

UNLOCKING POTENTIAL
TRANSFORMING LIVES



Victims of Crime in Europe: the future is now!

VSE Annual Conference
Years of APAV



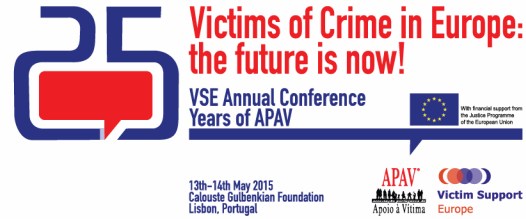
With financial support from
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Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation
Lisbon, Portugal



Victim Support
Europe

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BACKGROUND - SENTENCES

- The number of convictions resulting in a custodial sentence fell by 5 per cent in the year 2013-14. This is the lowest level observed in custodial sentences since 2004-05.
 - Custodial sentences represent 13 per cent of all court sentences in 2013-14. The proportion declined since 2012-13 but has been between 12 and 15 per cent over the last 10 years
 - Overall, the average length of custodial sentences, excluding life sentences, in 2013-14 was around 9 and a half months (292 days), 9 days (3 per cent) longer than in 2012-13 (283 days) and 63 days (28 per cent) longer than in 2005-06 (229 days or 7 and a half months) when sentences were at their shortest in the last ten years.
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BACKGROUND - PRISONS

- Annually across Scotland, the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) see more than 30,000 receptions to prisons;
- There are 16 establishments in Scotland of which two are privately operated.
- At 24 April 2015 the prison population comprised:
 - Life Sentence – 1013
 - Long term sentence (4>) – 1797
 - Short term sentence (<4) – 3475
 - Untried - 1249

VICTIM NOTIFICATION SCHEME

Victims are entitled to receive the following information:

- The date of the prisoner's release (other than being granted temporary release);
 - If the prisoner dies, his date of death;
 - If the prisoner has been transferred to a place out with Scotland;
 - That the prisoner has for the first time entitled to be considered for temporary release;
 - That the prisoner is unlawfully at large; or
 - That the prisoner who was released has been returned to custody; and
 - That the prisoner who was unlawfully at large has been returned to custody.
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VICTIM NOTIFICATION SCHEME

Victims are also entitled to make representations (in certain circumstances orally) to:

The Parole Board for Scotland - in relation to release on Parole license;

The Scottish Prison Service – in relation to:

- temporary release (on the first occasion only); and
- early release on Home Detention Curfew (mainly short term prisoners).



- By the end of the first year of the introduction of the VNS (2004) - 278 victims registered on the scheme;
 - In 2006 the scheme expanded when the eligibility criteria for joining the VNS changed and by the end of 2006 there were **557** victims registered on the scheme;
 - By the end of the financial year 2012-2013 more than **4000** victims had registered on the scheme since 2004.
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- At the end of the financial year 2012-13 there were **1941** victims registered on the scheme and actively receiving information. These comprised of victims of **645** life sentence prisoners, **990** long term prisoners and **319** short term prisoners;
 - At the 5 March 2015 there were **2145** victims registered on the scheme and actively receiving information. These comprise of victims of **748** life sentence prisoners, **1071** long term prisoners and **326** short term prisoners; and
 - In the financial year 2012-13 we sent information to victims on more than **1200** occasions.
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VICTIMS STANDARDS

[Standards for Victims](#) developed jointly by Justice agencies in Scotland.

- explains to victims what they can expect to happen at each stage of the criminal justice process,
 - the standards of service you can expect, and
 - who you can contact for help or advice.
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VICTIMS STANDARDS

The Standards of Service are based on the main principles of the Victims and Witnesses (Scotland) Act 2014:

- That a victim or witness should be able to obtain information about what is happening in the investigation or proceedings;
 - That the safety of a victim or witness should be ensured during and after the investigation and proceedings;
 - That a victim or witness should have access to appropriate support during and after the investigation and proceedings; and
 - That, in so far as it would be appropriate to do so, a victim or witness should be able to participate effectively in the investigation and proceedings.
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ROLE OF PRISON SERVICES


- What is the role of prisons in supporting victims?
 - What do prisons in your jurisdiction do?
 - Are prison services the right justice agency to provide this information? If not why not?
 - What more could prison services do to support victims?
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Thank you

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