



ANNUAL REPORT 2012

Towards strong rights in Europe for victims of crime





President's report



David McKenna

In 2012 we have seen the arrival of a new European Union Directive for victims of crime. The success of the new law is testimony to all the hard work of victim organisations across Europe. It is testimony also to the strong commitment of member states throughout Europe, the European Commission and European Parliament to strengthen the rights of victims.

It will now be a better Europe for victims and many new opportunities to improve their position will emerge over the months ahead. Victim Support Europe will continue to work in partnership with all concerned.

Over the last 12 months we have worked tirelessly with the European Commission and the Parliament to secure a strong directive for victims and we have succeeded. The challenges that lie ahead include supporting member states to implement the Directive, the development of new and existing victim support services and to keep victims issues high on the agenda of the next European Parliament election. In May last year thanks to the hard work of Victor Jammers and Slachtofferhulp in the Netherlands we were able to co-host the most successful meeting of the World Society of Victimology in The Hague. We also held an important hearing of in the European Parliament that gave voice to real victims of crime and the need for change in their treatment throughout Europe.

In the coming year 2013, our focus and priority will be member organisations and member states to plan for and in practical terms implement the new Directive in time for November 2015. Our priorities will include providing support for study visits and exchanges between member organisations, on a pan European level but also at regional level. Best practice and what works for policy makers, criminal justice authorities and for victim support will be key. We have welcomed the continuing high priority being afforded to victims in the European Commission 2014 – 2020 work plan. In tandem we will also be consulting on and developing a new 5 year manifesto for victims in Europe and new policy on the rights of victims for the future.

Victim Support Europe will be working to support member organisations to access funding programmes in particular capacity building development funding such as provided by the European Commission Action Grant Programmes. We will also work to support governments throughout Europe in their work to improve the position of victims and to make available effective victim support services.

In closing, my heartfelt thanks to all Executive Board and staff members of Victim Support Europe who have done just a magnificent job over the past year. Also to our member organisations who have worked together so successfully in recent years, congratulations.

Best wishes

David McKenna, *President*

Treasurer's Report



Helgard van Hüllen

Following properly accounted and audited financial figures for the period ended on 31 December 2011 it was for me as the treasurer most important to have on the one hand the official financial statements 2012 available as soon as possible and ready for approval for the AGM 2013 and on the other hand to have a solid base for the financial management, e.g. to draw up applications for EU grants, and the financial controlling throughout the current year. To me reliable figures audited by a trustworthy auditor shape the grounds for confidence into VSE for our members as well as for external parties such as the European Commission.

2012 has been managed in a much more relaxed way than the prior period amongst others thanks to an EC operating grant, awarded only in July, and to a functioning office in Brussels. Nevertheless the main problem remains "How to get own sufficient financial means without EU subsidy". We need such own income to overcome times without grants or to finance our contributions requested by operating grants. Here again I would like to thank for the remarkable financial inputs of some members during 2012. And I believe that one reason for the already almost approved operating grant 2013 is VSE own and reliable financial resources and management.

Looking at the main figures for 2012 the total operating income summed up to 707.566€ with expenditure in the amount of 692.510€ leaving a yearend gain of 15.056€ compared to a gain of 18.827€ in 2011. Further detailed figures can be found in the attached Balance Sheet 2012. It is to be mentioned that the CABVIS project, managed by APAV, has been businesswise as well as financially well settled in 2012.

On the basis of solid and audited financial statements for the second full year under Belgium law I on behalf of the Executive Board of VSE ask the AGM 2013 to approve the Balance sheet 2012 including the assets, liabilities and income statement and audited by Madame Martine Piret (audit report dated 13 May 2013).

Last but not least I would like to express my sincere thanks to all who have contributed to the solid financial management of VSE in 2012.

Helgard van Hüllen, *Treasurer*

Policy Report



Frida Wheldon

Following on from a very successful year, Victim Support Europe has during 2012 continued to strengthen our role as the voice of Victims in Europe. We have been active in developing both internal and external policies. Regarding external policies, we have actively engaged in the negotiations of the EU Directive establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, where we provided expert input and practical support to the countries holding EU Presidencies and chairing the negotiations in the Council of the European Union. We also provided suggestions and comments on the final wording of articles, to ensure the rights were as strong as possible and able to provide tangible improvements for victims across the EU. In relation to the new EU Directive, Victim Support Europe held two main events in the EU Parliament during 2012. The first event, held in March 2012, aimed at gathering support for the EU Directive and ensuring that the final text was as strong and clear as possible. The second event, held in November 2012, focused on the implementation of the Directive; providing best practice and suggestions how the rights can be interpreted and implemented in practice to ensure victims are able to access their rights. We collected best practice in relation to key rights on the Directive and informed key stakeholders and Member States of different practical options. During the end of the year, we began discussions how Victim Support Europe can assist Member States in the implementation and the EU Commission in the monitoring of Member States' fulfillment of the new Directive on minimum standards for victims.

