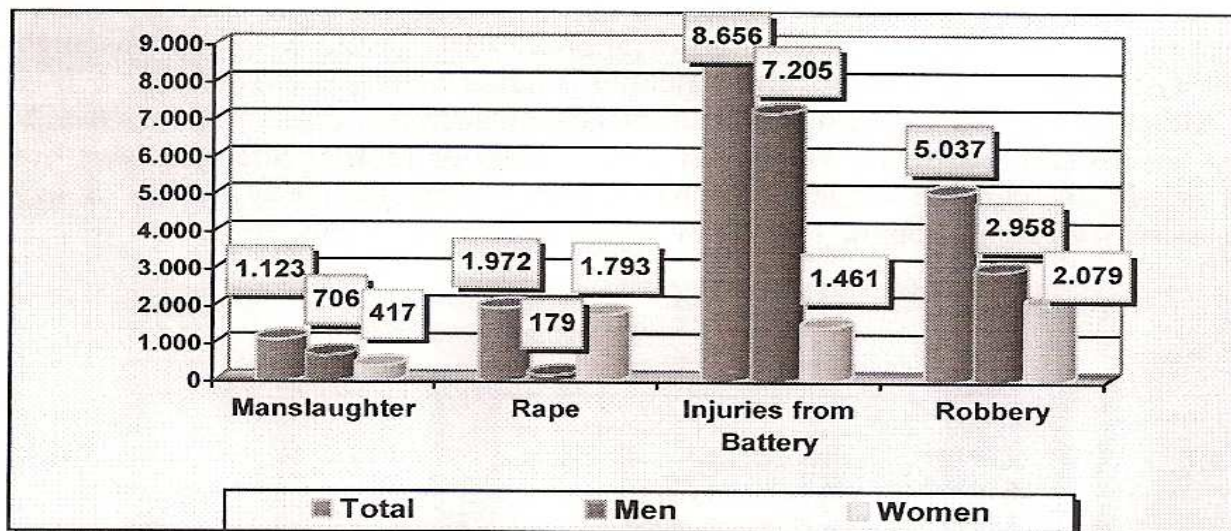
Source: Institute for the Research and Prevention of Criminality, Bucharest

**Graphic 4.** The dynamics of the victims of violent crimes during 2002-2004, function of the type (nature) of the crime

Much more significant is the analysis of the dynamics of the victims of various violent crimes function of their nature and the gender of the victim, fact which highlights the fact that men are with predilection the target of manslaughter, death-causing injuries, simple and serious injuries from battery and robbery, while women especially become victims of rape (see Graphic 5).

Thus, in the case of *manslaughter*, men are victims in a proportion of 62.8%, and women represent only 37.2%. Moreover, men hold the overwhelming share in the total of

victims from simple and serious *injuries from battery* (83.2%), having superior shares also in the case of *robbery* (58.9%); in exchange, women are in a proportion of 90% the victims of *rape*.

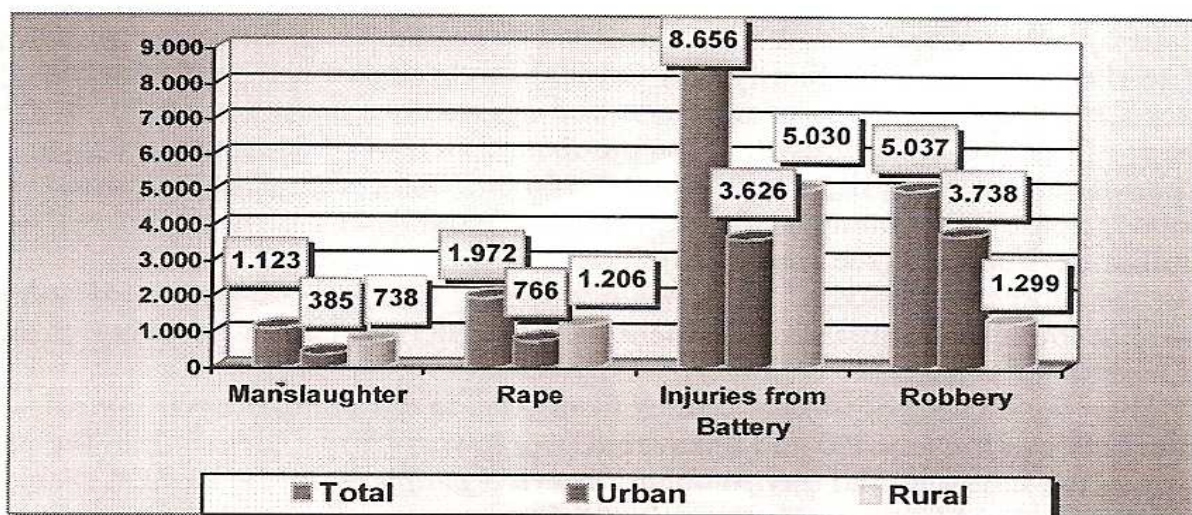


Source: Institute for the Research and Prevention of Criminality, Bucharest

**Graphic 5.** The dynamics of the victims of violent crimes during 2002-2004, function of the nature of the crime and the gender of the victim

Surprisingly enough, the dynamics of the victims of violent crimes function of the nature of the crime and the residential area of the victims exhibit that a great part of the victims had their residence in the *rural* area, considered, as a rule, less “criminogenic” and implicitly, “victimogenic”, by comparison to the urban one (see Graphic 6).

The *rural* area holds superior shares as against the urban one regarding the victims of *manslaughter* (65.7%, as against 34.3%), *rape* (61.1%, as against 39.9%) and *injuries from battery* (58.2%, as against 41.8%), while the *urban* area holds the overwhelming share regarding the number of victims of *robbery* (74.0%, as against 26% in the rural one).

