

Criminal Investigation and Evidence of Violence Against Parents by Adult Children

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Violence against parents by adult children includes single, multiple, or continuous behaviours or acts of an adult child that physically, psychologically, or economically harm their biological or foster parents. In this article, we present an analysis of all 46 police, prosecutor, and court files related to violent crimes against parents by adult children that were investigated in Slovenia between 2010 and 2013. Additionally, insights from a focus group interview with experts in the criminal justice field are examined. The aim of this article is to present the characteristics of criminal investigations and the evidence gathered in cases of violence against parents by adult children. The study reveals that classical investigative measures, such as crime scene investigation and interviews, are conducted during these investigations. Investigators impose restraining orders on suspects, seize relevant evidence, and order expert analyses of bodily fluids to check for the presence of alcohol and illicit drugs. In the analysed cases, material, personal, and circumstantial evidence was identified. In criminal cases that resulted in a conviction and prison sentence, all criminal charges were based on material evidence. For 75% of criminal cases leading to a conviction with a suspended sentence, criminal charges were also based on material evidence. In 95.8% (n = 23) of criminal cases, a conviction was achieved. Among these cases, prison sentences were issued in 17.4% of instances, suspended sentences in 69.6%, security measures in 8.7%, and a fine in one case. The type of criminal sanction imposed depends on the circumstances of the crime, the defendant, and the victim, rather than the type of evidence obtained.

Keywords: violence against parents by adult children, elder abuse, domestic violence, criminal investigation, evidence

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