



From the Editor

After a very successful Annual Conference on 13-14 May in Lisbon we are now planning events in Brussels during the week before the 16 November. This is the date when Member States are due to implement the EU Victims' Directive, and we feel it is important to raise awareness of their obligations and of ongoing concerns. We will inform you as soon as possible about the exact date and the programme. We already look forward to seeing you there!

In this Newsletter you will find again many interesting reports from our national members as well as information about ongoing projects. Thank you very much to all members who have sent us their contribution!

*Helgard van Hüllen
Vice President of Victim Support Europe*

UPCOMING EVENTS

- The **15th International Symposium of the World Society of Victimology** will be held in **Perth**, Western Australia at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre on the **5-9 July 2015**.

[Visit conference website](#)

- VSE will organize events in Brussels during the week before 16 November. Exact date and programme will be confirmed soon.

- Policy Seminar of Project [IVOR](#), November 2015. Exact date will be confirmed soon.

- VSE Annual Conference 2016 will be held in the Netherlands in May. Exact date and venue will be announced soon.

LIST OF ONGOING PROJECTS

- [*Infovictims II*](#), promoted by APAV (Portugal); partners: Victim Support Scotland, Subvenia Victima (Poland), Weisser Ring Austria, Weisser Ring Germany, Victim Support Europe

- [*IVOR*](#) - *Implementing Victim-Oriented Reform of the criminal justice system in the European Union*, promoted by APAV (Portugal); partners: Tilburg University (The Netherlands), Leuven University (Belgium), Victim Support Europe

- [*BRISEIS*](#) - *Fight Against Trafficking for Forced Labour*, promoted by APAV (Portugal); partners: the Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority (Sweden), the Soros Foundation (Romania), the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations (UK)

- *Project IMPACT - Social impact on victim support*, promoted by APAV (Portugal)

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AND ACTIVITIES



VSE Annual Conference and AGM in Lisbon, 13-15 May

Victim Support Europe's Annual Conference 2015 "Rights of Victims of Crime in Europe: the future is now!" took place in Lisbon, Portugal, from 13 to 14 May 2015. It was a very important event as we celebrated both Victim Support Europe's and the Portuguese Association for Victim Support's (APAV) 25th anniversary.

The Conference brought together Member States'

representatives, judicial practitioners, State authorities, academics and victim support practitioners to discuss in particular the difficulties and successes in the implementation of the EU Directive on victims' rights. It was also the opportunity to reflect upon developments in the field of victims' rights and the challenges that remain to be addressed.

More than 250 participants attended the five plenary sessions and the six workshop sessions including more than 40 presentations (please see the [programme](#)). Most of these presentations are now available on the [conference website](#) or in the [publication section](#) of our website under "VSE Conference Lisbon 2015".

Next year, our Annual Conference will take place in the Netherlands in May during the Dutch Presidency of the European Union and will be hosted by our member organisation Slachtofferhulp Nederland. We will send a save-the-date announcement as soon as the exact venue and dates are confirmed.

FRA research on national child protection systems



The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), at the request of the European Commission, conducted research on national child protection systems in the 28 European Union (EU) Member States. It seeks to understand how national child protection systems work and to identify common challenges and promising practices.

For more information, please visit the [FRA website](#).

The FRA has also produced interesting videos on children's rights in proceedings:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3FFJZFM5Cn8&feature=youtu.be>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N2WZatf_Z2E



ENAR's shadow report on racist crime in Europe

The European Network Against Racism (ENAR) has recently published a shadow report on racist crime in Europe. This report is based on data and information from 26 European countries: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

The report is available [here](#).

ENAR has also produced a [video](#) highlighting some of the main challenges relating to racist crime. Please find more information on [ENAR's website](#).



VSE has a new member organisation in Romania!

Victim Support Europe is proud to announce that [The Equality and Human Rights Action Centre](#) (ACTEDO) in Romania is now an associate member.

ACTEDO is a Romanian NGO established in 2013 whose mission is to promote fundamental rights and gender equality and to ACT against human rights violations. To this purpose, ACTEDO engages in advocacy, research, educational and community development activities, aiming to raise awareness, increase active participation and facilitate access to justice for all.