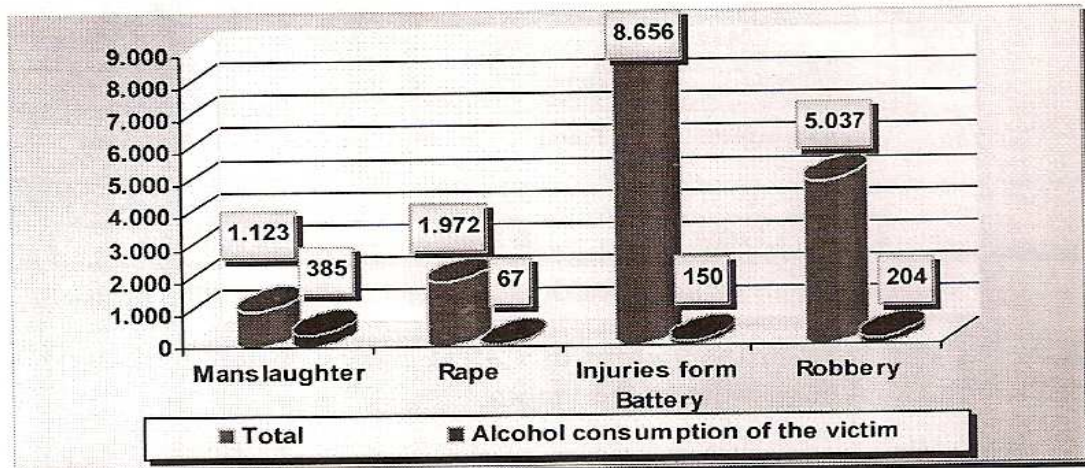


Source: Institute for the Research and Prevention of Criminality, Bucharest

**Graphic 6.** The share of the victims of violent crimes during 2002-2004, function of the nature of the crime and the residential area

A relevant indicator that characterizes the state of victims of violent crimes is represented by alcohol consumption by the victims themselves or together with the aggressor, in many cases alcohol representing an enticing condition of the crime, in the sense that it precipitates its triggering. If in the ensemble of the victims of such violent crimes alcohol consumption was present in a proportion of approx. 10%, in the case of manslaughter, the proportion of victims who had consumed alcohol is rather high (see Graphic 7).

Although alcohol consumption cannot be considered a *cause* for manslaughter, the fact that approx. 35.0% of the victims of such crimes or murder attempts have consumed alcohol attests the fact the victims also has a part to play in the triggering of aggression ensuing alcohol consumption, be it alone or together with the aggressor.



Source: Institute for the Research and Prevention of Criminality, Bucharest

**Graphic 7.** The share of the victims of violent crimes during 2002-2004, function of the nature of the crime and alcohol consumption

### The dynamics of the victims of violent crimes in the intra-familial environment

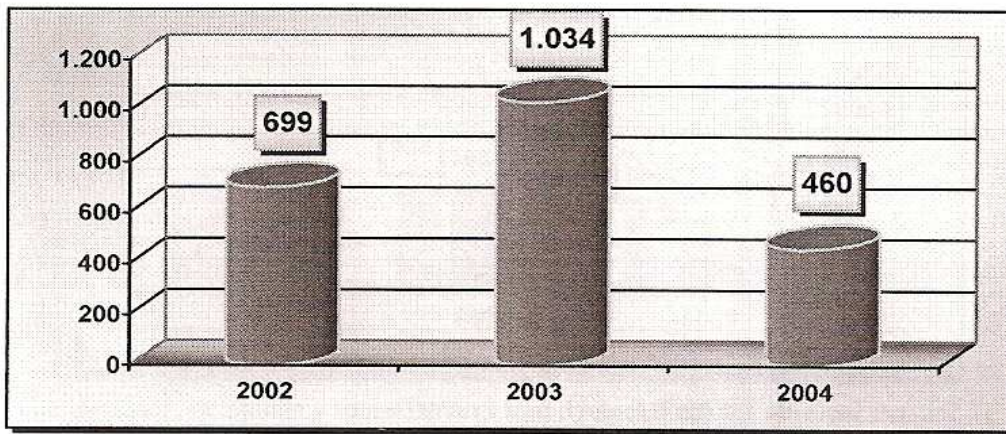
Considered by many specialists, theoreticians and educators as an environment that provides security to the individual, the family and familial environment are confronted lately with a recrudescence of various forms of violence and aggression, including some violent crimes that have as effect the annual growth of the number of victims of domestic violence.

In the period under analysis, (01.01.2002 – 06.30.2004), the police statistics exhibit a continuous increase in the number of victims that suffered from violent crimes within the very intra-familial environment (see Graphic 8).

In the aforesaid period, 2,193 people who had become the victims of some violent crimes within the intra-familial environment were registered, their share being of 8.2% from the total number of victims.

Unlike the victims of violent crimes from outside the familial environment, where the proportion between the married and unmarried people was almost identical, in the case of the victims from the intra-familial environment, *married people* hold the highest share (58.5%), as against the one hold by unmarried people (25.5%).

