



Victim Support
Europe



2021

Annual report.



WHO WE ARE.

Victim Support Europe (VSE) is the leading European umbrella organisation that advocates on behalf of all victims of crime, no matter what the crime, no matter who the victim.

VSE represents 66 national member organisations, providing support and information services to more than 2 million people affected by crime every year in 32 countries.

Since its foundation in 1990, VSE has worked on behalf of all European – and global – victims to ensure their rights and services, whether they have reported a crime or not.

We work through advocacy to achieve our mission of improving EU and international laws related to victims' rights, using research, knowledge development, and capacity building at the national and local level.

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01. FROM THE PRESIDENT



Geraldine Hanna

2021 has, on reflection, been one of the most challenging years that Victim Support Europe has faced in its history. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought disruption and uncertainty to our sector as well as to all our members, partners and colleagues. We have been guided by our values whilst trying to adapt and innovate; we have efficiently redesigned our annual events agenda from the ground up to ensure we can still bring victims' most pressing challenges to the attention of an even wider audience.

In my first term as President of VSE, I am proud to say that our organisation has continued to thrive, and to achieve its goals. This success has been possible thanks to the hard work and perseverance of the Board, the Brussels Office, and our members and volunteers, all of whom have contributed their time and skills to improve and sustain our community of like-minded people.

We have run two successful international conferences with improved online interaction: plenary sessions were supported by collaborative networking activities and simultaneous side events.

Substantial progress has been made with the staff exchange programme, which has evolved thanks to the host organisations developing impressive multi-day programmes. Indeed, we were able to send 20 victim support workers (rather than the usual 6) to Germany, Croatia and Portugal to participate in these knowledge exchange opportunities.

We piloted our first-ever Executive Board

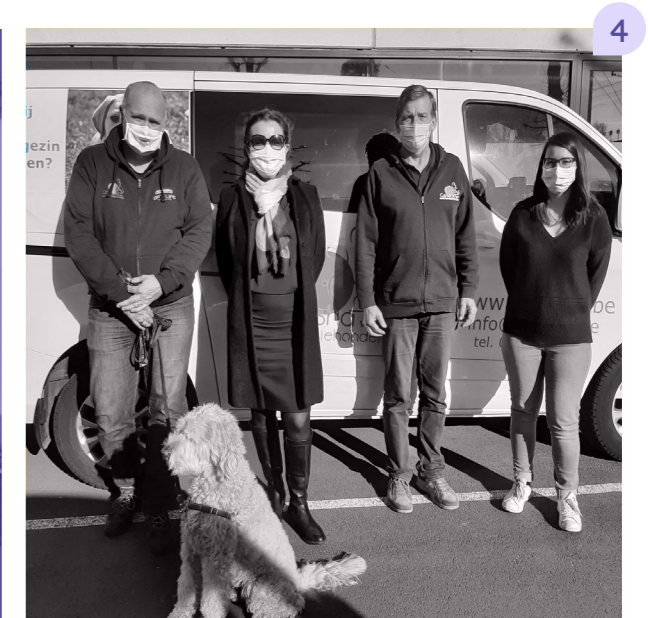
induction meeting format and have now adopted an online training approach when introducing new board members to our work.

We continue to be the leading voice of victims' issues in Europe and beyond. National, European and international actors are increasingly turning to VSE for advice and support as they develop their own laws, policies and services. VSE's 2015 Strategy focused on putting in place foundations that were based on the capabilities of a newly established office with very few staff. VSE's 2021-2025 Strategy comes at a very different time in our development. It reflects a growing need and capability to not just lobby for change, but also to support the implementation of that change by gathering evidence, developing policies and proposing changes to laws.

We have developed policy papers on safe justice and the national support framework. A further significant achievement, in 2021, has been our advocacy team's response to EU consultations, in response to which we submitted 14 proposals.

And lastly, but not least, we've implemented a separate communications strategy to highlight eight ongoing projects with the intention to efficiently disseminate completed project outputs.

In the coming months, we will continue to manage the impact of COVID-19, thanks in no small part to the hard work of our members. So, on behalf of the Board, I would like to thank everyone at Victim Support Europe for going the extra mile this year to build a stronger organisation and serve victims of crime a little better every day.



1. Press conference, Ghent police, FYDO project
2. VSE Deputy Director Aleksandra Ivankovic at the 'Maison pour l'Accueil des Victimes', Nice
3. VSE's Staff exchange at Weisser Ring Germany
4. VSE's team on a visit at Canisha VZW - FYDO Project

VSE 2021 IN PICTURES 02.



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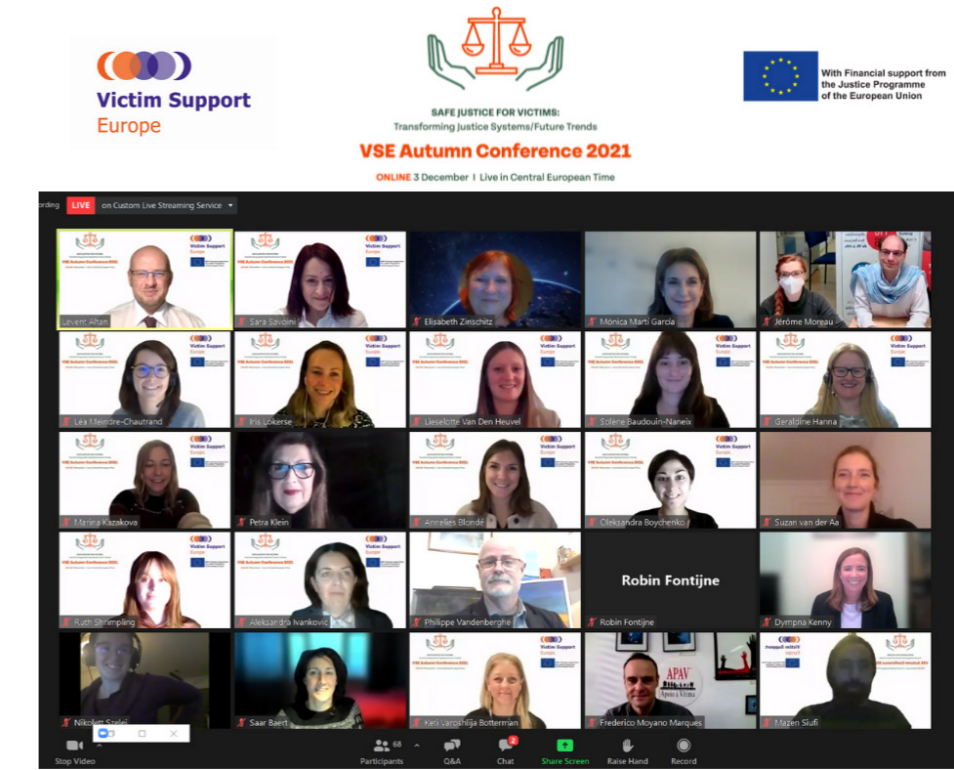
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Workshop
Victim Support Europe
 CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE
 With financial support from the Justice Programme of the European Union
116 006 european victim support helplines & supporting at a distance
 Brussels, 19 & 20 October 2021



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- 5. VSE's staff exchange at APAV, Portugal
- 6. Victim Support Europe's Policy Officer Léa Meindre-Chautrand at Rete Dafne Italia's Conference «Restorative Justice and Victims of Crime», Naples
- 7. VSE's annual Centre of Excellence Workshop
- 8. Levent Altan at the International Roundtable 'One Million Questions about the Support for Victims of Crime', Vilnius, Lithuania



- 9. VSE Autumn Conference 2021
- 10. Geraldine Hanna and Levent Altan moderating VSE's Autumn Conference 2021

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03. OVERVIEW OF 2021

OBJECTIVES 2021:

1. Advance improvements in laws and policies.
2. Pursue compliance with existing laws and policies.
3. Raise awareness of victims' issues.
4. Enable improvements in quality and accessibility of services.
5. Support coordination and delivery of cross border services.
6. Strengthen VSE's collective capability
7. Develop VSE's operational capacity.
8. Enhance financial resilience.

THEMATIC PRIORITIES FOR THE YEAR

116 006 helpline for victims of crime

Activities focused on the continuous exchange of knowledge and good practice between VSE members who run a 116 006 helpline. VSE also actively advocated for other EU Member States to implement the helpline in their country and pushed the European Commission for a stronger commitment to the Victims' Rights Directive on this matter.

Terrorism

Our activities focused on the evaluation of the Combating Terrorism Directive as well the evaluation of the Victims Rights Directive. We led the EUCVT project, which included preparing and publishing national and European handbooks, initiating national training sessions, and running the EUCVT hub. We also continued to improve our Terrorism Response Network and cross-border referral system to ensure that all victims have access to timely and appropriate information and support.

Hate crime

Our activities focused on initiating discussions to add hate speech and hate crime to the list of EU crimes – thereby allowing the EU to create appropriate legislation for offences and their sanctions – and evaluating the measures in need of harmonisation at the European level.

Since 2020, VSE has been a member of the EStAR (Enhancing Stakeholder Awareness and Resources for Hate Crime Victim Support) network – a project from ODIHR that equips state and non-state actors with the necessary tools and resources to ensure that hate crime victims are protected, enjoy full access to justice, and receive tailored specialist support. The project started on 1 January 2020 and will end on 30 April 2022.

