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## **A VICTIM-ORIENTED JUSTICE DISPUTE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM REFORM IN ALBANIA**

### **Abstract:**

The position and status of victims in the criminal justice process have been the subject of recent developments at the domestic, European and international levels in many aspects. The adoption of domestic legislations reflects the understanding of the challenges faced by victims and their commitment to a progressive judicial system. In this context, the recent amendments to its Code of Criminal Procedure in light of the recent Judicial System Reform by Albania seem to be a positive development towards the extensive participation of victims of crime in criminal proceedings. However, there are debates whether the right to participate is practically implemented and what is its impact on the criminal trial. This research shows the demand for the establishment of a neutral support mechanism to assist victims at all stages of the judicial process - from investigation to a final judgment. This paper addresses the perceptions and expectations of the judicial staff to address all the issues pertaining to victims' needs in and outside the criminal proceedings. This article aims: (1) to shed a light on the reasons behind the Judicial System Reform approach to amend the Code of Criminal Procedure rather than to adopt a comprehensive and comprehensible victim-oriented justice; (2) to reflect upon the role and rights of victims in the Albanian criminal justice system; and (3) to conclude with the recommendation to set up an effective long-term mechanism with the sole responsibility to provide the required support and assistance to the victims in Albania and in the context of the Kosovo Specialist Chamber.

### **Keywords:**

victim participation, victim's rights, psycho-social assistance and protection, financial compensation, mediation

**JEL Classification:** K14, K33, K49