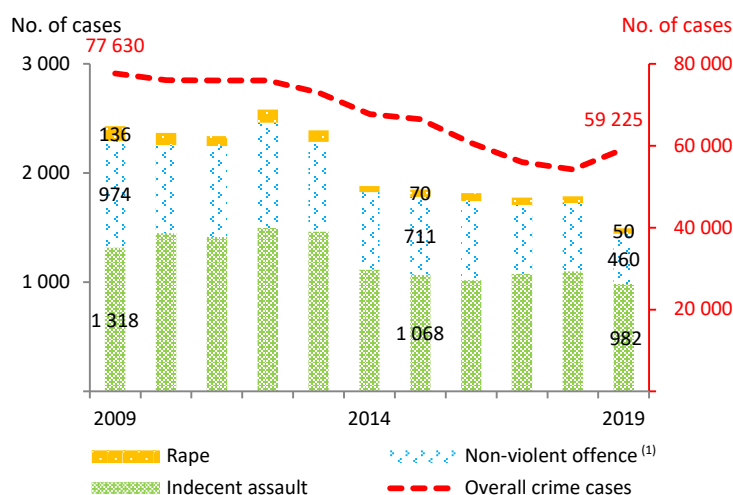




Sexual offences in Hong Kong

Figure 1 — Crime reported to the Police in Hong Kong



Note: (1) Non-violent sexual offences mainly include unlawful sexual intercourse and other offences against public morality etc.

Figure 2 — Detection rates of sexual offences

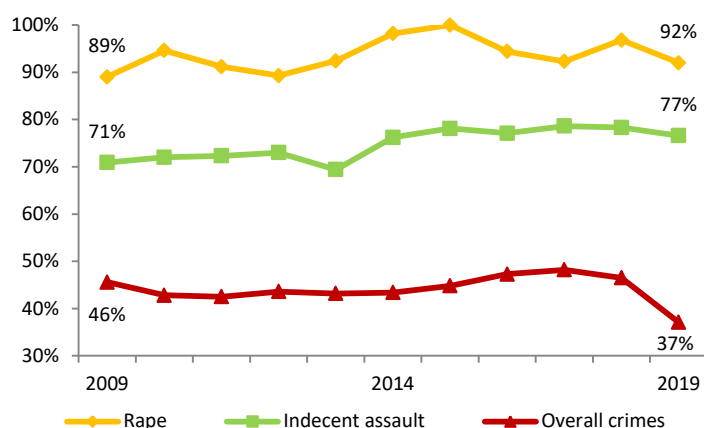
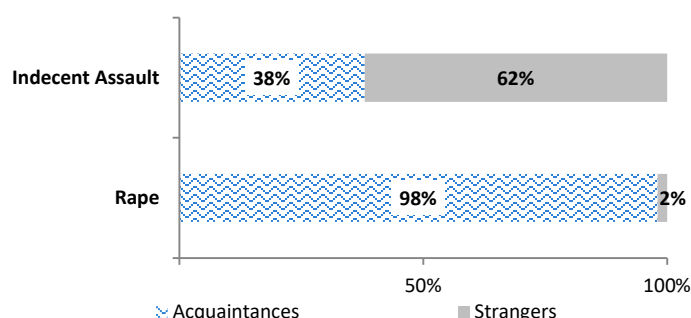


Figure 3 — Relationship between perpetrators and victims of sexual offences in 2019



Highlights

- In Hong Kong, the number of sexual offences (i.e. rape, indecent assault and non-violent offence) reported to the Police decreased by 39% within a decade to a 20-year low of 1 492 cases in 2019, deeper than the 24% decline in overall crimes (**Figure 1**). That said, the sex crime figures are widely believed to be under-reported, as its victims are generally too "ashamed" to report such offences. Moreover, some sexual offences (e.g. voyeurism) are not criminalized in local law yet. In December 2019, the Law Reform Commission recommended the Government to include such new sexual offences into the Crimes Ordinance (Cap. 200).
- For existing serious sexual offences, the Police appeared to be able to complete investigations and enforcement more effectively than overall crimes. During 2009-2019, the detection rate of rape had improved from 89% to 92% (**Figure 2**). So had that for indecent assault, from 71% to 77%. Both of them were way above the detection rate of only 37% in overall crimes in 2019.
- To a considerable extent, the high detection rates of serious sexual offences can be attributable to generally closer relationships between perpetrators and victims. In 2019, two-fifths (38%) of offenders of indecent assault were acquaintances of the victims, rather than strangers (**Figure 3**). The respective figure for offenders of rape was even higher, at 98%. This considerably narrows the scope of investigation by the Police, and hence leads to quick arrest of suspects. More recently, there are concerns over an emerging trend for the victims to know the perpetrators via social networking, precipitating a need to adopt new strategies to protect vulnerable victims especially youngsters.