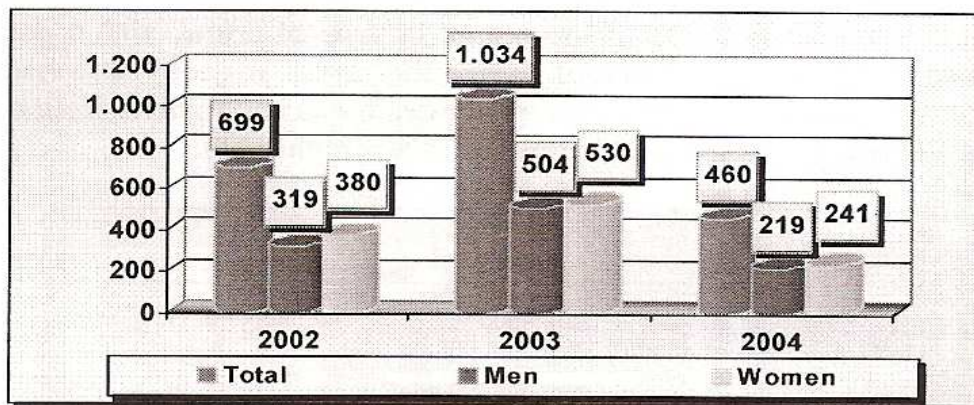




Source: Institute for the Research and Prevention of Criminality, Bucharest

**Graphic 8.** The dynamics of the victims of violent crimes during 2002-2004, in the intra-familial environment

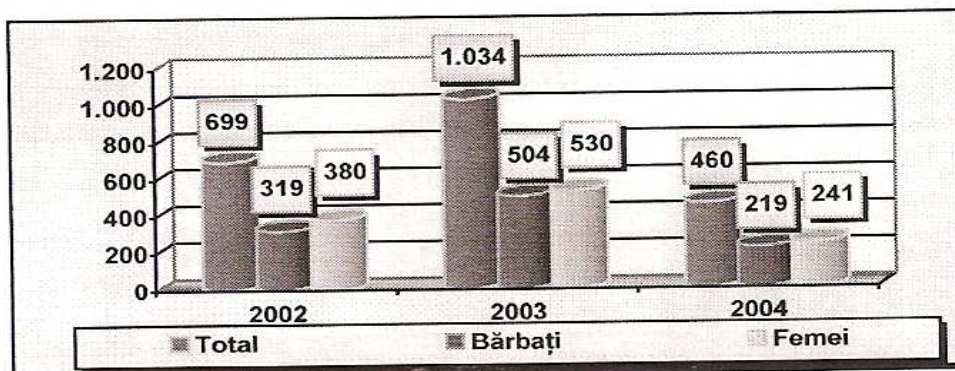
Compared to the relatively low share of men victims in the ensemble of violent crimes committed outside the familial environment, in the case of the ones committed in the intra-familial environment, women hold a superior share as against men, being the target of violent acts committed against them, 52.5% of victims being women, while 47.5% are men (see Graphic 9).



Source: Institute for the Research and Prevention of Criminality, Bucharest

**Graphic 9.** The dynamics of the victims of violent crimes during 2002-2004 in the intra-familial environment, function of gender

If in so what regards the *residential area* the share of victims of violent crimes outside the family dwelling in the urban area registered values close to the ones of the victims that lived in the rural area, the situation changes radically in so what regards the dynamics of the victims from the intra-familial environment function of the residential environment (see Graphic 10).

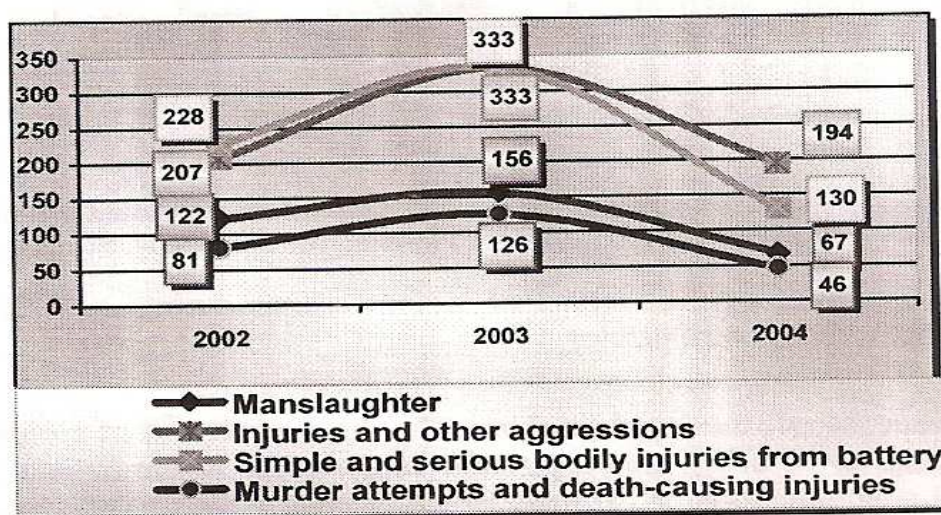


Source: Institute for the Research and Prevention of Criminality, Bucharest

**Graphic 10.** The dynamics of the victims of violent crimes during 2002-2004 in the intra-familial environment, function of residential environment

Out of the total of 2,193 of victims of some violent crimes in the intra-familial environment, 1,749 dwelled in the rural area, their share representing 66% of the total victim registered, as only a third part is formed by the share of victims dwelling in the urban area (respectively 744). It is a significant indicator which points again to the fact that intra-familial violence from the *rural* area undergoes an “alarming” recrudescence, especially on the background of some phenomena of “aggression” of the rural environment and family in this space, from all directions and under all forms.

Just as relevant is the analysis of the dynamics of the victims of violent crimes in the intra-familial environment function of the *nature* or *type* of crime, which points to the fact that, in a overwhelming proportion of 92%, the great majority of victims were the consequence of manslaughter, murder attempts or death-causing injuries from battery, battery, bodily injuries and less from rapes, robberies etc. (see Graphic 11).

