

# Review

## **New examination of the experience of victims when reporting a sexual assault to the police**

### *Background and objectives:*

- The aim of the report is to describe the experience of victims when reporting a sexual assault to the police. Since 2016, the police have taken several initiatives to try to standardise the way victims are met and treated and to make sure that they are treated well.
- A similar report was made in 2016 and the present report will try to compare the results of the two reports.

### *Research design:*

- The report is based on a survey handed out to victims who have reported a sexual assault to the police and contacted one of the centres for victims of sexual assault. Interviews with employees at centres for victims of sexual assault have also been used.
- The study is based on a limited data. There are many indications that the reason for the non-response is not or only to a limited extent that the victims do not want to participate. The non-response is rather considered random.
- The questionnaire sheds light solely on victims' initial encounter with the police when reporting a sexual assault.
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### *Findings:*

- There are indications that the guidelines set for the police in 2016 were to a great extent implemented in 2017 rather than in 2016.
- All the responses show a positive development in the way that the police handled reports of rape in 2017 compared to 2016 and although the samples were limited, there are several statistically significant differences between 2016 and 2017.
- There is a significant increase in the number of victims who respond that the police show them understanding, take their reports seriously and that the police considered their statement credible.
- There is a distinct increase in the number of victims who were informed of how the police intended to proceed with the case and of the possibility of compensation.
- The share of victims who are 'very unhappy' or 'unhappy' was halved from 2016 to 2017, down from 30 per cent to 15 per cent.
- The positive development in the survey results from 2016 to 2017 is supported by the experience of employees at centres for victims of sexual assault.