ACTEDO aims to prevent and address the causes of human rights abuses and of gender inequality,

including the lack of human rights education, stereotypical views and practices of femininity and masculinity, violence and institutional failures to implement laws and sanctions.

In 2014, ACTEDO has established the Pro Bono Network for Human Rights, a network of lawyers providing free legal advice and representation to victims of human rights violations and discrimination in Romania.

NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS



Bulgaria

SVCCC Foundation

For updates on SVCCC Foundation please visit their new [website](#).



Czech Republic

Bily Kruh Bezpeci

On 30 June 2015 after 2,5 years of hard work [Bily kruh bezpeci](#) is successfully finishing the project „KRUH“ granted by The Human Resources and Employment Operational Programme (The European Social Fund) and the Czech state budget.

The project main aim was to support vulnerable victims. A network of nine case managers with competence for covering the whole country was set up. They received specialized trainings in providing human support and assistance in the implementation of the legitimate interests of vulnerable victims and their rights. For immediate help in many cases we extended the therapeutic program and other of our services (e.g. social counseling).

We are happy to announce that all nine case managers will carry on with their duties after the official closure of this project.



Udruga
za
pomoć
žrtvama
kaznenih
djela

UDRUGA BIJELE KRUG HRVATSKE

Croatia

Bijeli Krug Hrvatske (White Circle Croatia)

[White Circle of Croatia](#) has started to work on the project "Reference center for evaluation of the victims needs in the criminal and misdemeanor cases" (please see [news article](#)).

The idea for the Reference center came from the Directive 2012/29/EU on victims' rights which needs to be implemented by 16 November 2015.

Our experience until now has shown that our main clients - violence and abuse victims and their families - are still not informed about their new rights and about the organizations which can help them to achieve these rights.

Our goal as an Association is to sensitize the ones who come into contact with the victim in the first place. We have therefore suggested to the Split police department a training for the police officers to which they have agreed. The training will start within a month.

Previous practice has shown that most of our clients are women, domestic abuse victims, who are unemployed and uneducated. Within the Reference center we therefore plan to organize educational workshops such as for example workshops on empowerment and confidence building, computer literacy, basic entrepreneurship, active job seeking, etc.



Denmark

Offerrådgivningen

Nationwide Mentor programme in Denmark

As mentioned in the last

Newsletter, [Offerrådgivningen i Danmark](#) (Victim Support Denmark) now has a new Mentoring system which started on 1st June 2015. The 20 new Mentors are a qualified offer/supplement to the existing services of Victim Support Denmark. The new Mentors help the victims back to their normal everyday life and complement existing counselling with personal meetings, communication and contact with the victims' network.

We are very pleased with this new Mentoring system and we look forward to getting some good experiences.

Information campaign - more need to know Victim Support

Victim Support Denmark has just received funding to create a nationwide information campaign to help raising awareness, and especially focus on our target market opportunities for support, advising and help to return to a normal daily life. The information campaign will be visible on buses and posters at the bus and train stations.

Over the past two years Victim Support Denmark has helped around 4,000 victims, witnesses and relatives per year, which should be seen in the light of over 70,000 reported crimes. We believe that more inquiries would come to us if there was a greater knowledge of Victim Support.



Estonia

Ohvriabi

On 15 May [Ohvriabi](#) (Victim Support Estonia) organized a conference "Children with behavioral problems and helping opportunities" to which well-known specialists were invited as speakers.

Anne Tiko from Tallinn University talked about children with behavioral problems who are victims of their environment. She gave an overview of a research conducted in 2014. Research participants

were two special schools for boys and girls with behavioral problems, the Viru Prison which has minors among the prisoners and the Tallinn Child Security Center, a closed institute for children with special needs. Research found that children with problems at home, who are not going to school and have all kinds of behavioral problems, have never felt simple emotions like love, security and caring.

Supervisor, psychologist and family therapist Inge Tael gave an overview on how children can cope with their emotions. From her presentation came out that those children are locking their emotions because they were already hurt at a very young age. These situations are often so intense that it is no longer possible to cope with them.

