

Rapes, Hate Crimes Rising in Moscow

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The crime rate in Moscow decreased year on year in 2010, but figures for both rapes and hate crimes grew, and the average size of a bribe extorted by officials in the capital was 20 times larger than nationwide, the Investigative Committee said Tuesday.

An average bribe in the city amounts to 600,000 rubles (\$20,000), compared with 30,000 rubles elsewhere in Russia, Vadim Yakovenko, senior investigator at the committee's Moscow branch, said at a news conference, Interfax reported.

The statistics are based on crimes investigated by the committee, he said. More than 500 graft cases have been forwarded to courts in 2010, Yakovenko said. The total number of crimes in Moscow dropped 12 percent to some 186,000, he said. Some 12,000 of them were committed by non-Muscovites, he added.

The figure for murders decreased 8 percent to 582, the investigator said.

The situation was worse with extremism-related crimes, the number of which grew one-third over the year, reaching 105. The number of extremism-motivated murders increased 50 percent, Yakovenko said.

There were also 382 rapes registered last year, Yakovenko said, the RPSI judicial news agency [reported](#). That figure is 38 percent higher than last year, he said.

Official statistics were called into question in an extensive study by a research group at the General Prosecutor's Office Academy last month.

The 840-page study claimed that only about one in 10 crimes nationwide was registered, the crime rate was growing at 2.4 percent over the last decade, and officials failed to take into account 126,000 possible murders in 2009 alone.

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