Sexual offences in Hong Kong (cont'd)

Figure 4 — Newly reported cases of sexual violence received by SWD and NGOs

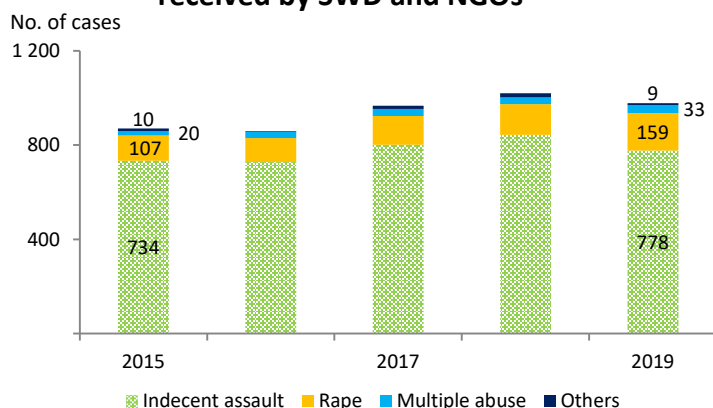
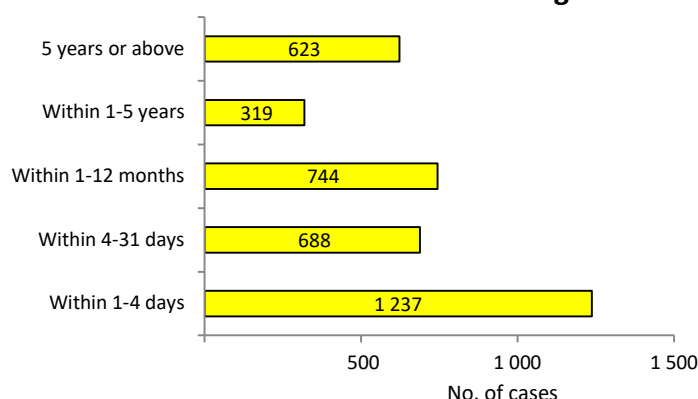
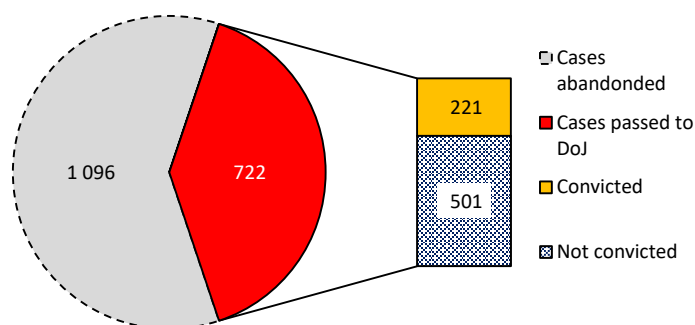


Figure 5 — Time for victims seeking help from the lead NGO on sexual violence⁽¹⁾ during 2000-2018



Note: (1) The caseload received by RainLily during 2000-2018.

Figure 6 — Legal outcome of cases received by the lead NGO and reported to the Police, 2000-2018



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Highlights

- Some victims of suspected sexual offences may prefer to seek help from the Social Welfare Department ("SWD") or non-governmental organizations ("NGOs") instead. During 2015-2019, such cases have gone up by a total of 108 cases, contrasted against the concurrent decline by 357 cases reported to the Police as shown in Figure 1. Of these, rape cases received by SWD and NGOs surged by 49%, against the concurrent 29% decline of those reported to the Police (**Figure 4**).
- Fear of second trauma is the key reason for victims delaying help-seeking from NGOs and reporting sex crime to the Police, as they need to retell the course of incidents repeatedly during counselling, investigation and trial. RainLily is now the first and leading NGO providing tailor-made assistance to victims of sexual violence. It found a serious delay in seeking help from the victims. As much as half (53%) of them asked for help within one month after the offences, whereas a quarter (26%) of the overall victims even sought help as late as one year or above after the incidents (**Figure 5**).
- Worse still, just half (50%) of the cases (1 818 cases) were reported to the Police during 2000-2018, with a conviction rate of only 12% in the first trial (**Figure 6**). Three-fifths (60%) of the cases reported to the Police could not proceed further, either because of insufficient evidence upon delayed reporting or case withdrawal by the victims.
- To encourage victims to seek justice, there are suggestions to establish crisis support centres in public hospitals to provide inter-disciplinary and one-stop support to victims, along with more privacy protection measures during investigation and trial.

Data sources: Latest figures from Hong Kong Police Force, Security Bureau, Social Welfare Department and RainLily.

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