Advancing laws and policies

VSE continued to play a supportive role in EU policy development as well as in the evaluation and implementation of EU legislation related to victimisation. VSE endorsed the EU-wide implementation of the Victims' Rights Directive and the EU Victims' Rights Strategy. VSE supports enforcement of the Directive by evidence-based means and encourages compliance by collecting and exchanging information, advice, and good practices.

Access to Justice

VSE's work also focused on the safe access to justice for all victims of a crime. In doing so, VSE produced a paper that provides a first take on the question "How to ensure safe justice from a victim's perspective?". The paper aims to address ways in which the justice system unnecessarily harms victims. VSE also submitted responses to EU consultations related to justice, including on the transfer of criminal proceedings, modernising judicial cooperation, and the justice scoreboard. In December 2021, VSE's Autumn Conference focused on transforming justice systems, with a view to opening the debate on how victims can achieve justice in a safe manner; a safe justice workshop was also organised for VSE members.

OUR WORK FOR VICTIMS

This year we spent time on improving victim-centric information and on connecting victims to national support organisations.

Information provision for specific types of victims through awareness-raising campaigns

6 videos and 7 films for specific types of victims were launched within the PREVICT and ItExists campaigns. These vehicles provide information on victims' rights, on how to identify and report a crime, on who to contact for help in the event of a crime, and on appropriate support after a crime.

Information Page for Victims and Victim Support Professionals about COVID-19

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit Europe, Victim Support Europe committed to supporting both individuals and organisations in addition to providing appropriate relevant information. Our dedicated Covid-19 webpage ensures victims continue to receive support during the pandemic. The webpage includes general information on COVID-19 as well as on coronavirus-related crime, advice for victims of domestic violence, resources for the provision of distance support services, and much more.

Victim Engagement

VSE listened to victims by engaging in additional victim interviews and event testimonies.



OUR WORK WITH MEMBERS

This year we aimed to improve our communication and engagement with members, and to strengthen our programme of member-centric events.

Hub

In 2021, VSE launched a brand-new Victim Support Hub to improve information-sharing and networking with our membership. The Hub provides a platform for VSE members and aims to stimulate dialogue as well as increase awareness on critical victims' issues ranging from advocacy, policy and justice to information, education and support.

Events

VSE Annual Conference 'Transforming victim support: from dream to reality'
VSE Autumn Conference 'Safe Justice for Victims'

Regional knowledge exchange event

In 2021, due to the global public health crisis, an online regional knowledge exchange event was organised via the newly launched VSE Social Hub. The event took place on 17 November 2021 and brought together 26 participants from different VSE member organisations. 8 speakers were invited to talk about their work in supporting victims of crime in their country.

Centre of Excellence online meetings

The VSE Centre of Excellence met twice online to discuss advocacy priorities around the 116 006 helplines and the future of the Centre of Excellence.

Participants worked closely with France Victimes to support its campaign against the French Government's decision to impose an operational time limit within the 116 006 helpline public tender. A letter was sent to the French Government by VSE, together with European victim support providers and operators of 116 helplines, to express their concerns on this requirement. The letter's signatories called on the French Government to urgently review the tender's terms of reference and to postpone any decision until the impact of these time restrictions were fully understood so as to avoid any reduction to the quality and experience of service enjoyed by callers. Ultimately, the French Government withdrew its clause limiting the duration of calls.

National Meetings

3 national meetings were organised in 2021.

In October 2021, the VSE Deputy Director was invited to deliver a presentation at an event organised by Croatian partners and members in Zagreb. The three-day event focused on “Capacity Building of Civil Society Organizations for Participation in the Process of Public Policy Development and Advocacy”. This event allowed different actors to meet, to network and discuss challenges identified by civil society organisations supporting victims in Croatia.

A second national meeting took place in Naples, Italy on 25 and 26 November 2020, it was hosted by the Università degli Studi Suor Orsola Benincasa and organised by Rete Dafne Italia. The meeting brought together representatives of the Italian Government and Parliament, the judiciary and victim support services to discuss Restorative Justice and victim support.

The final meeting took place in Vilnius, on 17 December 2021, at the premises of the Republic of Lithuania’s Seimas. The event was organized, with support from VSE, by Klaipėda (a VSE member) and the Center for Crime Prevention, a long-term VSE country partner. The roundtable – attended by governmental, parliamentarian, law enforcement and victim support representatives – aimed to formalise guidelines to strengthen victim support systems and cooperative structures among institutions engaged in the field.

Workshops & Webinars

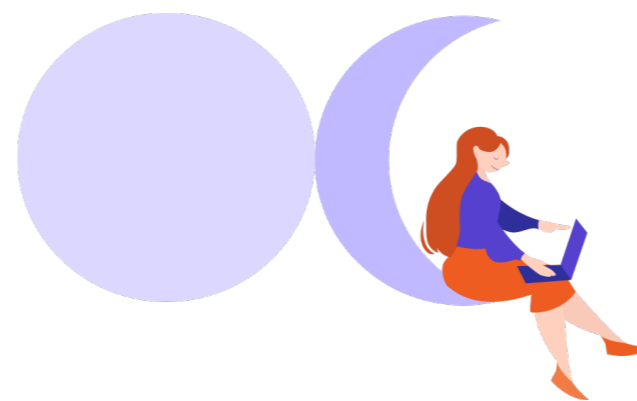
- September 2021, VSE members’ Webinar Discussion on the EU Public Consultation on the Evaluation of the Victims’ Rights Directive
- Pre-Autumn Conference online Safe Justice Workshop contributing to the research and work on the Safe Justice policy paper.
- September 2021, the first Victim Support Hub Webinar: “Coming together and reconnecting”
- October 2021, Centre of Excellence in-person annual workshop meeting for 116 006 and distance support
- November 2021, the second Victim Support Hub Webinar: “Getting to know the hub community”

Training

In 2021, VSE delivered 6 training modules:

- Training for new VSE Executive Board members on the function of the EU institutions and the EU policy cycle;
- Training on EU victims’ rights conducted during the ERA Summer Course on European Criminal Justice;
- Training on the needs of victims of terrorism delivered during a further ERA event;
- The OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina invited VSE to deliver a training module on support for hate crime victims;
- Training to the European Justice Training Network (EJTN) on the rights of victims of domestic violence;
- Training to Family Liaison Officers (FLO) UK on the rights of victims of cross-border crime and terrorism, and associated referral mechanisms.

As an integral part of the Victim Support Hub, VSE also launched its own Training Academy. The Academy offers training resources on all victim of crime topics.



COMMUNICATIONS AND CAMPAIGNS

Our communication activities increased this year

Information Campaign 2021

'You won't believe it, but ... exists'

'You won't believe it, but ... exists' is a 2021 information campaign that kicked off on 22 February, the European Day for Victims of Crime, and ran throughout 2021. Involving 14 partners across 13 different countries, the campaign looked to inform the general public about existing victim support services and to encourage victims to reach out to these services. The campaign had two components:

- 'You won't believe, but ...exists' – a series of films and visuals produced by VSE for release in seven countries,
- 'Reclaim your safety' - a series of videos and visuals produced under the EU-funded PREVICT project.

Publicity Campaign: Annual Conference 2021

From 15 March to 25 May 2021, VSE launched the PR Campaign 'Transforming Victim Support: from dream to reality' linked to its virtual Annual Conference, 19-20 May 2021. The aim of the campaign was to increase the digital footprint of VSE's endeavours in mainstreaming victims' rights and services in order to spark engagement and to continue the practical work of implementing victims' rights in every member state. The campaign results are represented by a total of 593 318 views.

Publicity Campaign: Autumn Conference 2021

VSE launched the campaign, linked to its virtual Autumn Conference, on 3 December 2021. The campaign ran between 21 September and 8 December 2021. The campaign hoped to increase the digital footprint of VSE's endeavours related to mainstreaming 'victim-centered justice' in order to spark engagement and continue the practical implementation of victims' rights in every member state. This campaign reached 809 397 people.

Marking important victims' rights dates

- 22 February - European Day for Victims of Crime
- 11 March - European Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Terrorism
- 22 July - European Day for Victims of Hate Crimes
- 21 August - International Day for Victims of Terrorism
- 25 November - International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

Multimedia work

115 campaign visuals, 7 animation films, 15 videos were developed.

Videoring of events

Increased the interviewing and videoring of events, workshops, training events etc. to help spread victims' rights knowledge.

PR campaigns to support our events

In 2021, we aimed to increase social media coverage of VSE events and commemorative dates (22 February, 21 August). The aim of these PR activities is to increase VSE's digital footprint, to ignite engagement with our projects and victim related endeavors, and the implementation of victims' rights in every member state.

04.

VSE 2021 FACTBOX

VSE Victims Statistics 2021

Although Victim Support Europe's 2021 statistics tell their story in numbers, their consequences are human. Behind each number is a person, a family, a community: we hope governments, victim support services, health providers, civil society organisations, the media and others will use these numbers to promote victims' rights, to develop comprehensive victim support systems, to keep communities safe, and to protect the vulnerable.

The report covers 66 global victim support services and signifies the number of crime victims in receipt of organizational support. Whilst the findings do not illustrate how victims, affected by crime, were able to access help, they demonstrate that NGOs, such as those highlighted in the report, encourage those victims to report crime, find help, and make their voices heard.