Anna Frank from Tallinn Child Security Center introduced the center's work and gave some practical examples of how they are working with adolescents.

Also Keili Kollamaa-Rander, board member of Victim Support Estonia and Baltic Criminal Prevention Institute, introduced practical programs which she has developed to work with children with aggression problems. These programs aim at lessening school bullying. From this year she is starting working with summer camps, also for troubled youth.

At the conference we also had the opportunity to listen to an interview with a mother whose child is now an adult but was diagnosed with ADHD in childhood.

The conference ended with a presentation from Meelike Saarna from Family Center Me and You. She introduced family therapy and gave examples of how family therapy can help when the family structure is not working properly.

Feedback on the conference was very positive. Participants came from all over Estonia, from kindergardens and schools, social departments and child protection agencies.



Finland

Rikosuhripaivystys Suomessa

[Riku](#) (Victim Support Finland) working with trafficking victims

As mentioned in the previous newsletter, Victim Support Finland is currently developing NGO cooperation and its own work with victims of human trafficking. We are currently developing a model of intensive support for trafficking victims as well as mapping available services and capacity gaps. We would be very interested in getting in touch with other VSE member organizations who work with victims of human trafficking (both labor and sex trafficking) to exchange information and learn from each other's experiences. If you are interested in starting a community of practice and/or sharing information about work with trafficking victims, please contact Pia Marttila, Coordinator of Assistance to Victims of Human Trafficking at pia.marttila@riku.fi.

Good Practice Plus: project for victims of hate crimes

Victim Support Finland participates in this EU project which aims at supporting victims of hate crimes with the focus on ethnic and religious reasons. The coordinator of the project is the Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities and the main partner in Finland is the Finnish Ministry of the Interior. Our aim in Victim Support Finland is to develop methods where victims of hate crimes are supported so that they report these crimes and know about victim services. Trainings for members of migrant communities will start later this year.

Germany

Weisser Ring

20. German Congress on Crime Prevention

Around 3000 experts on crime prevention from all



over Europe met on 8 and 9 June in Frankfurt. They discussed the impact and return of investment in crime prevention. [WEISSER RING](#) contributed to the extensive program through workshops and lectures and had a stand at the congress. WEISSER RING Germany is part of the programming board and associated partner of the annual congress.

WEISSER RING ambassador, actor Marek Erhardt, was honoured guest of the congress and awarded Erich Marks, Managing Director of the Congress, in the opening session for his tireless commitment for crime prevention and victims of crime.

The workshop regarding the costs of trauma psychological victim support was organised by the WEISSER RING. Around 30 participants discussed with three experts personal and economic benefits of quick trauma counselling for victims of crime. Several members of the scientific advisory board on crime prevention represented the work of WEISSER RING in their inputs. Chairwomen of the advisory board, Wiebke Steffen, announced the congress declaration. The declaration is asking for standardised evaluation of crime prevention programs and urges for ethical debate on crime prevention.

A lively program at WEISSER RING's stand attracted lots of visitors and gave a good opportunity to inform about victim support in Germany. Thieves' tricks were shown to raise awareness on how to better protect bags, watches and purses.

Please find further information on the 20. German Congress on Crime Prevention [here](#).



Ireland

AdVIC - Advocates for Victims of Homicide

The Criminal Justice (Victims of Crime) Bill 2015 will implement the Victims' Directive in Ireland.

[AdVIC](#) is very pleased that the legislation has started to be drafted and delighted to have been given the opportunity via their membership of the Victim's Rights Alliance (VRA) to review the Draft Heads of Bill which was recently introduced by the Irish Minister of Justice.

In our opinion the Draft Bill will need to be strengthened if it is to give full effect to the Victims Directive in Irish law.

