



## From the Editor

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*The past months have been marked again by repeated terrorist attacks, in particular in France and in Germany. Victim Support Europe has continued to coordinate support for victims of terrorism and to advocate to ensure that they receive appropriate support in the aftermath of an attack. Once more these tragic events have shown how important it is to work closely together to support victims in Europe and beyond and we would like to thank again our members for their collaboration.*

*For me personally a new era is starting for VSE as H el ene Heinrichs is leaving the organisation end of October.*

*After VSE was registered in Brussels in the second half of 2010 we first had a postal address and a desk at the ENCJ office in Avenue Louise (thanks again to the ENCJ for hosting us!). There we employed H el ene. H el ene and I purchased all necessary office materials, including a computer and a mobile phone. Sorting out administrative issues for which my personal data were needed we discovered that H el ene's mother and I were born on the same day. We also had to open new bank accounts and to start developing the financial and accounting management system. H el ene and I, as the treasurer at that time, struggled and had to learn a lot about Belgian accounting and financial rules. And now H el ene is an expert in that field and manages Office and projects perfectly.*

*Thanks to H el ene the establishment of the office continued when VSE moved to Rue de la Loi.*

*There we employed more staff, i.e. Levent Altan and An Verelst, and we are just expending even more.*

*I am very much moved and regret that H  l  ne is leaving to start a new life in the Belgian Ardennes. But as I am living on the countryside I can understand her and wish her wholeheartedly all the best!*

*Helgard van H  llen  
Vice President of Victim Support Europe*

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## UPDATES ON MEMBERS PROJECTS

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

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- **7th Annual Conference of the Victimology Society of Serbia**, 24-25 November, Belgrade, Serbia. Please find more [here](#)

- **VSE Members Meeting and General Meeting**, 28 November 2016, Brussels. More information will be sent to members soon!

- **VSE Conference in partnership with EESC**, 29 November 2016, Brussels. More information will follow soon!

## RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

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### Conference in partnership with EESC - 29 November 2016

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On 29 November VSE will hold a conference in the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC). The conference will bring together VSE member representatives and EU officials to discuss how to meet victims needs around Europe, practical developments and emerging trends.

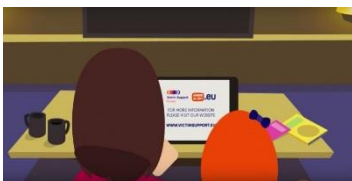
More information about the programme will follow soon.



## Hélène Heinrichs leaving at the end of October

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In the 25 year long history of Victim Support Europe Hélène Heinrichs has played a pivotal role. In 2012 Hélène was the first VSE employee in the Brussels head office. The first few years she worked with the Executive Board Members to build up the office in Brussels. From running around Brussels with our Vice President Helgard van Hüllen to look for a cell phone, starting up bank accounts, finding office premises and setting up furniture in the Rue de la Loi office, Hélène was there to do it all. She has contributed tremendously to the establishment and growth of the Victim Support Europe office, for which we are very grateful. Besides laying the groundwork for the VSE Brussels office, Hélène has worked hard to make all members and employees feel part of the Victim Support Europe family. Recently, Hélène has chosen to continue her life in another beautiful part of Belgium. She has moved with her family to the Ardennes in the South of Belgium where she will also start a new professional adventure in November. We thank her dearly for all her valuable and committed work for Victim Support Europe and wish her the very best in her new life in the countryside!



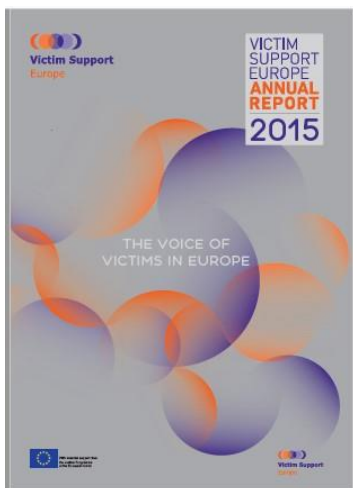
## Collaboration with AMBER Alert Europe on European prevention campaign

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[AMBER Alert Europe](#) recently ran an international campaign to raise awareness about keeping children safe and preventing them from going missing during the holidays. The aim was to share good practices as suggested by experts from all over the world. Germany, Poland, Slovak Republic, Czech Republic, Serbia and The Netherlands were

among the countries which took part in the campaign.