Number of victims supported by VSE members in 2021

The number of victims reaching support services has been rising for many years. In 2021, the number of victims supported by Victim Support Europe's members rose to more than **2, 110, 360**.

Out of which:
300 000 victims of crime supported by France Victimes

207 937 victims of crime supported by Victim Support Netherlands

52 199 victims of crime, witnesses and their next-of-kin by Victim Support Sweden

45738 victims of crime supported by Victim Support New Zealand

26.600 victims of crime supported by Victim Support Finland

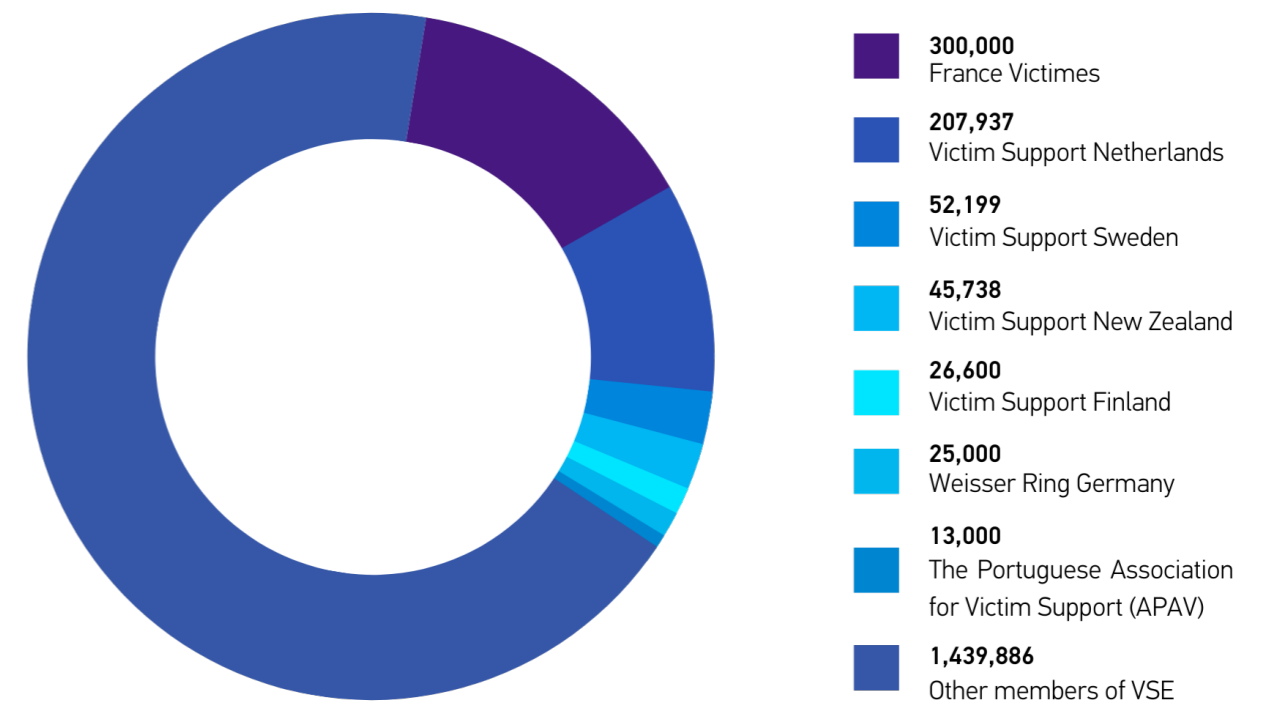
25.000 victims of crime supported by Weisser Ring Germany

13.000 victims of crime supported by The Portuguese Association for Victim Support (APAV)

1,439,886 victims of crimes supported by the rest of VSE members

NUMBER OF VICTIMS SUPPORTED BY VSE MEMBERS IN 2021:

2,110,360
VICTIMS OF CRIME



VSE Publications and Events 2021

This year VSE produced the following publications:

- A discussion paper focusing on the safe access to justice for victims of a crime. In introducing the concept of safe justice, the paper discusses current practical problems and barriers to victims achieving justice through a 'real-life' victim's journey: from the crime to the outcome of criminal proceedings. The paper thereby aims to initiate discussion on how to make the criminal justice system work in a way that is less harmful to victims and victims' families, and which can be considered more successful, by victims and their families, regardless of the outcome or guilt of the offender.
- A policy paper describing the National Framework for Comprehensive Support. This schematic, which was developed during the VOCIARE project in 2019, offers a clear visual of the different actors that should be involved at the national level as well as key channels of support, continual improvement approaches and standards that ensure high quality services of victim support.
- ECJ/ECHR case law report 2021
- VSE responded to 17 EU consultations on victims' rights

VSE held the following events:

This year VSE produced the following publications:

- VSE Annual Conference
- VSE Autumn Conference
- Online EU NGO Round Table
- 3 National Meetings
- 2 Centre of Excellence meetings
- 6+ workshops and training sessions
- 4 Executive Board meetings + Executive Board Induction Meeting
- 6 Management Team meetings

OVERVIEW OF VICTIM SUPPORT

05.

EUROPE

ACTIVITIES

2021

The needs of our members and victims are at the heart of all VSE actions. We offer various activities that encourage the victim support community's work; these activities are part of our strategic plan, which is developed in collaboration with our members (currently 66 organisations in 32 countries).

Main activities in 2021 included, but were not limited to:

- Exchange of best practices
- Organising online conferences and other networking opportunities
- Developing policy input including consultations, policy briefs/papers and position papers
- Advocacy by lobbying for victims' rights at the international and European levels
- Dissemination of information
- Managing the VSE network
- Ensuring responsible governance and operating structures



5.1 Developing knowledge, collaborations and partnerships.

5.1.1 Developing knowledge.

Safe justice paper

As mentioned above, the discussion paper “How to ensure safe justice from a victim’s perspective?” offers a first response to the challenges and barriers incurred by victims and highlighted by reviewing a ‘real-life’ victim’s journey, starting with the crime and ending with the outcome of criminal proceedings. The paper challenges conceptual concerns and preconceived notions that form the basis of (some of) the current justice systems that may influence the victim’s ability to achieve safe justice. It is our understanding that, in safe justice system, victims should have a sense that justice is achieved, while any potential harm encountered by them during the process is minimised. In conclusion, the paper offers recommendations for ensuring practical safe, victim-centred, justice systems.

National framework for comprehensive victims’ support

The framework provides a description of those sectors able to positively impact victims’ lives, and the organisational approaches that bring these sectors together in a coherent support system which continually improves and delivers a high-quality service. It aims to change the way we perceive engagement and activities: from a silo approach, with each organisation operating in single sphere with a single perspective, to one where every entity having contact with victims has a victim-centric perspective.

ECJ/ECHR case law reports

VSE regularly monitors CJEU and ECHR case law to identify relevant victims’ rights judgements. Throughout 2021, VSE has continued to monitor such ECHR and ECJ judgements that may be of interest in our advocacy work and that of our members. We have identified over 25 cases covering issues such as investigations into child sexual abuse, secondary victimisation in criminal proceedings, investigations into hate crimes and murders and their consequences on the victims’ families, etc. One case of interest identified in ECJ case law focused on the right to (EU) residency for victims of domestic violence.



5.1.2 Developing collaborations and partnerships.

I. Working with EU institutions:

At the EU level, we have been involved in many advocacy initiatives. While the work of the European Union may seem removed from its citizens, decisions taken by these institutions directly impact victims’ lives. Over the last year, VSE has broadened and intensified its work with European actors; and key partners include: the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Council of the EU, the European Economic Social Committee, the European Committee of the Regions, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, and the European Institute of Gender Equality as well as EEAS, Europol, Eurojust, and CEPOL.

VSE has been in regular contact with representatives from the European Commission on a range of subjects, but especially on the evaluation of the Victims’ Rights Directive and other legislation related to victims’ issues. VSE has also been involved in the evaluation of the Combating Terrorism Directive, engaging with the European Commission, other EU NGOs, and its member organisations. VSE staff have actively attended all 2021 Victims’ Rights Platform meetings and have presented the work carried out by the EUCVT. VSE has also been particularly active in responding to the Commission’s calls for consultation and roadmaps.

VSE has highlighted concerns, including those raised by members, and shared good practices with the Commission. Several in-person and online meetings were organised between the VSE President and key EU officials with the aim to present VSE’s priorities and discuss common areas of interest. The VSE President met with Commissioner for Justice Didier Reynders, Commissioner for Equality Helena Dalli, EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator, Diane Schmitt, Director General of DG Justice and DG HOME, the French Permanent Representation in Brussels, and several other key Members of the European Parliament.

Throughout the year, VSE has also monitored European Parliament committee and plenary session debates. On several occasions, VSE has been contacted by Members of the European Parliament for inputs on draft reports and issues related to victims’ rights and needs.



European Committee of the Regions



II. International engagements

VSE's work not only focuses on EU Member institutions, but also takes place in the global arena.

The United Nations

VSE has continued to cooperate with the United Nations, in particular with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the United Nations Office of Counter Terrorism, to promote the rights of all victims and to support policies related to victims of terrorism.