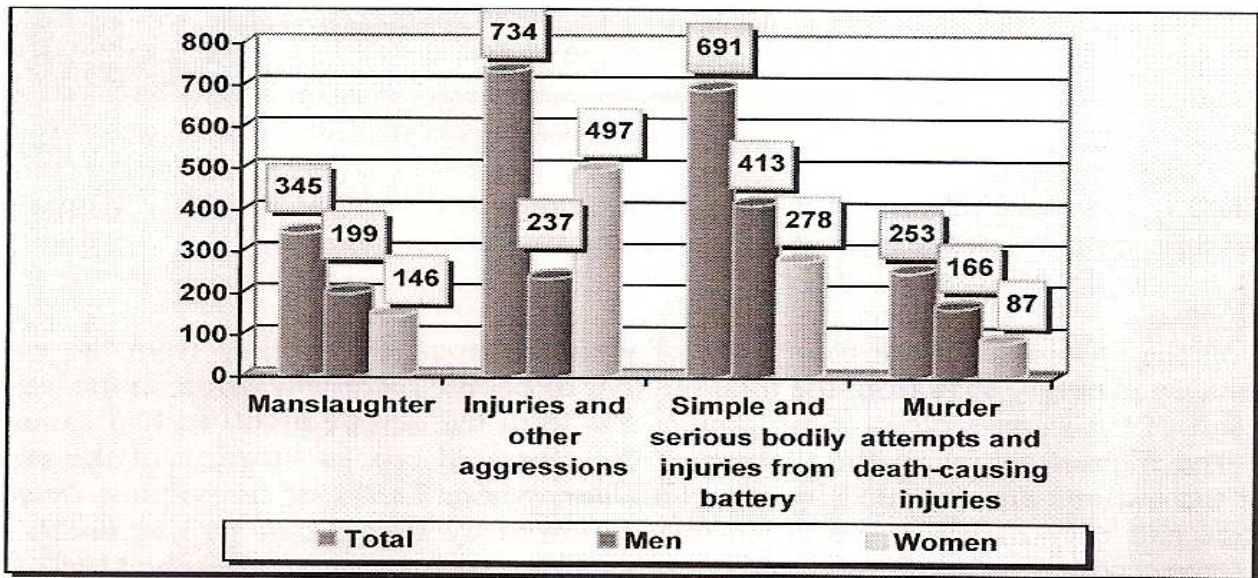


Source: Institute for the Research and Prevention of Criminality, Bucharest

**Graphic 11.** The dynamics of the victims of violent crimes during 2002-2004 in the intra-familial environment, function of the type of the crime

On types of crimes, the highest share is held by the victims of intra-familial violence, concretized under the form of crimes of *injuries and other aggressions* (33.45%), followed by the one of victims who suffered *simple and serious bodily injuries from battery* (31.5%). However, the rather high share of victims of crimes of *manslaughter* and *murder* committed in the familial environment (15.7%) is surprising, as well the number of persons who were the target of some *murder attempts* and *death-causing injuries* (11.5%), these very serious crimes generating, together, over 30% of the victims of intra-familial violence.

If we have in view the dynamics of the victims of some violent crimes committed in the intra-familial environment, function of the nature of the crime and the gender of the victim, it differs considerably from the dynamics of the victims of the violent crimes committed outside the family, in the sense that, in a series of crimes, such as the ones of *injuries or other aggressions*, *bodily injuries from battery*, *murder attempts* and *death-causing injuries*, the majority of victims are women (see Graphic 12).

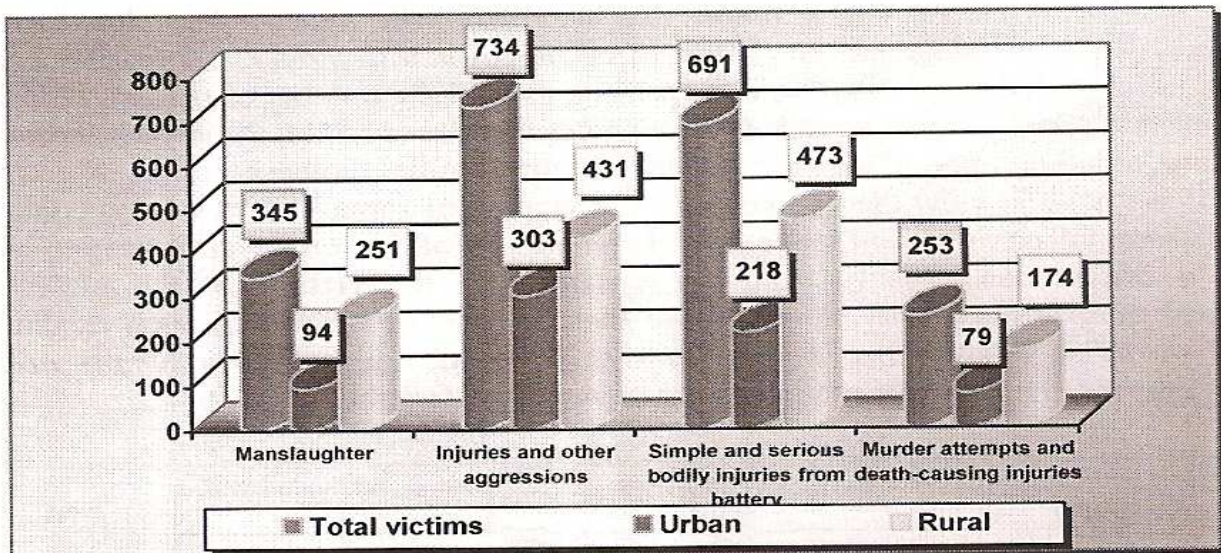


Source: Institute for the Research and Prevention of Criminality, Bucharest

**Graphic 12.** The share of the victims of violent crimes during 2002-2004 in the intra-familial environment, function of the nature of the crime and the gender of the victim

With the exception of *manslaughter* crimes in the familial environment, where the majority of victims are men (57.85%, as against 42.2% women), in the case of the other violent crimes, the share of women is much higher: *bodily injuries from battery* (68.5% women and 31.5% men), *battery and other aggressions* (58.8% women and 41.2% men), *murder attempts* and *death-causing injuries* (68.7% and 31.3% men).