Currently the Draft Heads of Bill limit a victims' rights under the Directive in certain instances. The Draft Bill does not provide that the legislation will apply regardless of the residential status of the victim nor does it legislate for restorative justice. Most disconcerting is the fact that the legislation has created a new term, not defined by the Directive. The Draft Bill uses the term 'complainant', rather than 'victim' to limit the information, support and protection a victim can obtain, unless they make a formal complaint to the Gardaí (Irish Police Force). In some instances victims themselves may not make a formal complaint to the Gardaí. This may be done by a witness. There are instances where the Gardaí investigate a crime ex-officio and/or without a victim making a formal complaint. Furthermore, family members who have lost a loved one due to a criminal offence, children and persons with physical disabilities and mental health issues may not be able to make a formal complaint and therefore they would not be able to access their rights fully under the Draft Bill. Therefore the use of the term 'complainant' in the Draft legislation has the result of prohibiting a victim from accessing their full rights under the Directive unless they make a formal complaint to the Gardaí. In this regard, victims would, for example not be entitled to information on the time and place of the crime and the nature of the charges made against the offender.

It is important to note that the legislation is in its draft format. The Victim's Rights Alliance is in the process of completing submissions to the Irish Department of Justice on the Draft Heads of the

Criminal Justice (Victims of Crime) Bill 2015.

Victim Support Europe has been consulted by VRA and has provided an analysis of the draft legislation.



Italy

Associazione LIBRA Onlus

Project on child safety online

[LIBRA Onlus](#) is currently involved in the project [EU Child Safety Online](#) financed by the European Commission ISEC fund. The project partners recently met in Enna (Italy) in order to develop strategies and move the project forward with the development of a study on victimisation.

For the dissemination, the second work package of activities provides a survey addressed to young adult (18-25 years old) in order to examine how many received sexual messages or requests when they were online as a teenager. We will also conduct a series of focus groups in the near future to discuss about this and about the general topic of youth safety online.

LIBRA Association supports FDE Institute of Criminology of Mantua in this project. Kore University of Enna organised a conference about sexual abuse online, in which different perspectives of digital childhood exploitation were examined: from the victim to law enforcement, victim support to offenders. Dr. Elisa Corbari, from FDE Institute of Criminology presented LIBRA victims prevention project within schools, addressed to 11 year-old schoolchildren, teachers and parents.

Victim Support Centre

After 3 years of activities of the Victim Support Centre managed by LIBRA Onlus, the service has supported more than 85 persons, victims of different types of crime. 90% of them were women, and the percentage of Italian and foreign people is

quite the same.

Last month, during our assistance at the Victim Support Centre, the problem of gambling came to light, as indirect factor of victimization.



**VICTIM
SUPPORT
MALTA**

Malta

Victim Support Malta

Since last year [Victim Support Malta](#)'s leading initiative has been the SART – the Sexual Assault Response Team. A new initiative for Malta, this team entails various professionals working in a multi-disciplinary manner to support victims of rape and sexual assault. Victim Support Malta has been entrusted by the Government to coordinate this service, and also to provide additional follow up services to victims, including legal representations, psychological assistance as well as translation and interpretations services. The role of Victim Support also includes identifying relevant training needs and delivering training to the various professionals; as well as the implementation of prevention campaigns.

The Victims of Crime Act has come into force in Malta in April 2015. Victim Support Malta is in discussions with the Government in order to ensure that the services which are to be provided to victims in accordance with the said Act, are indeed provided in line with the wording and spirit of the law. Once again this entails coordination amongst various service providers in Malta – Victim Support is therefore active in liaising with all other entities and agencies in order to ensure that the appropriate services are set up and function as they should. Also, due to various shortcomings in the Act, Victim Support Malta will continue lobbying for an improved legal framework for victims, in order to ensure that the Victims' Directive is adequately transposed. Last but not least, Victim Support Malta will be implementing an awareness campaign in order to ensure that the public is informed about the new rights in the said Victims of Crime Act.

Victim Support Malta is also working on the development of a needs and risk assessment tool which will facilitate that implementation of the needs and risk assessment, as required under the Victims' Directive. However, this is proving to be a very challenging task, particularly in view of the fact that the specific characteristics of a multitude of crimes have to be taken into account.