In 2021, VSE participated in the following UN-led events:

- Expert consultation on the Model Provisions Regarding Victims of Terrorism
- Validation Meeting for Guidelines and Principles to Assist, Protect and Support Victims of Terrorism in Asia Pacific
- UN Counter-terrorism Week
- A virtual "Dialogue with Human Rights and Civil Society Partners to Build a Better Paradigm to Prevent and Counter Terrorism"
- ECOSOC High-level Segment
- Counter-terrorism Advisory Network: autumn event

Wenn möglich bleiben Sie daheim.

Meiden Sie die Innenstadt.

Es herrscht morgen keine Schulpflicht in Wien.*



* Die Schulen sind für die Betreuung geöffnet

Council of Europe

VSE continues to regularly work with the Council of Europe, thanks to our participatory status. VSE has been actively engaging at various events including the INGO Conference and the Conference "Gender Equality and the Istanbul Convention: a decade of action" in May 2021.

Victim Support Asia (VSA)

Following the establishment of Victim Support Asia in 2018, VSE has continued to help VSA bring together organisations and institutions working for victims in Asia. In 2021, VSE participated in VSA board meetings and assisted with the preparation for VSA's 2021 Annual Conference.

VSE Terrorism Response Network

Following the 2015 Paris terrorist attacks as well as other attacks in Europe and beyond, Victim Support Europe, together with its members, has helped ensure victims are offered the support they need and that governments and international institutions better understand their needs and how to deliver the best response. Since 2015, VSE, through its Terrorism Response Network, has responded to more than European and global 20 attacks, including attacks in France, Germany, Spain, UK, Sweden, Finland, Russia, Turkey, USA, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh. VSE responds to large scale attacks wherever European citizens are likely to be involved.



INVICTM – International Network Supporting Victims of Terrorism and Mass Violence

VSE remains an active member of INVICTM and participates in monthly online conference calls with the informal group of experts.

An international online TTX, replacing its annual symposium that was cancelled due to the Covid pandemic, was held on behalf of INVICTM and involved members of Canadian and UK police forces. The e-TTX, held over two days for operational reasons, aimed to establish police protocols to support (cross-border) victims and first responders after a major terrorist incident as well as to provide VSE with an opportunity to expand its training repertoire. The event was well supported by VSE members and numerous experts, including survivors of terrorist attacks, from around the world: some 100 observers attended both events.

In 2021, VSE has maintained good contact with network members.



EU NGO Round Table Meeting

Online, 11 February 2021

III. VSE's collaboration with European NGOs

EU NGO Round Table

This year, VSE collaborated with several international NGO networks and agencies involved in victim support. Activities included the organisation of a well-attended roundtable discussion, which enabled those sharing a common commitment to victims of crime in Europe, to connect and to identify future partnership opportunities between the EC and NGOs at European and national levels.

For several years now, VSE has organised regular roundtable discussions with other EU NGOs advocating for vulnerable groups. While in the past the meetings were hosted by the European Commission, VSE has begun to host its own discussion groups.

In February 2021, VSE organised an online EU NGO Roundtable, 16 European NGOs sent representatives. The meeting provided participants with an opportunity to update each other about common advocacy activities and priorities, and to discuss how to cooperate during future European Commission Victims' Rights Platform meetings.

Conversation focused on priorities for the year and common areas of cooperation, such as the implementation and evaluation of the Victims Rights Directive, standards for helplines, training, EU legislation on violence against women, combatting child sexual exploitation, safe justice, underreporting of crimes, anti-trafficking strategy, etc.

A regular exchange of emails allowed the EU NGOs to update their work, events and joint actions.

Joint Efforts

With our EUNGO partners, we have developed a common advocacy language and resources that include joint events, statements, and campaigns-in-collaboration, which:

- 1) raise awareness on EU priorities in the field of victims' rights by highlighting critical gaps
- 2) provide details on the impact of the practical implementation of victims' rights in all EU member States.

In 2021, VSE began developing stronger links with NGOs and other organisations in Europe.

In June 2021, VSE participated at the 1st International Conference on Child-Friendly Justice: "Can Justice be Child-Friendly? – National and International Perspectives", organised as part of Child-Friendly Justice: Developing the concept of social court practices. VSE's Deputy Director, Aleksandra Ivankovic, spoke at this 3-day event that aimed to open discussion on the level of transposition and implementation of two EU Directives: Directive (EU) 2016/800 and Directive (EU) 2012/29, as well as discussion on the approaches and practices of three member states: Bulgaria, Italy, and Romania. The conference brought together a broad church of speakers – children, academics, professionals, and policy-makers from the European Commission, UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights and UNICEF – on the topic of child-friendly justice and access to justice for children with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities, children in migration, and children in alternative care.

5.2 Enhancing the quality of victim support services.

5.2.1 Workshops and Training



When it comes to building knowledge of victims' rights, VSE and its network bring a wealth of experience and expertise to the table. VSE's overall objective is to achieve change, and to strengthen the organisational capacity of its members, partners, and external organisations as well as those individuals who interact with victims.

VSE supports the development of knowledge by delivering training courses, workshops, lectures, and presentations at its own events and at those organised by others.

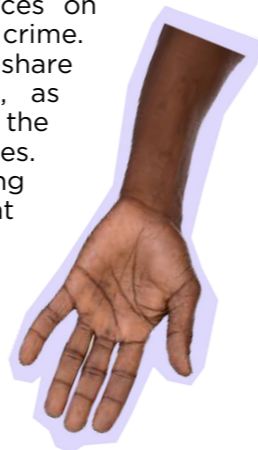
In 2021, VSE delivered 6 training modules:

- VSE delivered a training module, on the function of the EU institutions and the EU policy cycle, to enable new Executive Board members more clearly understand how, and why, VSE influences the development and implementation of EU victim-centric legislation;
- VSE was invited to deliver EU victims' rights training during the ERA Summer Course on European Criminal Justice;
- VSE was invited to deliver training on the needs of victims of terrorism during another ERA event;
- VSE was invited by the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina to deliver a training module on supporting hate crime victims;
- VSE delivered training to the European Justice Training Network (EJTN) on the rights of victims of domestic violence;
- VSE delivered training to Family Liaison Officers (FLO) UK on the rights of victims of cross-border crime and terrorism, and on referral mechanisms.

In 2021, VSE was active in developing new online tools for its members and partners. In this sense, we launched our own online hub and training academy (<https://victimsupporthub.eu/>) in May 2021. The VSE Hub gives VSE members, victim support organisations, civil society actors, individual experts and other entities working for victims the opportunity to exchange knowledge and experiences on the rights and needs of victims. In doing so, the Hub aims to connect stakeholders and facilitate virtual discussions and networking across borders. Access to the Hub has been initially restricted to VSE members only. Over the course of 2022, access will gradually be extended to friends of VSE and experts taking part in VSE working groups. At a later stage, the Hub will be open to anyone interested in advancing the rights of all victims of crime.

As an integral part of its Hub, VSE launched its own Training Academy. The Academy offers training resources on all matters related to victims of crime. The Academy's mission is to share knowledge, skills and practice, as well as to support excellence in the delivery of victim support services. The Academy will offer learning opportunities nationwide, at European and global events, through eLearning, themed learning groups and regular webinar discussions that will address victims' needs and victims' rights.

Several workshops have also been organised, including the Centre of Excellence workshop on 116 006 helpline and distance support, an online webinar on the newly launched Online Hub focused on 'Coming together and re-connecting', a workshop on the topic of Safe Justice to feed the research and work for the discussion paper on Safe Justice, and a Webinar Discussion on the EU Public Consultation on the evaluation of the Victims' Rights Directive.



5.2.2 Setting Standards

Previous experience has taught us that our accreditation approach, as piloted in 2018, is unsuitable for our larger member organisations. For that reason, it has been decided that other methods should be tested, including an option to allow members align their services with our standards. The creation of this 'self-verification stage' will conserve, rather than stretch, VSE resources involved in the external verification process. In 2022, we will research the feasibility of a self-accreditation system based on our quality standards that could be implemented for full members.



5.2.3 Developing centres of excellence across the EU

As our members are located in many countries and may be in contact with different victim groups, the VSE Centre of Excellence allows them share their 116 helpline and distance support knowledge, experiences, best and worst practice issues.

VSE continues to support member organisations running a 116 006 helpline for victims of crime and/or providing online distance support to victims. The Centre of Excellence now has 14 members representing organisations in Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, the Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Portugal and Sweden.

In 2021, Centre of Excellence members met twice online to discuss work priorities, common areas of interest, and the future of the Centre.

Centre of Excellence members were able to support France Victimes in its campaign against the French Government's decision to impose public tender criteria on the length of calls handled by the 116 006 helpline staff. With the help and support of VSE members, who oversee 116 helplines, and external partners in lobbying the French President and the French Ministry of Justice, France Victimes was successful in getting these criteria dropped from public tender documentation.

Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, VSE organised the 2021 Centre of Excellence Workshop on 116 006 helpline and support at a distance in Brussels, Belgium on 19 and 20 October (with 3 participants attending remotely). The workshop brought together 22 participants from 16 different organisations (including 3 VSE staff members and 2 external speakers). The Workshop allowed members to meet in-person and share their knowledge and expertise on different topics, including the training, recruitment and supervision of staff and volunteers, promoting the work of the helpline and online support, helpline funding, and online support. 2 external speakers from organisations running a 116 000 hotline for missing children and 116 111 child helpline were also invited to talk about their work and the running of the different helplines.