Victim Support Europe was honored to support AMBER Alert Europe for this campaign. Two short animated videos were produced with advice from police experts on missing persons from all over Europe teaching parents [how to prevent your child from going missing](#) and [what to do when your child is missing](#). The videos were especially developed by AMBER Alert Europe in the framework of a strong partnership with VSE.



## [Annual Report 2015 published](#)

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On 28 July VSE was proud to publish its 2015 Annual Report. In 2015 we carried out a large number of activities to develop and strengthen our network, better represent victims across Europe, support implementation of victims' rights and develop the capacity of organisations and governments around Europe to deliver support for victims.

Read all about it in the full report:

<http://victimsupporteurope.eu/activeapp/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/VSE-AnnualReport-EBook.pdf>



## Coping following a terrorist attack - guide

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Victims of a terrorist attack, witnesses of the attack or its aftermath, or those close to any of the victims will be affected by the attack in different ways.

**Find out more about normal reactions, what to expect and where to get help if you need it [here](#).**



## EU initiatives on Violence Against Women presented in regional Parliamentary Conference in Tunisia

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In July Victim Support Europe was invited by the European Parliament's Directorate-General for External Policies of the Union to the Parliamentary Conference 'Maghreb en mouvement : de la criminalisation des violences faites aux femmes à la mise en œuvre' in Tunis. The conference was organised and supported by UNDP, UNWomen, the European Parliament and the Tunisian parliament, and focused on violence against women (VAW) and the local legislative initiatives on the issue in Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria and Egypt.

VSE was asked to present the initiatives of the European Union on VAW and protection. An Verelst, VSE's policy officer, presented a range of victim oriented legislation adopted by the EU. She presented the EU Victims' Rights Directive and shed light on the implications and potential this Directive has to improve rights, support and protection for victims of gender based violence. In her speech An stressed the importance of implementation of laws to meet the actual needs of victims.

Please read more about this conference [here](#).



## EFUS' Call for Practices: Prevention and fight against all forms of intolerance

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Have you implemented a project combatting crime and misdemeanors motivated by racism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance at a local level in Europe? Why not participate in the European Forum for Urban Security's (Efus's) call for practices for the prevention and fight against racism, xenophobia, homophobia and all other forms of intolerance.

Efus and eight European organisations are launching a call to identify existing innovative and encouraging practices at a local level throughout Europe to combat crime and misdemeanors motivated by racism, xenophobia and all other forms of intolerance. Our member [APAV | Associação Portuguesa de Apoio à Vítima](#) is one of those European organisations.

Fifty practices will be selected from the responses to this call, which will be published in a manual of practices and disseminated across Europe to promote local action and encourage authorities to take more action against intolerance.

This call is part of the framework of the *Just & Safer Cities for All Project*, led by Efus and co-financed by the European Commission, whose primary objective is to strengthen the knowledge of stakeholders on the measures which can be taken at the local level against crime and offences linked to intolerance.

For more information, see the *Call for Practices*, available in [English](#), [French](#), [Italian](#), [Polish](#), [German](#) and [Spanish](#).

## PRESENTATION OF NEW MEMBERS

## MAYOR OF LONDON

## The Mayor of London

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Over the past months VSE has extended its membership with one new associate member: [The Mayor of London](#)

We are proud to have The Mayor of London on board and we warmly welcome him and his team to Victim Support Europe!

The Mayor of London heads the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), which is responsible for policing in London. MOPAC assumed responsibility for victims' services in London from October 2014; it commissions victims services for London, working in partnership with all Criminal Justice System (CJS) agencies.

## NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS



Udruga  
za  
pomoć  
žrtvama  
kaznenih  
djela

UDRUGA BIJELI KRUG HRVATSKE

### CROATIA

#### White Ring Croatia

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Since the last newsletter in June we have continued our work providing legal and emotional support to our clients. We have had an increase of calls from other parts of Croatia much further than the Split-Dalmatia county and also from abroad from tourists that were victims of crime in Croatia this summer.

Recently we have had a good example of cross-border collaboration. A colleague from Weisser Ring Germany contacted us about a victim of a serious crime here in Croatia regarding some problems the victim had been encountering in court proceedings. Unfortunately that victim has been a victim of secondary victimization by our legal system. We have done our best to help and explain what to do. But that was once more a reminder that we have to put a lot more work in preventing something like that to happen again in the future.