The analysis of the dynamics of the victims of violent crimes in the intra-familial environment function of the nature of the crime and the residential area proves that, in the ensemble of the victims that suffered from the various crimes, the rural area holds superior share as compared to the urban one (see Graphic 13).

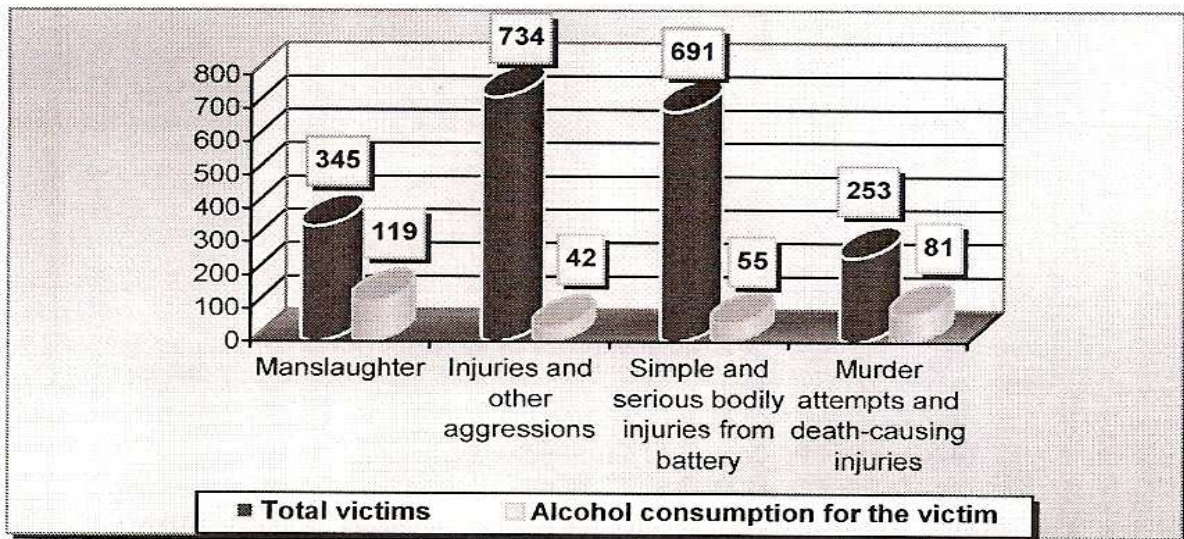


Source: Institute for the Research and Prevention of Criminality, Bucharest

**Graphic 13.** The share of the victims of violent crimes during 2002-2004 in the intra-familial environment, function of the type of the crime and the residential area

In the ensemble of the four types of violent crimes, the victims from the *rural* area represent, on average, 65% from the total number of people recorded, while, in the urban area, as a result of the same violent crimes, only 35% from the people involved had something to suffer. The highest shares of the victims of the aforesaid crimes function of the residential area of the victims are recorded by *manslaughter*, where 72.7% of the victims dwell in the rural area and only 27.3% in the urban one, followed by *simple and serious bodily injuries from battery* (with 68.4% of the victims coming from the rural area and only 31.6% from the urban one) and *murder attempts and death-causing injuries* (with 68.7% victims from the rural area and 31.3% from the urban one). This distribution of victims of violent crimes points to the fact that, presently, the *rural* area becomes increasingly “criminogenic”, compared to the urban one, and that within the rural family there are and are given rise to more aggressions and violence, having as results human victims, than the ones that are produced within the urban family.

An indicator just as relevant regarding the evolution of victims of violent crimes in the familial environment is represented *alcohol consumption* for the victim, before or during the violent action in itself, alone or together with the aggressor, which constituted an enticing condition in the triggering of the violent act (see Graphic 14).



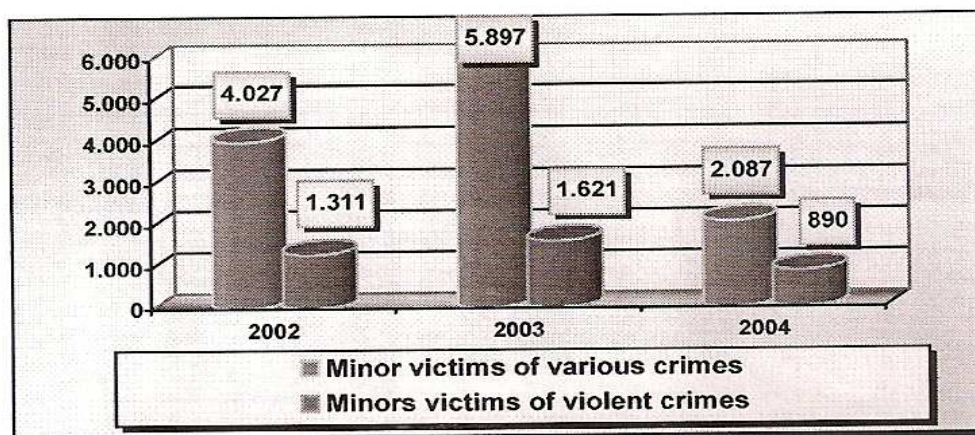
Source: Institute for the Research and Prevention of Criminality, Bucharest

**Graphic 14.** The share of the victims of violent crimes during 2002-2004 in the intra-familial environment, function of the nature of the crime and alcohol consumption

In the ensemble of victims of these violent crimes in the familial environment, approx. 15.5% of the victims have consumed alcohol alone or together with the aggressor, *alcohol* being yet much more present in the case of the victims of manslaughter, who, in a proportion of 34.4%, have consumed alcohol, and of murder attempts and death-causing injuries from battery, where 32% of the victims have consumed alcohol.