Victim Support Malta is also still active in PHROM – the newly set up Platform for Human Rights Organisations in Malta, which is currently chaired by its director Dr. Roberta Lepre. Through this initiative, we aim, *inter alia*, to adopt a rights-based approach in discourse pertaining to victims of crime.



Portugal

APAV

[APAV awarded with the Order of Liberty](#)

The President of the Portuguese Republic awarded APAV with the degree of *Honorary Member of the Order of Liberty* in the official celebrations of the 10th of June, Day of Portugal, Camões and the Portuguese Communities.

In a timely occasion, as on the 25th of June APAV celebrates 25 years, the award recognizes the mission, work and commitment of APAV in the support of all victims of crime and in the promotion of victims' rights.

APAV presents a document about the transposition of the Victims' Directive 2012/29/UE in Portugal

APAV developed a document entitled "*For a victim's statute in Portugal: minimum standards on the rights of all victims of crime*". It contains a set of proposals for decision-makers about the transposition of the Victims' Directive in Portugal. It was based on APAV's know-how in the support of victims of crime and on in-depth interviews with

more than 70 professionals of different fields about the situation of victims of crime in Portugal.

The document is available [here](#).

APAV launches an awareness campaign against domestic violence: the Home Catalog

APAV has launched an awareness campaign against domestic violence in the form of a catalog entitled "Home". It seems, at first glance, a regular furniture album, but instead it includes statistical information about the prevalence and impact of domestic violence against women, men, children and elderly in Portugal.

The campaign is available [here](#).

APAV launches the English version of the microsite about sexual violence

The microsite about sexual violence is now available in English. It was developed under Project *UNISEXO 2: prevention of sexual violence in higher education*, promoted by APAV under the Human Potential Operational Programme. It contains information about sexual violence, safety strategies, support resources and useful contacts. The microsite is available [here](#).



Scotland

Victim Support Scotland

Legislative Developments

In order to transpose the Directive 2012/29/EU establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, the Scottish Government introduced new legislation called the Victims and Witnesses (Scotland) Act 2014 ('the 2014 Act'). This is being implemented in stages, and there are ongoing discussions between victim organisations and the Scottish Government as to what further legislative changes are required in order for the Directive to be fully transposed into our national law.

The 2014 Act brings in a variety of provisions for victims. So far, a National Confidential Forum has been established for people abused in institutional care as children; victims and witnesses have a right to request certain case-specific information from justice agencies; victims are now allowed to make oral representations to the Parole Board in relation to the release of life sentence prisoners; and justice agencies have set and published clear standards of service for victims and witnesses.

Provisions still to come into force include a presumption that all witnesses under 18 years of age and victims in cases involving sexual offences, domestic abuse, stalking and human trafficking are vulnerable and so will have automatic access to special measures when giving evidence in court; and the introduction of a victim surcharge, paid for by offenders, to give immediate support and assistance to victims of crime.

[Victim Support Scotland](#) (VSS) liaises and consults with the justice agencies on these changes as they are being made and on an on-going basis, in collaboration with other victim agencies through the Victims Organisations Collaboration Forum Scotland (VOCFS).

We have also been very busy in providing responses to the Scottish Government and Scottish Parliament on other proposals for change within the criminal justice system. We provided written and oral evidence to the Scottish Parliament at the beginning of this year on a new human trafficking bill; we also provided our views in relation to proposals for a Victim Notification Scheme for victims of mentally disordered offenders, and changes to the system of release for prisoners.

Operations

VSS has agreed a new referral process with Police Scotland for cases of murder. This new procedure, effective from 1 April 2015, ensures that all families are aware of the services we have and will have immediate access to them. Police Family Liaison Officers (FLOs) will notify our National Support

Centre when a murder is committed anywhere in Scotland, and will go on to advise the victim's family of the support available to them from VSS, telling them that a referral will be made to us unless they do not want help. The FLO will then make the referral to the National Support Centre giving details of the victim and family, which will be passed to the local service to make contact and provide support. A similar notification and referral process which has been in place in England and Wales has shown that about 80 per cent of families take up the offer of support when it is offered in this way.

