



MEMBERSHIP OF VICTIM SUPPORT EUROPE

INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS

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1 INTRODUCTION

Victim Support Europe is an independent organisation that highlight and address the challenges facing victims in the aftermath of crime. One of Victim Support Europe's many strengths lies in its unique position as the recognised umbrella organisation of major victim support services in Europe. The diversity of the membership is a key component, which gives Victim Support Europe an important influencing position in respect of the rights and needs of victims and witnesses of crime in Europe. The wide backgrounds and experiences of our member organisations also help to ensure that they can learn from each other to develop high quality services in the aftermath of crime.

We provide the foundation for a brighter future for victims in Europe. Join us!

This paper is intended to assist victim support organisations and other entities in applying for membership of Victim Support Europe.

2 FULL MEMBERSHIP

Full membership is open to European non-governmental Victim Support organisations providing or overseeing a range of generic services of practical, psychological and emotional support to victims of crime on a national level. Such services must be available to all victims of crime. Consideration for full membership will be given to organisations operating at a sub state level that provide support services on a large scale to a significant group of people within the population or provide a substantial range of services.

Full membership is only open to non-governmental Victim Support Organisations that operate in a European state as defined by the Council of Europe.

Victim Support Organisations interested in full membership are invited to start the registration process through our website ([Apply Now](#)). If you have questions about your organisation's eligibility, please contact VSE's Administrative Officer for more information and support.

2.1 Eligibility Criteria for Full membership

Organisations wishing to join VSE as a full member, must comply with the following conditions:

- (a) Is an independent non-governmental organisation, operating in a Council of Europe State (See <http://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/country-profiles>)
- (b) Provides a range of general services supporting victims of crime, including at least practical and emotional support
- (c) Operates at a state or national level and provides or makes available support to a substantial group of the population
- (d) Provides services free of charge to the end service user
- (e) Ensures within the laws of their state that the confidentiality of the service user is respected and maintained in all its activities
- (f) Ensures that all staff and volunteers working with or supporting victims of crime receive an appropriate level of training in accordance with the nature of their contact with the victim and the type of crime involved. Training should as a minimum aim to ensure that victims are treated with dignity and respect, and that no further harm is caused
- (g) Has a non-discrimination policy and prohibits any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation.
- (h) Does not restrict the scope of its activities by declining to assist victims on the basis of sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation, the nature of his/her complaint or for any other reason based on the personal or social characteristics of the person. However, a full member may refer a victim, with their consent, to another organisation which provides an effective service for a specific group of victims'

- (i) Has clear and transparent governance and financial control mechanisms in place.

In addition, in order to join VSE, full members must:

- (a) Not engage in party political activity or express views on behalf of a political party, when representing or working with VSE. Also they must not undertake campaigns concerning the sentencing of offenders with the exception being in relation to rights of victims.
- (b) Generally agree with and support the principles, policy, standards and good practice guidelines that may from time to time be agreed by Victim Support Europe.

VSE's strength is its membership, which is why full members are expected to participate actively in the work of Victim Support Europe. In particular full members will be asked to provide to VSE on a regular basis such reasonable information as to enable VSE to fulfil its obligations and ensure that the conditions of membership continue to be met. It is through members' involvement that VSE has the expertise, knowledge and legitimacy to act as the voice of victims of crime.

Full membership is continuous on the basis of the payment of the appropriate membership fee. Full membership will vest in the name of the member organisation which should nominate two individuals to represent the organisation at formal meetings of VSE, one of whom should be designated as the voting member.

2.2 Application Process for Full Membership

In considering an application for full membership VSE needs to be satisfied that the applicant organisation can meet the criteria set out for full membership. This is essential to maintain the integrity and legitimacy of the organisation.

In those European states with one or more full members already present, the applicant organisation must have the application signed and endorsed by the Chair, President, or other senior official of the existing full member

organisations prior to submission. The list of full members can be found on [VSE's Website](#).

In European states where no full membership organisation exists, the application should be accompanied by at least one letter of support from a recognised public body or non-governmental organisation or other such entity as may from time to time be defined by VSE.

The Executive Committee of VSE will appoint a member of the Committee to act as liaison between VSE and the applicant organisation. The application process can take between six to eight months. It will usually include some informal discussions with representatives of the applicant organisation followed by the submission of the application to VSE.