## CZECH REPUBLIC

### [Bily kruh bezpeci](#)

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Bily kruh bezpeci celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary on September 4, 2016. By that day we have provided 159.517 consultations to victims, witnesses and survivors of crime. At the moment we have 11 advice centers around the country and we run the 116006 nonstop helpline for victims of crime. More than 1,500 volunteers willing to help those in need have gone through this experience in last quarter of a century. Currently we cooperate with 350 of them.

More info at [www.bkb.cz](http://www.bkb.cz)



## FINLAND

### [Victim Support Finland](#)

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#### **Conference on the implementation of the Victims' Directive**

Victim Support Finland organized a conference on the implementation of the Victims' Directive on 30.9.-1.10. in Helsinki with around 250 participants. Speakers included civil servants involved in the national implementation of the Directive and Finnish Victim Policies, representatives from the Police and the Prosecutors giving presentations on the practical implementation of the individual evaluation to identify the specific protection needs of victims as well as representation from the Finnish Parliament. Experts from NGOs and authorities as well as Victim Support Finland staff and volunteers were among the participants.

#### **Information to hate crime victims in 11 languages**

Victim Support Finland together with the Finnish

League for Human Rights and the Ministry of the Interior have published a leaflet for victims of hate crimes in 11 languages. According to recent studies the numbers of hate crimes have been clearly rising in Finland. Racism is clearly the main motivation behind the crimes. The purpose of the leaflet is to help victims to identify a hate crime and to encourage them to report these crimes to the police as well as to seek assistance from Victim Support Finland.

## GERMANY



### Weisser Ring

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WEISSER RING, Germany's largest victim support organization, turns 40 years old. The association was founded on September 24<sup>th</sup>, 1976 in Mainz. "Since then WEISSER RING has been giving a voice to victims of crime", said Roswitha Müller-Piepenkötter, National Chair of WEISSER RING at the anniversary ceremony held at the Paulskirche in Frankfurt on 23 September.

Over the past 40 years the association has contributed enormously to improve the legal and social situation of victims of crime and to bring about positive changes in their environment, said Müller-Piepenkötter. The National Chair described as exemplary the state support for victims which has been continuously improved over the years, as well as the increased rights for victims in criminal proceedings. "But our work is far from done. We still see a need for improvement to provide a really good and substantial assistance to those seeking help", said the National Chair.

WEISSER RING is critical about the current plans of the Federal government concerning the crime victims compensation law. On the one hand these plans foresee a significant reduction of benefit payments. On the other hand there is a will to create a new federal agency to deal with the victim compensation law and compensation payments. "This would only create additional and unnecessary

bureaucracy", the National Chair complained. "Victims need efficient support, quick procedures and financial security. They don't need another federal agency in the field of compensation". Throughout the years of its existence WEISSER RING has been able to help several hundred thousand victims who were in need through no fault of their own – quickly, unbureaucratically and in manifold ways.

Throughout the years of its existence the association has constantly improved its support services. In March 2016 the Victims Helpline cracked the mark of 100.000 answered calls. The helpline of WEISSER RING is a toll-free and nationwide service and reachable under 116 006 since September 2009. In August 2016 WEISSER RING also set up an online counselling – providing an additional and anonymous support access.

Please find the full press release [here](#)  
Photos of the ceremony can be found [here](#)



## HUNGARY

### [White Ring Hungary](#)

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#### **New branches**

On 1st of August White Ring Hungary opened two new offices in the countryside, in the cities of Békéscsaba and Nyírbátor. We now have 23 offices nationwide. Exact details and locations of each office are available [here](#).

#### **International conference**

On 17th-18th of October White Ring Hungary is organizing an international conference jointly with Anonymus Roads Foundation, the Hungarian branch of the Canadian Servant Foundation. Their mission is to help and represent victims of trafficking and prostitution.

The theme of the conference is: "Supporting

Victims of Crime and Victims of Human Trafficking".

Spot46, a dutch organization which deals with victims of trafficking and prostitution in the Netherlands will present a workshop about their work.

We will have several lecturers from the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Human Resources, the Crime Prevention Department of the National Police Headquarter, and representatives from several NGOs.

Victim Support Europe will be represented by An Verelst, Policy Officer.