In order to better assess the quality and consistency of frontline service delivery, a case quality review was undertaken in 2013. This led to a series of actions to better evidence outcomes of our work linked to wider National Outcomes framework and Scottish Justice outcomes. Following extensive training for staff and volunteers on new ways of working, a new approach to core service delivery went live on 1 April 2015 around Individual Support Plans (ISPs). Key benefits include:

- Development of core service outcomes and indicators framework
- Redevelopment of VSS Case Management system recording and reporting tools
- Redefinition of case management practice: individual support plans, robust progress measurements, enhanced case closure arrangements, better volunteer management

This will be revised and redefined, as necessary during 2015.

Training

Over the past year, the VSS Learning and Development department have expanded their work in providing training to external agencies. The department recently went to Tulliallan Police College to help them create a course for all probationary officers on the impact of crime on

victims and the role of VSS, which is now part of the training of every new police officer in Scotland. A new bespoke course was carried out for the Parole Board for Scotland to help with conducting interviews with families and victims of crimes that have resulted in an offender being sentenced to life in prison. VSS has also been providing bespoke training in response to the new legislation with other criminal justice agencies, such as the Scottish Court Service and the Scottish Prison Service. In addition, courses have been provided for anyone who works with victims or witnesses as part of their job or studies, for anyone from a security guard to a doctor.

VSS Manifesto 2015-2018

We are currently working on our Manifesto for 2015-2018, to be launched at our AGM in September.



Spain

ANVDV

One of the challenges of the Victims' Directive 2012/29/EU is the training of professionals involved in caring for victims of crime.

A project of first priority for [ANVDV](#) is the training of professionals involved in the direct assistance to victims of crime, in this regard we want to point out the training sessions we gave at the British Consulate in Madrid addressed to the consular staff, which aimed at informing about the situation of victims of violent crime and how to deal with them to minimize the damage suffered. This training has a multidisciplinary approach: legal and psychosocial, knowing the psychological processes experienced by a person when he/she is victim of a crime, the influence of social support and some basic understanding of the European and Spanish regulations affecting British nationals victims of crimes in Spain, whether tourists or residents, in order to help them and redirect them to the proper resource.

At the state level, there are also some training initiatives as the one organized by the Public Prosecutor's Office ("The position of the victim and its impact on criminal prosecution. New legislation") which was aimed at prosecutors in Spain.

UPDATES ON ONGOING PROJECTS



Project IVOR | Policy Seminar | November 2015

The European Commission set that the EU Member States must implement the provisions of the Victims' Directive into their national laws by 16 November 2015. Especially now, the rights of victims of crime enshrined by the Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime are the touchstone of every political and organisational victim support agenda.

The Policy Seminar of Project IVOR will be an utmost important and unique timing opportunity for practitioners (judiciary, victim support organisations) and policy-makers to debate the current victim assistance models and have ready-to-use recommendations for implementing the EU Directive.

Don't miss the opportunity to hear and discuss these transversal topics with our fantastic invited speakers! The exact date will be confirmed soon.



Project IMPACT - Social impact on victim support

The challenges brought by the Portuguese economic crisis, with more complex sets of needs,

together with the low number of victims who actually access support services motivated the investment on new tools that allow the improvement of internal procedures and greater capacity to influence public policies.

It was this motivation that led [APAV](#) to promote Project IMPACT – social impact on victim support. The main goal of IMPACT is to promote the improvement of services provided and contribute to APAV's greater external acknowledgement as a reference organisation in victim support. This will be possible by introducing a new quality management system into APAV's procedures.

By working on the organisation capacity, the project will also benefit victims of crime, their families and friends. By the end, we expect an organisational evaluation system implemented and integrated in the SGQ focused on performance based on principles of value for money.

VSE ON TWITTER AND ON YOUTUBE

Please follow Victim Support Europe on Twitter ([@VictimSupportEu](#)) and on our [YouTube](#) channel where we are collecting useful information on victims related issues as well as publicizing events.



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[About Victim Support Europe](#)

Victim Support Europe is an umbrella organisation which currently consists of 40 national and regional victim support organisations in 26 countries.

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