5.2.4 Enhancing VSE's services for members

In 2021, we worked on increasing the quality and accessibility of member-oriented services. VSE members can now access a range of benefits designed to enhance knowledge exchange, visibility, networking, and information sharing.

We have launched a brand-new Victim Support Hub to improve information-sharing and networking with our membership. The Hub provides a VSE members' platform to stimulate dialogue and spread awareness of critical victims' issues ranging from advocacy, policy and justice to information, education and support.

Currently, the Hub is only open to executives and single points of contact coming from VSE's member organisations, as well as to limited senior staff members and several EU organisations with whom VSE works.

Towards the end of 2022, VSE aims to open the Hub to the public, including to staff and volunteers working for our members (with their agreement).

We believe that members can benefit from the Hub by:

- Finding, and connecting with, other Hub users for the purposes of supporting their activities and those of their organisation;
- Developing knowledge & expertise on topics relating to victims' rights and needs;
- Promoting their activities to other Hub users.

5.2.5 Assistance on the development of victim support in EU member states

When the COVID-19 crisis hit Europe in March 2020, Victim Support Europe remained committed to supporting individuals and organisations in the development of victim services across the EU, by providing space for organisations to exchange best practices, and by providing information to its members and the public. Our organizational efforts have been most impacted in terms of (a lack of) physical presence at events, while a quick shift to 100% home working and online meetings was immediately initiated.

Throughout 2021, we continued to support our member organisations by developing an online membership management system, which we launched in the fourth quarter of the year. This system has allowed us to streamline the membership application process and keep track of member engagement, ultimately ensuring that we provide a better service to our members

Country	Name	Role	Phone	Email	Status
Albania	Albania Legal Aid Initiative	Member	+355 69 220 220	albania@vse.org	Active
Albania	Albania Legal Aid Initiative	Member	+355 69 220 220	albania@vse.org	Active
Albania	Albania Legal Aid Initiative	Member	+355 69 220 220	albania@vse.org	Active
Albania	Albania Legal Aid Initiative	Member	+355 69 220 220	albania@vse.org	Active
Albania	Albania Legal Aid Initiative	Member	+355 69 220 220	albania@vse.org	Active
Albania	Albania Legal Aid Initiative	Member	+355 69 220 220	albania@vse.org	Active
Albania	Albania Legal Aid Initiative	Member	+355 69 220 220	albania@vse.org	Active
Albania	Albania Legal Aid Initiative	Member	+355 69 220 220	albania@vse.org	Active
Albania	Albania Legal Aid Initiative	Member	+355 69 220 220	albania@vse.org	Active
Albania	Albania Legal Aid Initiative	Member	+355 69 220 220	albania@vse.org	Active



National Meetings

Each year VSE, in collaboration with its members and partners, organizes national meetings aimed at sharing perspectives and views on the implementation of the 2012 EU Directive (Victims' Rights Directive). These meetings provide an opportunity to work together, through frank, open, and constructive dialogue, with the aim to better protect and support victims of crime in various national contexts.

In 2021, despite the Covid-19 pandemic, VSE supported the organisation and delivery of three national events.

In October 2021, the VSE Deputy Director was invited to deliver a presentation at an event organised by Croatian partners and members in Zagreb. The three-day event focused on "Capacity Building of Civil Society Organizations for Participation in the Process of Public Policy Development and Advocacy". This event brought together different actors to network and to discuss civil society challenges while supporting victims in Croatia.

On 25 and 26 November 2021, VSE supported its Italian Member Rete Dafne in the organisation of its annual Congress. The theme of the two-day conference, in the degli Studi Suor Orsola Benincasa in Naples, Italy, was "Restorative Justice and Victims of Crime". A VSE Policy Officer delivered a presentation on victims' rights and restorative justice. VSE invited France Victimes to present their work for the (13 November 2015) victims of terrorism during the current criminal trial in Paris. The Congress attracted more than 60 attendees, representatives of victim support services, restorative justice services, ministry of Justice, police forces and the parliament.

On 17th December 2021, VSE supported the organisation of a roundtable discussion in Vilnius, together with its Lithuanian member, Klaipėda, and its long-term country partner, The Center for Crime Prevention. VSE presented recommendations for a successful national victim support framework. The organisers invited VSE member, APAV, to share its expertise and experience with delivering victim support in Portugal. This event was attended by 30 people, including representatives from civil society organisations supporting victims of crime, parliamentarians, law enforcement authorities and government.

Regional Knowledge Exchange Event

Victim Support Europe organises an annual European Regional Knowledge Exchange Event, offering a unique opportunity for victim support practitioners to engage in dialogue with a broader audience and to advance their knowledge of victim support improvements.

In 2021, due to the public health crisis, the regional knowledge exchange was hosted online on VSE's newly launched Online Hub on 17 November and was attended by 26 participants from different VSE member organisations. 8 VSE members were invited to present their work and activities for victims of crime in their country.



5.3 Advance improvements in laws and policies

VSE actively engages in and influences the development of European and international public policy to highlight the needs of victims and those affected by crime as well as to strengthen victims' rights and protection in the aftermath of crime. We aim to ensure that new legislation and policies consider the needs of victims and others affected by crime, and that their wishes and priorities are reflected and adhered to.

We work with the major European Union institutions (the European Commission, European Parliament, and the Council of European Union) as well as with the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and the United Nations. We have a formal consultative status with the UN's ECOSOC Committee and the Council of Europe and work closely with various EU Agencies such as the Fundamental Rights Agency, CEPOL, EIGE, etc.

In 2021, VSE continued to play a supportive role in EU policy development as well as in the evaluation and implementation of EU legislation. VSE supported the implementation of the Victims' Rights Directive and the EU Victims' Rights Strategy across the EU.

VSE supports enforcement of the Directive through evidence-based means as well as encouraging compliance by collecting and exchanging information, advice, and good practices.

We ensured the delivery of activities on the EU acquis of rights related to victims of crime and formulated recommendations for EU actions to improve the rights of all European victims. VSE has been active in developing recommendations in response to the evaluation of the Victims' Rights Directive. A webinar discussion provided participants with background to the evaluation, including the consultation criteria and objectives as well as highlighting VSE's own priorities: the importance of protecting, strengthening, and improving existing rights. VSE encouraged

its member organisations to submit their own responses to the evaluation. VSE activities also included involvement in 17 EU Commission consultations and other surveys:

- Justice Scoreboard 2021 and 2022,
- CEPOL evaluation,
- Strategy on combating anti-Semitism and fostering Jewish life in the EU,
- Fighting Organised Crime - EU Strategy for 2021-2025,
- 2 FRA surveys,
- Effective Justice Common Conditions for Transferring Criminal Proceedings between EU Countries,
- Preventing and Fighting Human Trafficking Review of EU Rules,
- Combating Child Sexual Abuse Review of EU Rules,
- Fighting Child Sexual Abuse: Detection, Removal And Reporting Of Illegal Content Online,
- Combating Gender-Based Violence - Protecting Victims and Punishing Offenders (public consultation and impact assessment),
- Consular Protection,
- Modernisation of Judicial Cooperation,
- Innovation and Research Strategy
- Inclusion of Hate Crime and Hate

Speech to EU crimes.

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- Fighting Organised Crime - EU Strategy for 2021-2025,
- 2 FRA surveys,
- Effective Justice Common Conditions for Transferring Criminal Proceedings between EU Countries,
- Preventing and Fighting Human Trafficking Review of EU Rules,
- Combating Child Sexual Abuse Review of EU Rules,
- Fighting Child Sexual Abuse: Detection, Removal And Reporting Of Illegal Content Online,
- Combating Gender-Based Violence -

Protecting Victims and Punishing Offenders (public consultation and impact assessment),

- Consular Protection,
- Modernisation of Judicial Cooperation,
- Innovation and Research Strategy
- Inclusion of Hate Crime and Hate Speech to EU crimes.

VSE also organised several advocacy meetings with key EU officials, including Commissioner for Justice D. Reynders, Commissioner for Equality H. Dalli, DG Just, DG HOME, and a number of Members of

Parliament, and the VSE new President.

The aim of these meetings was to advance victims' rights and to lobby on behalf of various VSE recommendations, including calling for the full and effective implementation of the Victims' Rights Directive and ensuring a comprehensive victim support framework in all EU Member States.

VSE actively participated in meetings of the Victims' Rights Platform, including 2 plenary meetings and 6 ad hoc meetings on the following topics: digitalisation of justice, victims of terrorism, victims in detention, vulnerable adults, violence against women and undocumented migrants.

In addition, VSE was also involved in the evaluation of the Victims' Rights Directive, the Combating Terrorism Directive, and a study on ID theft. In this context, VSE participated in research, expert meetings and organised consultations with members and external partners.

At the international level, VSE continued to closely cooperate with the United Nations, in particular with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, to promote the rights of all victims and support policies related to victims of terrorism.

VSE also worked closely with the Council of Europe and in particular the INGO Conference to advance the rights and services of victims of crime.