***The dynamics of the underage victims of the violent crimes from outside the familial environment***

The increase of the violence targeted against the child and the youngster represents one of the grievous social problems that the Romanian society faces, as the statistics evince more and more cases of children victims of violent acts and aggressions. According to the statistics of the police department, in the period under analysis (01.01.2002 – 06.30.2004), approx. 12,000 minors became victims of various crimes they were subjected to, out of which 3,822 suffered serious physical and psychical prejudices (see Graphic 15).

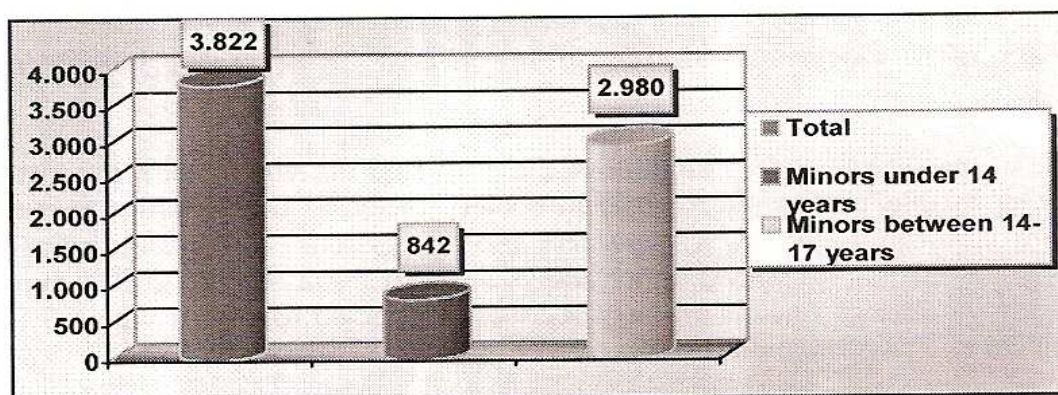


Source: Institute for the Research and Prevention of Criminality, Bucharest

**Graphic 15.** The share of the minor victims of violent crimes during 2002-2004, out of the total of minor victims of various crimes

If in the ensemble of victims of some infractions from the analyzed period the share of minors is of 6.5%, it rises to 31.8% in so what regards the minors that became the victims of violent crimes, which points to the fact the sensible increase in the number of violent acts targeted against them; practically, on in three minors becomes a victim.

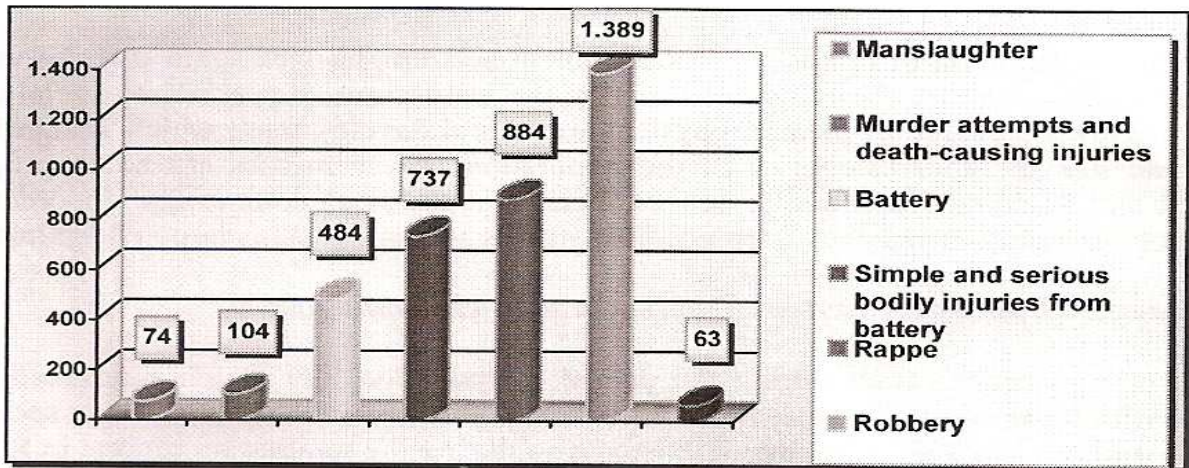
On age categories, the vast majority of victimized minors were aged *between 14-17 years (77.9%)*, while the minor victims of the same violent crimes who were aged *under 14 years* represented 22.1% out of the total figure (see Graphic 16).



Source: Institute for the Research and Prevention of Criminality, Bucharest

**Graphic 16.** The share of the minor victims of violent crimes during 2002-2004, function of age

More relevant is the analysis of the dynamics of minor victims of violent crimes function of the nature of the committed crime, which attests the fact that they were the target, first and foremost, of *robbery, rape, simple and serious bodily injuries from battery, injuries and aggressions* and less of *manslaughter and murder attempts or death-causing injuries* (see Graphic 17).