In addition to providing input to the finalisation and implementation of the EU Directive, Victim Support Europe has actively engaged with a range of external agencies to promote stronger rights for victims of crime. We have attended key events across the EU and beyond to share information and highlight the needs of victims, to ensure that new public policies reflect the needs and wishes of people affected by crime.

Victim Support Europe has during 2012 also strengthened our internal policies. We have developed a 4 year strategy, confirming organisational aims and visions. Our strategy includes minimum standards in relation to victim support services. We have also provided assistance and practical suggestions in the development of new victim support services across Europe, highlighting a range of areas that could be kept in mind when establishing victim support services. We have also improved our communication and increased cross-border referrals between Member organisations. The new VSE website provides a range of information for victims of crime, but also for victim support practitioners and partner agencies.

Frida Wheldon, *Head of Policy*



EU-funded projects



Carmen Rasquete

The two-year long **project CABVIS** (2011-2012), co-financed by the Criminal Justice Programme of the European Union, was created with the purpose of responding to the increasing need of capacity building within Victim Support Europe (VSE) member associations and of providing training to professionals that deal directly with victims of crime. The project focused specifically on cross-border victimisation, which was identified as a topic the Victim Support Organisations had less knowledge of.

The project benefited from the experience of its partners and of VSE members, using lessons learnt, materials and best practices of our NGOs to create new tools and promote knowledge exchange.

Insofar, 2012 was a vibrant year, with five national seminars taking place in Portugal, Germany, Scotland, England and the Netherlands to, among other objectives, raise awareness on the new Directive establishing minimum standards on the rights, protection and support to victims of crime and that involved the participation of several police officers, court staff, judicial practitioners and victim support workers. In this same year a handbook to support the implementation of the 116006 helpline was launched, with useful information to any VSE member in the process of requesting this harmonised EU-wide line and providing more information about what it is and entails. A training manual, with a compilation of training sessions on several relevant issues and extensive background information, was also published during this year and has been used as a reference by APAV, Weisser Ring Germany, Victim Support Scotland, Victim Support England & Wales and Slachtofferhulp Nederland. These two documents can currently be found on the brand new VSE website. This website, with an intranet and with a more attractive layout and more information, was also an outcome of the CABVIS project. The project ended in December 2012 and its most emblematic moment took place on the 27th and 28th of September with its Final Conference in Lisbon, that got together several important stakeholders and VSE members in a unique opportunity for networking, knowledge exchange and learning through the many sessions and workshops with renowned speakers.

The Centre for Public Policy – PROVIDUS just finished a two year European Project on **“Substantial Support for Victims: Towards a Holistic Response to Crime. Latvia and beyond”**. Victim Support Europe was very pleased to be a partner in this project, giving input as research advisor throughout the activities developed within the project. The overall objective of the project was to prevent victimization by enhancing support for victims and fostering a more holistic and healing response to crime, where the victim, offender and society are equally acknowledged. More specifically the Project aimed to provide research based strategic and policy recommendations for development of good victims policies that address victims’ needs, and response to crime in a balanced restorative way; to provide information and support to victims of crime; to enhance understanding about the benefits of a restorative response towards victims needs among law enforcement agencies, media and society at large and to improve cooperation and networking among state agencies and NGOs working with



victims of crime within Latvia and beyond.

The final Conference of the Project – “Supporting Victims of Crime in Latvia - Incorporating an EU dimension” took place in Riga, Latvia on February 21-22, 2013.

Victim Support Malta has just finished the Project “**Strengthening Crime Prevention between EU member states**” with the Final Conference that took place in Gzira, Malta, from the 29th January to the 1st February of 2013. The overall objective of the project was the harmonization of EU policies on crime prevention, with the aim of developing a sense of European identity between the organizations and fostering a sense of ownership of the EU through the involvement of all participants. Victim Support Europe was pleased to be one of the partners of such relevant project, contributing by maintaining an open channel of communication between all its member and disseminating information about the project throughout its network of victim support organisations. Victim Support Europe was also present at the final seminar, ensuring that participants from several member states were present and actively participating in the plenary sessions and workshops.

The **project CARONTE**, co-financed by the Criminal Justice Programme of the European Union, aimed to develop procedures to support family and friends of victims of homicide. It was promoted by APAV since 2010 and ended in 2012. Besides an interchange of practical knowledge on this kind of support between the partners (Portuguese police forces and criminal investigation, National Legal Medicine Institute, Victim Support Scotland and Weisser Ring Austria), the project created the opportunity to develop the “Caronte Handbook: for the assistance to the family and/or friends of victims of homicide”, and a final international seminar.

