

IT'S ALL RELATIVE(S): FAMILIAL SEARCHING IN THE NETHERLANDS

C. van Kooten, K. Slooten, K. van der Beek

Netherlands Forensic Institute, Laan van Ypenburg 6, 2497 GB Den Haag, The Netherlands

Familial searching is the process through which the DNA-profile of an offender of a crime is compared to a DNA-database to identify potential close relatives. These potential close relatives may lead to identification of the offender. Although current legislation in the Netherlands does not permit familial searching, this may soon change. At present the Dutch Parliament is considering a bill that if passed will allow the Dutch DNA database to be used for familial searching in serious unsolved criminal cases in which certain criteria are met. The approval of the law is expected to occur in the first half of 2011. Once this happens, a large number of requests for familial searches are expected, particularly from cold case investigations. In anticipation of this need, the NFI is at present making the necessary preparations.

These preparations include;

- a) Criteria setting: which crime scene DNA-profiles qualify for familial searching
- b) Prediction: how many initial matches can be expected
- c) Protocols: how will the search be conducted and when and how will (further) investigation be carried out

Estimations on the basis of (computer) simulations of the expected results, necessary (further) investigations and rate of success will be reported.