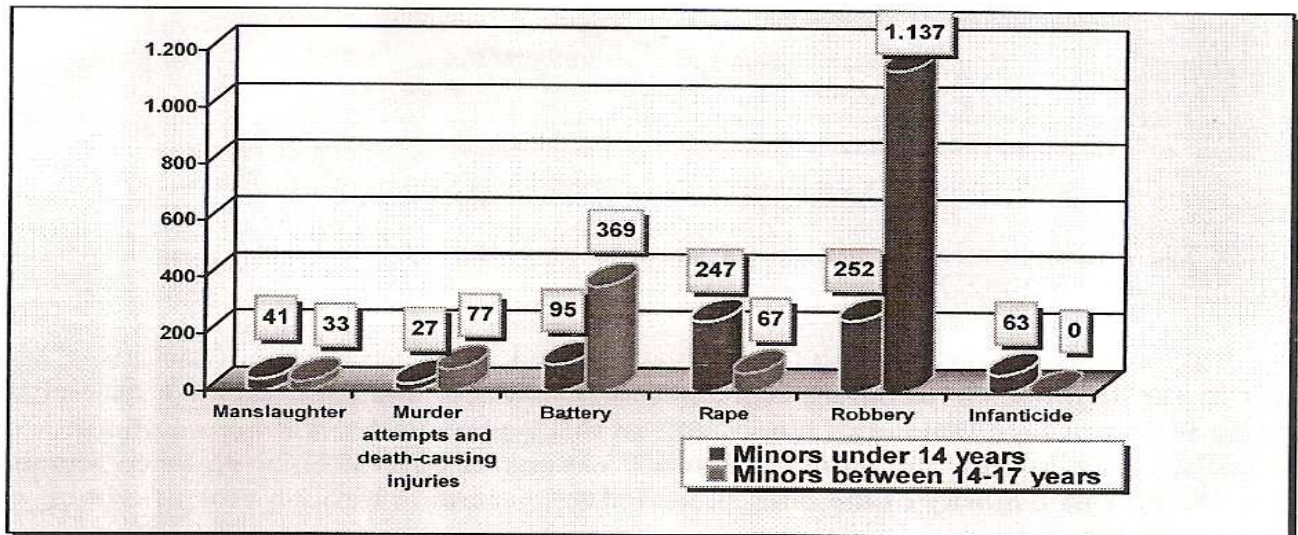


Source: Institute for the Research and Prevention of Criminality, Bucharest

**Graphic 17.** The share of the minor victims of violent crimes during 2002-2004, function of the nature of the crime

Over a third out the minors was a victim of *robbery*, while approx. a fourth was a victim of *rape*. Moreover, approx. a third of the minors became the victim of *simple and serious bodily injuries resulting from battery* (12% in battery and 19% in bodily injuries), being less involved as victims in *manslaughter* (1.9% of the minors) or *murder attempts and death-causing injuries* (2.7% of the minors). It is also worth noticing the number of victims of *infanticide*, whose share is as high as 1.6% in the ensemble of victims.

On age categories, the minors under 14 years have been victims in a proportion of 55.4%, as a consequence of crimes of *manslaughter*, representing the total of the victims (63 minors) in the crimes of *infanticide*, while the minors between 14-17 years constitute the majority of victims in the case of the crimes of *rape* (972%), *robbery* (81.8%), *battery* (79.55), *murder attempts and death-causing injuries* (74%) (see Graphic 18).



Source: Institute for the Research and Prevention of Criminality, Bucharest

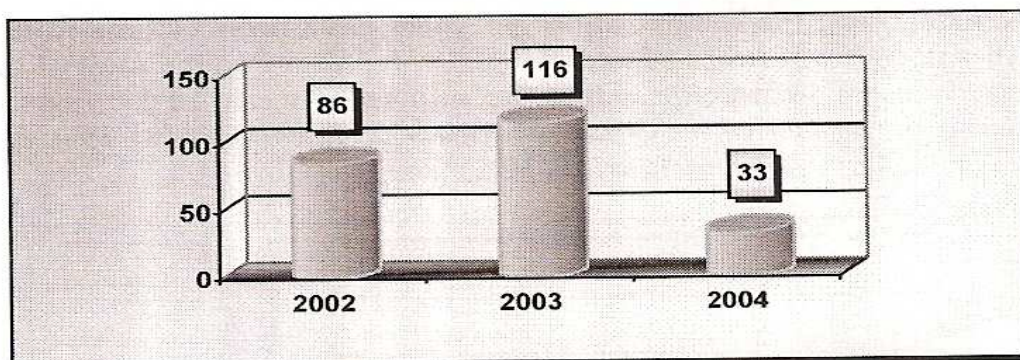
**Graphic 18.** The share of the minor victims of violent crimes during 2002-2004, function of the nature of the crime and the age of the minors

This distribution of minor victims of violent acts emphasizes again that this category of the population is not sufficiently protected by the institutions of specialized social control, having in view its degree of mental, physical and moral development, which is significantly lower than that of other categories of the population. These minors are not appropriately educated and socialized by family, school, peer groups, local community, in order to be capable of defending themselves from possible attacks and aggressions targeted against them.

*The dynamics of the minor victims of violent crimes within the family*

In spite of its intensification during the period of transition, the violence targeted against children within the family does not represent a new phenomenon in the Romanian society, the research studies clearly showing that it existed also during the totalitarian regime in Romania, being closely connected to certain structural characteristics of the family, among which its manner of organization, relationships between parents, the income and occupational status of the parents, models of parental authority etc. Nowadays, this phenomenon has significantly amplified, the statistics highlighting ever more cases where numerous minors become victims of some abuses, battery and aggressions committed against them by the very parents or other close relatives and, most grievously, victims of crimes of manslaughter, serious bodily injuries from battery, infanticide, death-causing injuries or murder attempts.

In the period under analysis (01.01.2002 – 06.30.2004), the number of minor victims of intra-familial violence has known a continuous growth, reaching around the middle of 2004 the number of 235 minor victims of intra-familial violence (see Graphic 19).