2021

- VSE Contribution – 2021 EU Justice scoreboard
- VSE Contribution – Combating Child Sexual Abuse – Review of EU rules
- VSE Contribution – Combating Gender-Based Violence: Protecting Victims and Punishing Offenders
- VSE Contribution – Consultation on Consular Protection
- VSE Contribution – Effective Justice – Common conditions for transferring criminal proceedings between EU countries
- VSE Contribution – Fighting Child Sexual Abuse: Detection, Removal and Reporting of Illegal Content
- VSE Contribution – Fighting Organised Crime – EU Strategy for 2021-2025
- VSE Contribution – Inception impact assessment – Combating gender-based violence – Protecting victims and punishing offenders
- VSE Contribution – Inclusion of Hate Crime and Hate Speech to the list of EU crimes
- VSE Contribution – Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings – Review of EU Rules
- VSE Contribution – Research, innovation, education & young people – a new global approach
- VSE Contribution – Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life in the EU
- FRA's consultation on experiences of civil society organisations working on human rights in the EU
- FRA's stakeholder consultation on director's note on the development of the work programme 2023
- Survey on the evaluation of CEPOL
- Survey on the digitalisation of cross-border judicial cooperation

Some examples include:

DG-Justice:

monthly, at a minimum, consultations with DG representatives on their priorities, on VSE-identified emerging issues, and on EU Victims' Rights Directive etc. compliance and implementation issues.

DG-Home:

engagement with respect to the confiscation of criminal assets, cybercrime, e-evidence, and child sexual exploitation.

FRA:

VSE continued cooperation with the FRA, including consulting on their programme, and being interviewed by the FRA to help in defining victims' rights priorities, and having FRA's representatives to speak at VSE-led events.

European Parliament:

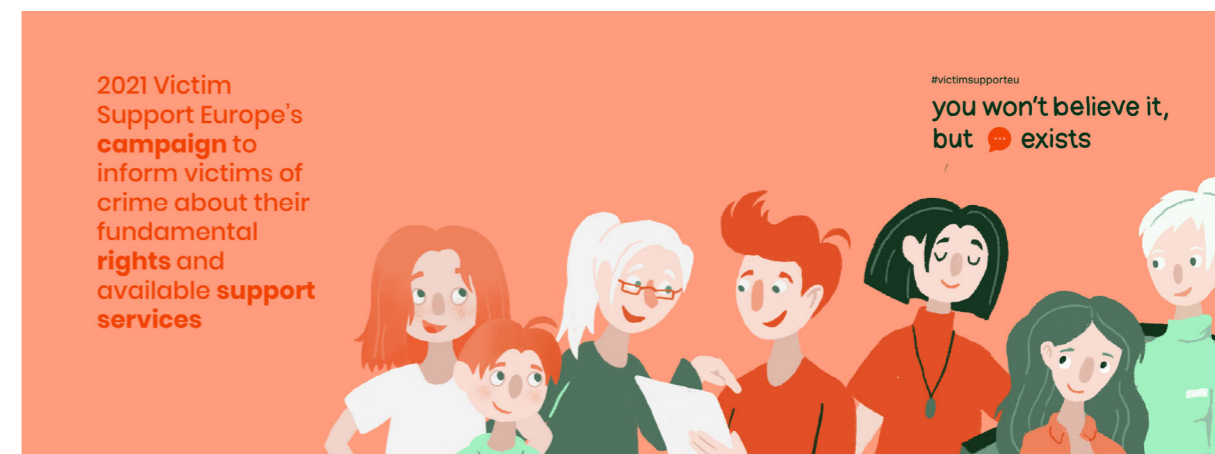
VSE worked with individual MEPs to support EP work on victims' issues, the development of reports relevant to victims' rights, supporting the LIBE and FEMM Committees as well as the Special Committee on Terrorism (TERR).

Europol:

VSE explored opportunities to work with Europol's cybercrime unit. This resulted in Europol's participation in the VSE campaign 'Crime Is Crime. Even Online'.

The United Nations:

Since 2019, VSE has supported the UN in developing its follow-up paper on good practices in assisting victims of terrorism in Asia, which will be published in 2021. By carrying out its memorial campaign, VSE supported the UN's third International Day for Victims of Terrorism.



5.4 Raising awareness of victims' issues

All VSE's campaigns are developed in conjunction with our ongoing review and analysis of needs and opportunities within the European victim support community.

The main results of our 2021 communication effort were three social media campaigns (2021 information campaign 'You won't believe it, but ... exists', a campaign linked to our Online Annual Conference and a campaign linked to our Online Autumn Conference) and several multimedia products developed for the above-mentioned campaigns.

The highlight was the VSE information campaign "You won't believe, but it exists" launched on the European Day for Victims of Crime in conjunction with 13 partners across 12 different countries.

The campaign consisted of two components: 'You won't believe, but ...exists'- 7 films were produced by VSE for 7 countries (Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, Italy, Sweden) and 'Reclaim your safety'- part of the EU-funded PREVICT project, aimed to inform the general public about existing victim support services and to encourage victims to reach out to these services.

The campaign was conducted on two levels: at the national level it involved local victim support services and public institutions concerned with victims' rights, and at the EU level it was run across major VSE social media platforms (Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram under the hashtags: #ItExists #victimsupporteu #EUVictimsRights) and networks.

The campaign reached a total of 2 097 056 people, using various touchpoints and channels to connect with a broad audience. It is noticeable that most of the results were achieved through the campaign's social media efforts, specifically through the Twitter Grant for Non-Profits, which helped to boost relevant organic social posts as based on pre-defined triggers.

Reaching an audience of 2 million plus people over the campaign period proved the efficacy of the chosen strategy. Compared with the 2020 campaign stats: some 200 000 plus people were reached in 2020, 10 times fewer than were reached in 2021.

Our campaign helped spread and raise awareness via Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram (website pageviews: 28141, 96K people reached by Facebook, over 1mln 987K reached by Twitter), using the VSE Intranet we reached VSE's own victim support community (pageviews: 4095) and there were 1417 recipients for each of the four editions of VSE's newsletter.

VSE's online Annual and Autumn Conferences, in addition to our other public webinars, were successful and contributed to an EU-wide awareness raising on the implementation of victims' rights and services.



Events and representation



With Financial support from the Justice Programme of the European Union

VSE Annual Conference

This year, VSE's annual conference titled "Transforming victim support: from dream to reality", took place on May 19th and 20th in a new format: spread over two days, with interactive networking sessions built into plenary sessions on both days, and with six simultaneous side events on the second day of the conference.

With 90 registrations for the event, 85 participants attended the plenary sessions. Side events were organized over the following topics: "Setting up and developing victim support services", "Specific groups of victims", "Supporting victims across sectors", "Victims in an international context", "Communications in victim support sector" and "An Interactive Game on Victims' Rights".

During and after the conference, participants were asked to fill out a short evaluation form to share their thoughts on the event. Overall, respondents reported high levels of satisfaction with the event. The fact that the conference took place over two days instead of one to allow more time for interaction as well as more sufficient breaks received overwhelming support from all respondents. Participants greatly appreciated the newly introduced networking sessions but pointed out that the time allocated for them was not sufficient.

Further, participants enjoyed the broad range of topics and speakers presented to them during the conference. They also praised the ability to learn about topics they are usually not confronted with as well as addressing some basic, specific challenges in working with victims. The side events received overwhelmingly positive feedback.



With Financial support from the Justice Programme of the European Union

VSE Autumn Conference

VSE's Autumn Conference entitled "Safe Justice for Victims: Transforming Justice Systems/Future Trends" was organised and planned as an in-person event in Belgium, however, due to the deteriorating COVID-19 situation, the event was held online on December 3rd, 2021.

The conference was attended by 103 people, hosted more than twenty speakers from diverse fields and consisted of four main content parts:

- Safe reporting as the first step in seeking justice
- Modern solutions to effectively support victims in criminal proceedings (in two parts)
- Collaborative working to achieve better justice for victims
- What can we do to make the criminal justice system work better? (live debate)

Additionally, on the eve of the conference, on December 2nd, VSE held a Safe justice workshop for its members, which enabled a lively exchange of challenges and solutions regarding victims' experiences and access to safe justice.

During and after the conference, participants were asked to fill out a short feedback form to share their thoughts on the conference as well as on the safe justice workshop. The feedback received from the participants of the Autumn Conference was overwhelmingly positive.

Further, participants enjoyed the range of topics and the quality of the speakers presented to them during the conference. Notably, the victim testimonies were very well received and yielded many comments from the participants appreciating being able to hear from the victims themselves.

Finally, conference participants expressed gratitude to the VSE team for organising the events, praising the "very impactful presentations", the "variety of presentations", "victim testimonies", and the "music during the breaks". Overall, the conference can be considered a success and a celebration of the victim support family and its resilience in the face of challenges.



5.5 Projects

In 2021, VSE continued with its project workload. As previously, we aimed to engage only in projects, which are in line with our strategic priorities and, which ensure better services and implementation of rights for victims of crimes. We remain committed to engaging with our members whenever possible, however we always welcome external partners, whose participation and expertise contributes to the success of our efforts.

INFOVICTIMS III



INFOVICTIMS III is the third INFOVICTIMS project and aims to develop new, updated information for victims of crime and, in addition to those Member States included in previous editions, to extend the project to even more EU countries. Ultimately, INFOVICTIMS III will provide more information on Member State criminal justice systems, the rights of victims of crime, and how victims can exercise their rights.