## ITALY

### I-CARE

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Most of the support given by I-CARE to victims is carried out through 6 shelters distributed in northern Italy. The largest shelter can accommodate up to 17 victims in parallel.

Benefits paid to all victims are:

- Basic care, listening to the physical and / or psychological needs.
- Preparation of meals with the participation of the victims if they feel a benefit from participating in this activity;
- Laundry and maid;
- Transport to and from hospital, courts or police offices, law firms, or any other legitimate need;
- Protection of the victim from unnecessary intrusions, protecting their privacy even with the press;
- Consultancy for obtaining compensation and reparation;
- Updating the victim on the developments of legal proceedings.

In 2016, in addition to the normal work of service and support, I-CARE has been supporting victims of the terrorist attacks in Brussels and Nice. I-CARE has also started working on a research project on

victims of Hate Crime in particular victims of homophobia or, in general, LGBT victims (a collective term that includes homosexuals, bisexuals or transgender).



## ITALY

### Rete Dafne Onlus

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#### **Towards an Italian Network of Victim Support Services**

On September 30, 2016 [Rete Dafne Onlus](#) organized a national meeting in Turin in order to discuss the design and implementation of an Italian network of victim support services.

VSE Vice President Helgard van Hüllen and Weisser Ring Germany's Executive Director Bianca Biwer, through their expert contribution, provided a valuable opportunity to learn about the organization of existing victim support service networks in Europe, in particular of the model of operation of Weisser Ring Germany.

Rete Dafne Onlus together with LIBRA Onlus and I-CARE, the other two Italian VSE associate members, in straight collaboration with representatives of the Italian Ministry of Justice and of local victim support organisations, will be working together on the development and implementation of nation-wide services for victims of crime as provided by the EU/2012/29 Directive and further acknowledgement of services by the Ministry of Justice.

Rete Dafne Onlus is grateful to VSE for giving Italian victim support services the opportunity to learn about the preliminary work for the creation of a network at this meeting and over the past months.



## SERBIA

### [Victimology Society of Serbia](#)

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The Victimology Society of Serbia will hold their 7th Annual Conference “Security and victimization: Challenges of social reaction and victims’ protection” on 24th and 25th November 2016 in Belgrade

The conference aims to bring together experts and researchers who deal both theoretically and practically from the perspective of different disciplines with victims’ rights and provide assistance to victims of crime, human rights’ violations and other forms of suffering, and to enable a comprehensive exchange of experience and knowledge.

Within the main conference theme, particular attention will be given to the challenges of social reaction and protection of victims in the context of contemporary security risks, threats and challenges, particularly in relation to the current migration and refugee crisis, extreme violence, terrorism, radicalism and organized crime.

Please find all information about the conference [here](#).

## UK

### [Victim Support Northern Ireland](#)

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**Victim Support NI have ‘Something To Shout About’**

Victim Support NI will hold a conference-style learning event in Belfast this November. Aimed at professionals working within the Northern Irish



Criminal Justice System, the event is titled “*Something to Shout About – Addressing the Needs of Vulnerable Victims in the Justice System*”, and will provide a unique opportunity to make the voice of the victim heard by solicitors, barristers, and judges.

Speakers confirmed so far include Professor Penny Cooper, who is currently writing a book on vulnerability in the Criminal Justice System, and Antony Pemberton, Professor of Victimology and Director of INTERVICT, Tilburg Law School, who will speak on the issue of re-victimisation. Other speakers are to be confirmed.

The conference will also act as a launch for Victim Support NI’s new strategy document, laying out their operational plan for the next 4 years.

It is hoped that this event will help further Victim Support NI’s relationship with our partners in government and the Criminal Justice System, and enable us to ensure that positive changes are made to our current legal processes, and the Voice of the Victim is placed at the centre of decision making in Northern Ireland and beyond.

## **MAYOR OF LONDON**

## **UK**

### [Mayor of London](#)

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#### **UK’s first Child Houses to launch for young victims of sexual abuse in £7.2m pilot**

Children who have been victims of sexual abuse or exploitation will, for the first time in the UK, be able to access a complete range of support services from dedicated experts under one roof, in a pioneering project to launch in London.

The UK’s first two Child Houses, funded by £7.2m secured by the [Mayor’s Office for Policing And Crime](#) (MOPAC) and NHS England (London) from the Home Office Innovation Fund, will offer medical, investigative and emotional support in one place,

removing the need for young victims to go through the trauma of repeating their statement several times to different agencies.