A visit to the applicant member's organisation along with a presentation on its work may be appropriate. Such a visit is usually considered when an application for full membership is received from an organisation in a state that does not presently have a VSE full member organisation.

The application accompanied if necessary by a short report and recommendation is then submitted for consideration by the Executive Committee which meets three times each year.

Successful applicant organisations will become members on receipt of the payment of the appropriate membership fee.

3 ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

VSE recognises the important and valuable work undertaken by governmental bodies, academic institutions and other governmental and non governmental organisations operating within Europe, at an international, national, regional or local level. Such organisations may have a legitimate interest in contributing to and benefiting from the work of VSE. To enable more effective networking, sharing of experience, information and best practice VSE has an associate membership scheme.

Bodies such as those outlined above are now able to apply for associate membership of VSE. Interested organisations may apply for membership through VSE's website ([Apply Now](#)).

3.1 Eligibility Criteria for Associate Membership

The criteria for membership includes that the applicant should:

- (a) Be an organisation or individual operating in a relevant field of work associated with victims of crime. Where the applicant is an organisation, it should be formally constituted and may be non-governmental, governmental, academic, educational or victim support organisations operating nationally, regionally or locally.

- (b) Be interested in improving the position of victims of crime.

In order to join VSE, associate members must generally agree with and support the principles, policy, standards and good practice guidelines that may from time to time be agreed by Victim Support Europe.

VSE's strength is its membership, which is why associate members are will be asked to provide to VSE on a regular basis such reasonable information as to enable VSE to fulfil its obligations and ensure that the conditions of membership continue to be met.

Associate membership is continuous on the basis of the payment of the appropriate membership fee.

3.2 Application Process for Associate Membership

In those European states with one or more full members already present, the applicant organisation must have the application signed and endorsed by the Chair, President, or other senior official of the existing full member organisations prior to submission. The list of full members can be found on [VSE's Website](#).

In European states where no full membership organisation exists, the application should be accompanied by at least one letter of support from a recognised public body or non-governmental organisation or other such entity as may from time to time be defined by VSE.

Usually the Executive Committee of VSE will appoint a member of the Committee to act as liaison between VSE and the applicant organisation. The application process will usually include some informal discussions with representatives of the applicant organisation followed by the submission of the application to VSE. A visit to the applicant member's organization may be appropriate. Such a visit is usually considered when an application for associate membership is received from an organisation in a state that does not presently have a VSE full member organisation.

The application accompanied if necessary by a short report and recommendation is then submitted for consideration by the Executive Committee which meets three times each year.

Successful applicant organisations will become associate members on receipt of the payment of the appropriate membership fee.

4 BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

1. Members play a strategically important role in developing and innovating new policy and practice at a pan European level.
2. VSE has formal consultative status with the European Union and the United Nations.
3. Access to some of the most renowned victim service experts around the world.
4. Opportunities to participate in victim projects to develop policy and best practice.
5. Regular opportunities to attend conferences, seminars and specialised training events.
6. Participation in VSE's annual conference
7. Membership of a diverse network of national organisations providing services to victims of crime across Europe.
8. Access to the members area of the VSE web site – including a publications database, contacts database and online fora.
9. Quarterly VSE Newsletters that provide comprehensive updates on developments of member organizations throughout Europe. Also provides important information about the work of VSE at a European and international level.
10. The licensed use of the VSE logo on letterheads and publications.
11. European wide recognition of prestige and standards in your work or that of your national organisation.
12. Access to reports and briefings specially prepared for members.
13. A certificate of full or associate membership of VSE is provided as appropriate.

Additional Benefits of Full Membership	Additional Benefits of Associate Membership
1. Participation in VSE's General meeting – including voting rights	1. Associate members may attend and speak at annual general meeting of VSE but have no voting rights
2. Support when required for your organisations work at home and abroad, including capacity building.	
3. Members may be elected to the Executive Committee and other forums of VSE	

5 MEMBERSHIP FEES

The membership fees for both full and associate membership will be as determined by the General Assembly on the basis of a proposal from the Executive Board. Presently at January 2016 they are:

Full Membership

Fees are based on the Annual income of each organisation.

Income Range (in Euros)	2016 Fee (in Euros)
0-100,000	500
100,001 – 1,000,000	1000
1,000,001 – 2,000,000	1500
2,000,001 – 3,000,000	2000
3,000,001 – 4,000,000	2500
4,000,001 – 5,000,000	3000
5,000,001 and above	8000

Associate Membership

A fixed fee of €250.