VSE's role in the project is to raise awareness of the roles police and judicial authorities play in providing information to victims of crime, and to raise awareness on victims' rights in broader public domain. As the European Network of victims support organization, VSE is best placed to take responsibility to disseminate the project at the EU level, bringing together its members in the field of victims support and its European and international networks of experts.

Through the project, partner organisations in 9 different EU countries are developing information tools for victims of crime that are easy to read, while being comprehensive in the essential aspects any person needs to know when falling victim to crime, such as the rights made available to victims and the ways to exercise them. The information tools include a website, a mobile app and a brochure, which will be launched in 2022.

Project PREVICT



This project focuses on the analysis of victim-related information campaign best practices and on the development of a toolkit for the evaluation of communication activities.

The project contributes towards:

- the provision of information for victims on their rights and the support they can claim/receive;
- the understanding on how to effectively and inclusively provide information to victims;
- measuring the impact of information provision on victims of crimes.

Project INHeRE- Inclusive Holistic Care for Refugee and Migrant Victims of Sexual Violence in Belgium, Sweden and the UK



INHERE

Holistic care for migrant, refugee and trafficked victims of sexual violence

The project aims to improve holistic care for MAR victims of SV, regardless of their age, gender, sexual orientation and/or legal status, by strengthening the capacity of multi-sector professionals. Attention is given to making care pathways inclusive for MAR victims, who are male, LGBTQIA+, and/or victims of trafficking. To this end, a highly participatory research approach has been applied to the project. Throughout the project, a highly participatory research approach has been applied.

At the end of this two-year project, the INHeRE project consortium presented the overview of the good practice tools and the online training.

The tools to improve professionals' practice are:

1. A Triage Tool for identification, care and referral of victims of sexual violence at European asylum reception and accommodation initiatives.
2. A Good Practice Tool for police hearings with migrant, applicant for international protection, refugee (MAR), trafficked, and LBGT+ victims of sexual violence

3. Upgraded international remote interpreting system, including user checklist.

An online training on “Sexual Violence & Migration” consists of 8 comprehensive online modules to improve the capacity of frontline professionals in caring for and referring migrant victims of sexual violence.

Project Counter@ct - Preventing and combating online radicalisation



Counter@ct's core objective is to promote behavioural change, dissuading 'extremist' groups from posting radicalising/terrorist content online and/or using violence, by providing them with counter-narratives, which use successful stories of disengagement by vulnerable groups from radical ideas. Tools, to address these groups via an online counter-narrative campaign and to assess its impact, are being identified.

AREV Project - Advancing Rights of Estonian Victims



The main goal of the AREV project is to enhance the rights of Estonian victims by improving the protection and support processes of victims of crime in the country. To achieve this goal, VSE works closely with the Estonian Ministry of Justice, the Police and Guard Board, the Social Insurance Board, the healthcare sector, and other key stakeholders to develop, deliver and test tools for information provision, individual needs assessment and referral of victims.

CREST-Fighting Crime and TerrorRism with an IoT-enabled Autonomous Platform based on an Ecosystem of Advanced IntelligEnce, Operations, and InveStigation Technologies



CREST's overall objective is to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of LEAs intelligence, operation, and investigation capabilities, through the automated detection, identification, assessment, fusion, and correlation of evidence acquired from heterogeneous multimodal data streams. Such data streams include (but are not limited to) Surface/Deep/Dark Web and social media sources and interactions, IoT-enabled devices (including wearable sensors), surveillance cameras (static, wearable, or mounted on UxVs), and seized devices and hard disks.

FYDO - Facility Dogs in Europe



Facility Dogs in Europe. The effort is supported by the experts from the Courthouse Dogs Foundation - the global pioneers of facility dog.

Objectives of the project:

- Develop and introduce a novelty training programme for FYDO dogs and handlers;
- Train 5 FYDO dogs and up to 10 handlers;
- Support at least 200 highly vulnerable victims;
- Raise awareness and disseminate results to inform stakeholders and general public;
- Advocate for the embedding of the service into the justice systems and extension of the service in project countries and in the rest of the EU.

Breaking Barriers

BREAKING BARRIERS

The Breaking Barriers project aims to develop a victim-centric approach to the Canadian Ontario Provincial Police's (OPP's) response to and engagement with victims and survivors of human trafficking. To achieve this goal, the project focuses on identifying and gaining a better understanding of the needs of trafficking victims and supporting a better access to wraparound community supports. This pilot project will be implemented in each one of Ontario's five regions: North East, North West, East, West and Central.

EU Centre of Expertise for Victims of Terrorism



Victim Support Europe has been appointed to run the European Commission's Centre of Expertise for Victims of Terrorism.

The Centre operates as a hub for guidance, expertise, and support with respect to victims of terrorism. Its establishment reflects the importance that the European Union places on victims. It also underlines the EU's commitment to partnerships between Member States, civil society, the private sector, and the victims, themselves.

To have a positive impact on victims of terrorism, the EU Centre developed measures, guidelines, and training for practitioners as well as encouraging networks of experts at the national level to promote knowledge exchange and better cross-border responses. It provided information for victims and will assist Member States to effectively transpose, and practically apply, EU rules applicable to victims of terrorism.

Throughout the project, the Commission published the EU Handbook on Victims of Terrorism produced by the EU Centre of Expertise for Victims of Terrorism. The EU Handbook aims to assist in the practical implementation of the EU legislation, based on lessons learned from responses to previous terrorist attacks. In February 2021, the EU Centre provided a training of trainers to 80 participants, coming from 25 EU Member States. Upon completion of this training, the participants became EUCVT Training Officers. The EUCVT Training Officers supported the EU Centre in the development of national handbook and trainings. National trainings were delivered to national stakeholders in the period June-September 2021.

In March 2021, the Centre launched its online Hub of Expertise. This Hub of Expertise allows national authorities and victim support organisations in the Member States to exchange knowledge and experience on the rights and needs of victims of terrorism. The Hub also promotes a better flow of information across borders and contributes to the creation of effective response structures for victims of terrorism in general and cross-border terrorism victims in particular.

The final conference held online on 13th December 2021, marked the end of this two-year pilot project. This event provided the opportunity for all those who contributed - participants and stakeholders - to celebrate the Centre's achievements and success.

06.

NEW MEMBERS

FOR A MORE DETAILED OVERVIEW OF OUR PROJECTS VISIT:

[VICTIM-SUPPORT.EU/WHAT-WE-DO](https://victim-support.eu/what-we-do)

VSE New Members 2021

This year, VSE extended its membership network. 7 new groups joined in 2021, bringing our total membership to 66 organisations across 32 countries compared with 42 members in 2015. The yearly increase in new members is the result of VSE's continuous effort to improve its services to retain, and attract, existing, and potential, members.

Association for the Prevention and Handling of Violence in the Family (Cyprus)

CAW Groep (Belgium)

Center for Legal Civic Initiatives (Albania)

Louise Lacour (Belgium)

Manus Legis (France)

SAM (Belgium)