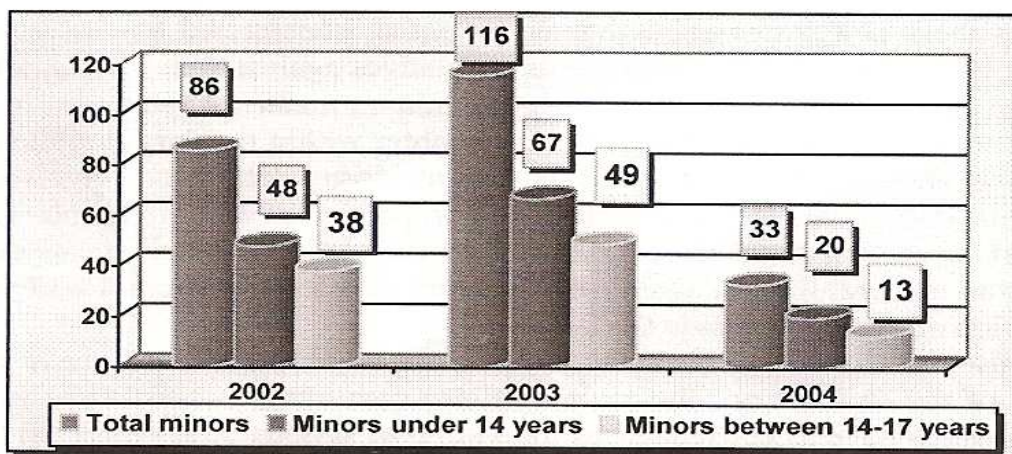
Source: Institute for the Research and Prevention of Criminality, Bucharest

**Graphic 19.** The dynamics of the minor victims of violent crimes within the intra-familial environment during 2002-2004

Taken in its entirety, during the analyzed period, the share of minor victims of violent crimes in the familial environment represent 10.7% out of the total number of victims of domestic violence, such that out of ten victims of this type of violence, one is a minor.

If we have in view the number of minor victims of intra-familial violence function of age group, the vast majority of the ones subjected to aggression through violent crimes within the family are the minors *under 14 years* (see Graphic 20).



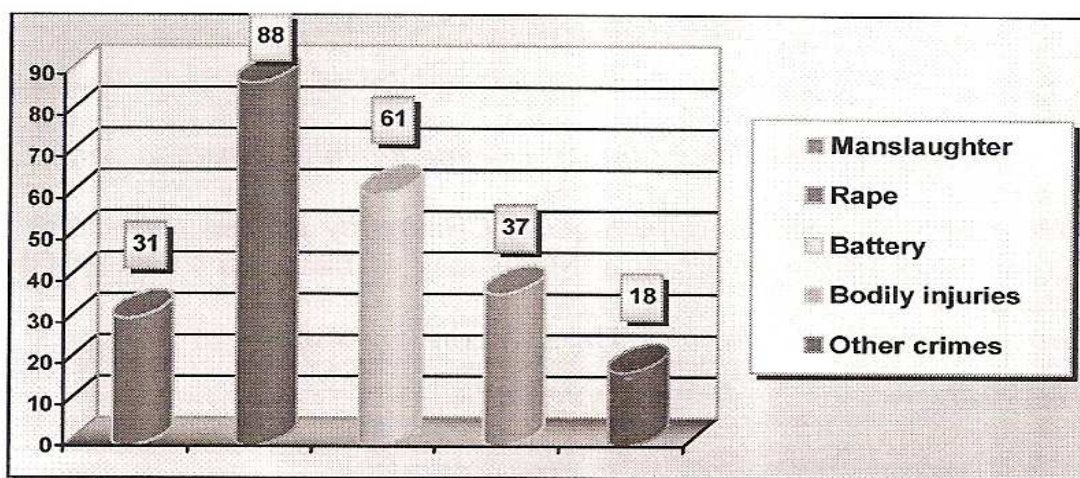


Source: Institute for the Research and Prevention of Criminality, Bucharest

**Graphic 20.** The dynamics of the minor victims of violent crimes within the intra-familial environment during 2002-2004, function of age group

Having on the ensemble of the victims of domestic violence the share of 57.4%, the minor under 14 years constitute the category with the highest *victim vulnerability*, as against the share of 42.6% held by the minors between 14-17 years.

The analysis of the dynamics of the minor victims of violent crimes within the familial environment function of the nature of the crime shows the fact that this category of victims is the main “target” of rapes, battery and other aggression, manslaughter and simple and serious bodily injuries (see Graphic 21).



Source: Institute for the Research and Prevention of Criminality, Bucharest

**Graphic 21.** The dynamics of the minor victims of violent crimes within the familial environment during 2002-2004, function of the nature of the crime

The most part of the minor victims of crimes committed in the familial environment are the consequence of *rape* (37.4%), immediately followed by minor who suffered *battery* and various *aggressions* (25.9%). The attention is also drawn to the rather high shares of minor victims of some particularly heinous crimes, such as *bodily injuries* (15.7% of the minor victims) and *manslaughter* (13.1% of the victims), which proves that, at the moment, in

many families there is a strong criminogenic potential, concretized by particularly heinous acts and aggressions committed by the parents or relatives against their own children.

On age categories and type of crimes, the minors *under 14 years* are, in an alarming proportion of approx. 80%, the victims of manslaughter within the very familial environment and where their parents (or one of them) as well as close relatives are involved. The same category of minors becomes the main victim, in a proportion of 55%, in crimes of *battery* and *other aggressions* as well as those of *rape* (46% of the victims), which attests once the more their high victim vulnerability, as against the category of minors between 14-17 years, victims with predilection of violence outside the family.

All this statistic data proves that ever more serious than the abuse and physical maltreatment of the children are the violent crimes committed against them in the familial environment, which have as consequences the killing or serious injury inflicted by the parent of legal guardians. Among the *main causes* of these forms of heinous violence taking place within the family, we should mention: the precarious socio-economic conditions of some families, the various spontaneous or recurrent conflicts among family members, many of them enticed by alcohol consumption in the family, the lack of culture of the parents, the reproduction by the parents of the cultural models existent in the family of origin, the confrontation with the harsh realities of daily life, the lack of affection of the parents for the child etc.

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