This multi-agency approach will help gather better evidence and increase the speed of its delivery to court, as well as offering longer term support to victims of child sexual abuse in the criminal justice system.

The new Child Houses, which will open next year, will provide a multi-agency, long-term support and advocacy service under one roof. Criminal justice aspects of aftercare will be embedded in the service, with evidence gathering interviews led by child psychologists on behalf of the police and social workers, and court evidence provided through video links to aid swifter justice.

Each Child House is expected to be able to provide support to over 200 children and young people each year. They will build on the work currently carried out by the CYP Haven, set up following work by MOPAC and NHS England (London) to improve health services for victims of sexual violence in the capital.



## UK

### [Supporting Justice](#)

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It's been another busy quarter working with clients to improve the victim and witness experience. Having assisted Citizens Advice to launch their new service to witnesses, we are now looking at further steps to improve the witness experience. Brexit has understandably brought about monumental change to our government structures and we, like other agencies, have spent some time considering that impact. We have been busy reviewing the new proposals that come with changes in ministerial positions – innovative digital reform is certainly going to be a key focus for the criminal justice system, as is further devolution of funding to local



authorities. With so much change, it's important to maintain the energy on ensuring progression for victims and witnesses. This was a key challenge for a CJS symposium we presented at; the focus was on putting victims of crime first and looking at the next steps necessary to transform victims' experiences. Additionally, we discussed and debated the need to ensure compliance with the Victims Code. A key theme coming out, as is so often the case, is training; having delivered over 114 training courses in the last year, we recognise its importance and will spend the next few months developing that offer further.



## US

### [ICV - International Cruise Victims Association](#)

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International Cruise Victims (ICV) is pleased to announce new steps toward improving safety on cruise ships. This new measure initiates more accurate accounting of all reportable crimes including, but not limited to crimes of sexual assault. In addition, the FBI will implement a proactive process enabling passengers who become victims of crime to establish direct contact with the FBI while still on board ship.

New cruise ship crime reporting requirements took effect in January of 2016. The [new Cruise Line Incident Reports](#) are being issued by the Department of Transportation. We consider this a major step forward in providing some measure of transparency in the form of the disclosure of actual crimes committed on cruise ships.

For example, the six months' report issued under the new law indicates the following (please note the contrast between the reports issued in 2015 vs. 2016):

#### Sexual Assault Crimes

Total reported in the first six months of 2015      6

Total reported in the first six months of 2016 39

Total Reported Crimes

Total reported in the six months of 2015 12

Total reported in the six months of 2016 61

This new and more transparent reporting standard is more in keeping with the original intent of Congress in the passing of the CVSSA in 2010. As is the FBI's new process. Under this new approach, the assigned case agent and/or victim specialist will reach out to victim directly by phone or email as soon **as possible after receiving a report of a crime from the cruise ship security point of contact.**

The purpose of the initial FBI contact is to advise the victim (or family if the victim is a minor, incapacitated, or deceased) that the FBI received the report and will meet the ship upon arrival back in the US. During the initial contact, the victim or family will be provided with the name and contact information for the FBI victim specialist.

## UPDATES ON PROJECTS

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## Project on Preventing Online Child Abuse and Profiling Child Victims

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### **LIBRA Association (VSE associate member)**

supports and participates in the EU project *Developing Research Informed Good Practice Policing and Industry Collaborative Models in Preventing Online Child Abuse and Profiling Child Victims*, coordinated by Middlesex University of London.

Recently, a survey was conducted in the framework of an EU research among more than 1,000 respondents from England, Italy and Ireland. At the moment of the research respondents were on average 20 years old, and were asked to reflect on their Internet behavior in adolescence (age 12-16 years old).

A poster addressed to students was created with the results of the research and translated into English, Italian and Dutch.

The project results were discussed during the **16th Annual Conference of the European Society of Criminology 2016**, in Munster on September 23. The panel brought together representatives from international teams, including Ireland, Netherlands, Italy and UK. The focus was on qualitative and quantitative findings collected over the course of the two year project, but also offered an integrated summary of the work moving forward in protecting youth online and facilitating police investigations.

Please find more information [here](#).



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[About Victim Support Europe](#)

Victim Support Europe is an umbrella organisation which currently consists of 44 national and regional victim support organisations in 26 countries.

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