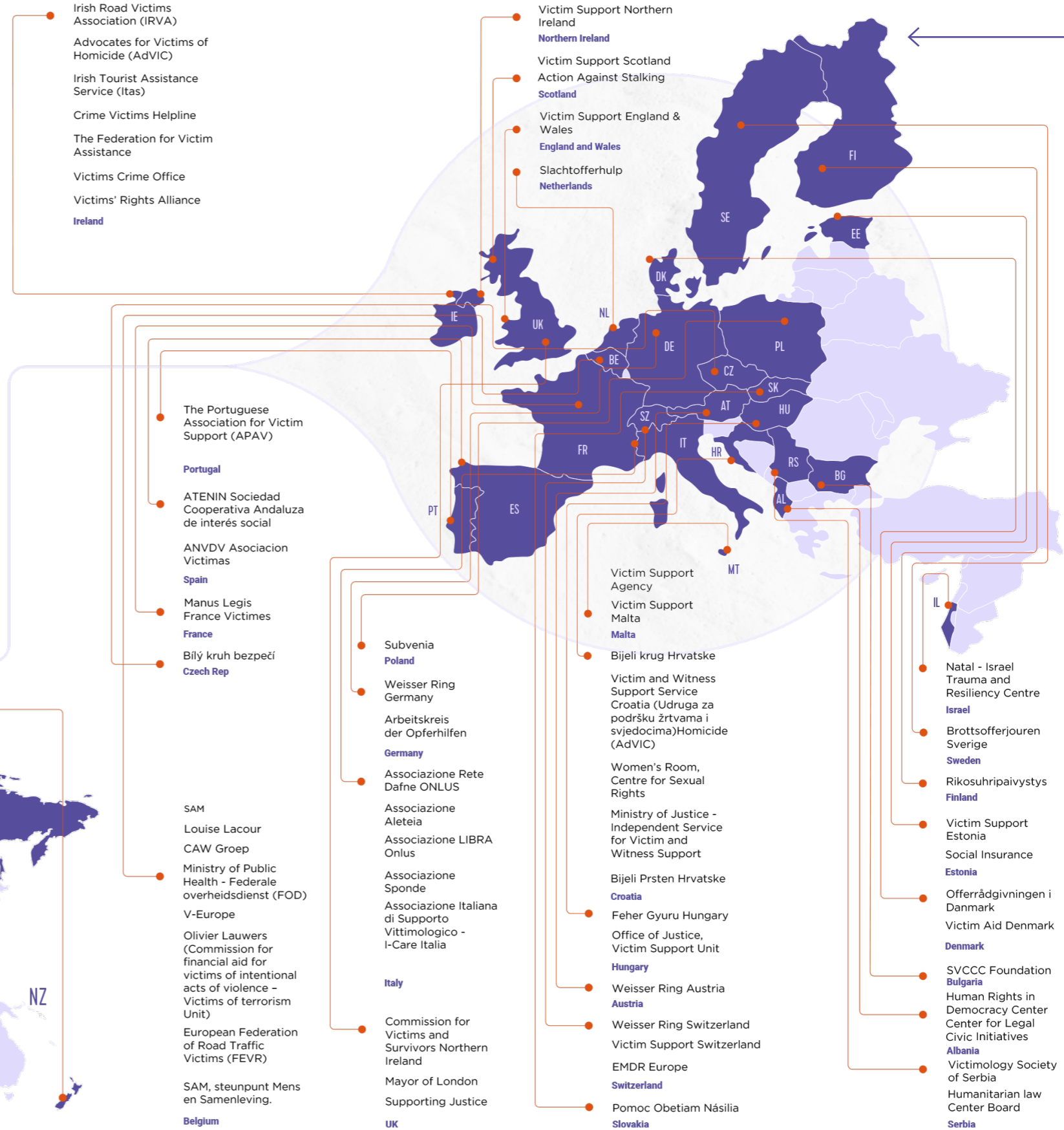
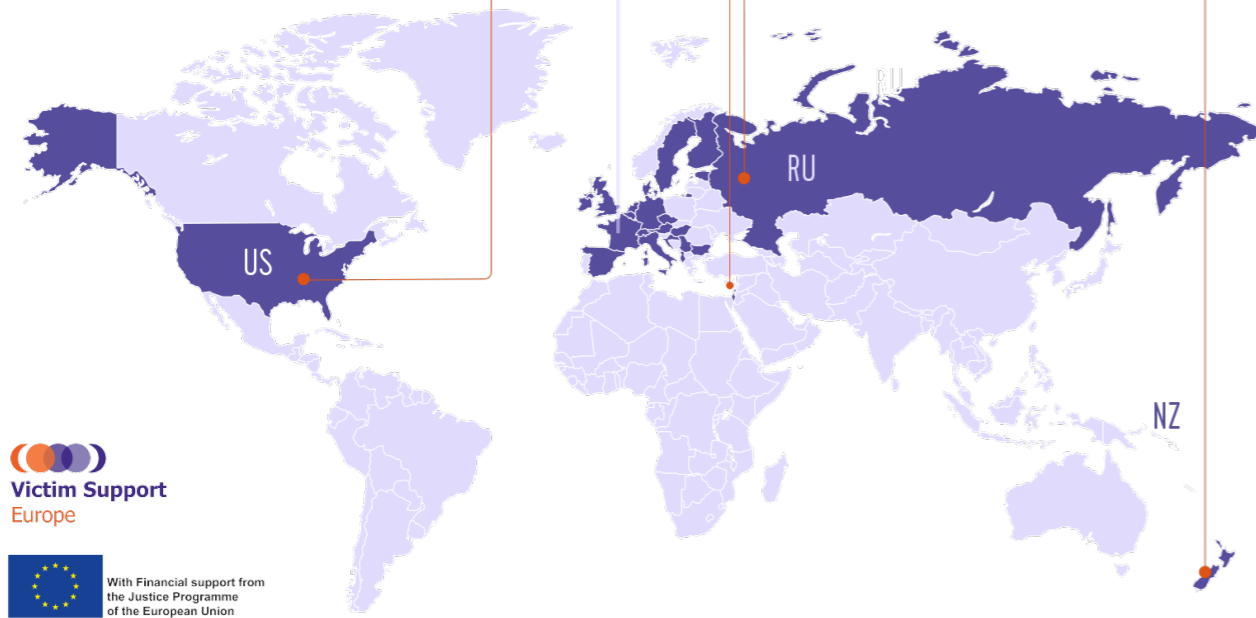
Victim Support Agency (Malta)

MEMBERS MAP

2021

Victim Support Europe is a community of 66 organisations who help over 2 million victims of crime a year and who campaign for a world where victims' rights are enjoyed by all.

Our vision is a Europe in a world where the needs of all victims of crime are fully met through effective rights and high quality services.



08. EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

Executive Board members (from 26 May 2021 onwards)



Geraldine Hanna

Chief Executive, Victim Support Northern Ireland



Vice-President

Petra Klein

Weisser Ring Germany



Vice President

Jérôme Moreau

France Victimes, France



Treasurer

Carmen Rasquete

Secretary General, Portuguese Association for Victim Support (APAV)

Executive Board members



Frida Wheldon

Director for Legal Affairs, Victim Support Sweden



Livija Planić

President of White Circle Croatia



Gábor Veisz

Member of Fehér Gyűrű Közhasznú Egyesület/White Ring Association



Rosa Jansen

President of the Board of Directors of Victim Support The Netherlands and the Foundation Restorative Justice



Tobias Koertner

Team leader for victim support at Weisser Ring Austria



Silva Taravan

President of Rete Dafne Italia

09. HEAD OFFICE



Levent Altan
Executive Director



Aleksandra Ivankovic
Deputy Director



Cristina Ana
Policy Manager



Antonio De Martin
Project Manager



Mazen Alsiufi
Finance Officer



Marina Kazakova
Communications Officer





Ruth Mary Shrimpling

Senior Training and Knowledge
Development Officer



Léa Meindre-Chautrand

Policy Officer



Inês Nunes de Freitas

Project Officer



Anellies Blondé

Junior Policy Officer



Iris Lokerse

Policy Assistant



Solène Baudouin-Naneix

Policy Assistant



Lieselotte Van Den Heuvel

Communication Assistant (Internship)



Keti Varoschlija Botterman

Junior Administrative Officer



Oleksandra (Sasha) Boychenko

Researcher



An Verelst

Volunteer



Pamela Dalby

Volunteer



Sigal Haimov

Consultant



Kristina Marfeldt

Project Officer

10. TREASURER'S REPORT

Despite the challenges brought by the Pandemic, 2021 has proven to be year of good achievements for Victim Support Europe. As set in the strategic objectives of VSE, to increase its financial resilience, it was possible to continue the diversification of income sources resulting in a 31% increase in income in 2021 compared to 2020.



This income diversification has been carefully pursued to support VSE's financial integrity whilst developing victims' rights and services across Europe, in line with the organisation priorities. In particular, it has been achieved through six action grants (AREV, FYDO, Previct, CREST, INHERE, InfoVictims III), various contracts (Mainly the EU Centre of Expertise on victims of terrorism, Breaking Barriers and contracts with ICF) and the operating grant. Income increase was achieved through the existing action grants and largely the successful adoption of the EU Centre of Expertise on Victims of Terrorism contract.

In 2021, VSE made specific investment decisions which allowed to grow the organisation through efficient use of EU funds. These investments will put the organisation

in a strong position in the coming years.

As result of this approach, VSE total income in 2021 was of €1,158,794 with result in a year-end surplus of €68,531. Our available reserves position increased as a result to €290,908.

This approach ensured that by the end of 2021, we were able to accomplish our strategic objectives of sustainable growth whilst diversifying our income sources. Income continues to be drawn through an EU operating grant, member registrations, projects, contracts and donations.

The financial statements, as prepared and audited under Belgian law, show a healthy Audit Report. The General Meeting in 25th May 2022 approved the annual accounts 2021 and the audit report 2021 as audited by VSE's statutory auditor Crowe Horwath Callens Pirenne & Co.

This places Victim Support Europe in an extremely strong position to continue its carefully planned growth in 2022, enabling additional improvements in its operations and the delivery of new services.

11. CLOSING THOUGHTS

The year 2021 has been fulfilling, and has given VSE the opportunity to take forward the victims' agenda both in Europe and globally, consolidating the actions, the successes of the previous years.

What Victim Support Europe and its members have achieved this year is a testament to thousands of volunteers who work for the benefit of victims of crime. In many ways our success has been achieved despite us being a non-governmental organisation, moreover because of it.

We have pushed for change, advocated for new laws, and have slowly turned a machinery of government. Civil society has been fundamental to initiating change and to continuing progress. Yet, achieving true change has only been possible in partnership with government. In those countries, where government have embraced collaboration with civil society the greatest change has been attained.

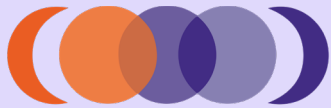
Government and civil society must work in tandem, like cogs in machine, together to make the machine function properly. If only one cog is malfunctioning, the wheel loses direction and goes nowhere.

Victim Support Europe as an NGO itself has

been recognised and embraced by national governments, international institutions and by the European Union. This is thanks to their commitment to civil society and democratic values. Yet, it has also been part of our role to ensure that VSE demonstrates and delivers highest quality of action and shows evidence of us being part of the progress in the victims' rights field.

During 2022, VSE will work explicitly to clarify laws, policies, and practices to better support the victims we represent. And we will look to raise public, professional, government, and victim awareness of the work being carried out to provide victims with access to safe justice at their time of need

Every voice makes a difference, every action builds momentum and pressure for change.



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