The Project outcomes surpassed its own completion. Services for the target group were developed and are now in the field. A strategy for the implementation of a specialised support team was put into force, with national range, and close contacts with the Judiciary Police (the Portuguese police responsible for investigating homicides). This strategy involved recruiting the most adequate persons for the team, providing them intensive training, and a *modus operandis* for supporting families and friends of victims of homicide, from the moment of the crime until long term support.

One of the worst obstacles that victims of crime still face across Europe is the lack of information available to them. This may lead to a general unawareness on how to exercise their rights, but also to further ordeals and secondary victimisation due to lack of knowledge of police and judicial authorities regarding victims’ rights, needs and interests. It was with the intention of addressing these shortcomings that the **Project Infovictims**, co-financed by the Criminal Justice Programme of the European Union, was designed. It started in October 2011 and will have a duration of two years.

Aiming to respond to the pressing need of information, Project Infovictims launches an innovative and user friendly way to provide information to victims of crime.

Firstly, by directly improving the quality and quantity of the information provided to crime victims concerning the criminal justice system, their rights and the ways to exercise them in different partner countries (Portugal, Czech Republic, Austria). An



exciting set of materials is now almost at victims' disposal and these are:

- an interactive website with relevant information about the criminal justice system;
- leaflets and/or brochures containing the basics about the criminal justice system and victims' rights in a friendly language;

Furthermore, by raising the awareness of the judicial operators and the police forces to their duty to inform, and to the need to ensure that the victims fully understand their rights and that their needs, interests and expectations are taken into account. Insofar, we intend to:

- develop an awareness raising kit to disseminate amongst judicial operators and police forces with the aim to call their attention to the importance of providing clear, complete and accurate information to victims of crime;
- organise meetings and/or awareness raising sessions with key persons from the judicial and police authorities, to highlight the importance of the duty to inform the victims of crime and also their needs.

Victim Support Europe is delighted to be one of the transnational partners of this project together with Brottsoffermyndigheten (Sweden), Weisser Ring Austria (Austria) and Bily kruh bezpeci (Czech Republic).

From January 2011 to January 2013 APAV promoted, with the financial support of the Directorate-General for Justice of the European Commission, the **Project LEAD - inform to prevent**. This project aimed the use of information as an intervention strategy or tool for preventing the occurrence of youth violence and promoting personal safety behaviours, and social skills that are important for establishing positive relationships with peers. With the collaboration of national and transnational partners, ISCTE - University Institute of Lisbon (Portugal), Portuguese Young Foundation (Portugal), Victim Support Scotland (Scotland) and Brottsoffermyndigheten (Sweden), and using young people as consultants or co-authors, several informative resources for children and young people were developed and disseminated, namely, an informative website <http://www.apavparajovens.pt/en> about different forms of youth violence, strategies for self-protection and for seeking support, an awareness campaign entitled "*Your safety is not a game. Stay alert.*" with the purpose of informing about the importance of personal safety, and a school agenda with advice about positive and safety behaviours.

Throughout 2012 several group discussions were performed with Portuguese, Swedish and Scottish young participants for gathering their perceptions and knowledge about youth violence and, at the end of the project, group discussions were also carried out with young people for assessing the attractiveness and relevance of the resources produced. Among other activities, one partners' meeting was held in Edinburgh where final adjustments and improvements to the informative resources were made. The end of 2012 was dedicated to the dissemination of the resources developed among children and young people through the collaboration with the school context, the World Wide Web and the media.

Carmen Rasquete, *Project Coordinator*

Balance sheet for the period 1 January 2012 to 31 December 2012

| | Codes | 2012 |
|--|--------------|------------|
| ASSETS | | |
| FIXED ASSETS | 20/28 | 7.075,58 |
| Tangible fixed assets | 22/27 | 2.200,58 |
| Plant, machinery and equipment | 23 | 2.200,58 |
| Owned by the association in full property | 231 | 2.200,58 |
| Financial fixed assets | 28 | 4.875,00 |
| CURRENT ASSETS | 29/58 | 366.132,60 |
| Amounts receivable within one year | 40/41 | 46.937,51 |
| Other amounts receivable | 41 | 46.937,51 |
| Cash at bank and in hand | 54/58 | 179.207,06 |
| Deferred charges and accrued income | 490/1 | 139.988,03 |
| TOTAL ASSETS | 20/58 | 373.208,18 |
| EQUITY AND LIABILITIES | | |
| CAPITAL AND RESERVES | 10/15 | 71.908,63 |
| Association Funds | 10 | 38.026,03 |
| Opening equity | 100 | 38.026,03 |
| Accumulated profits (losses) | (+)/(-) 14 | 33.882,60 |
| AMOUNTS PAYABLE | 17/49 | 301.299,55 |
| Amounts payable within one year | 42/48 | 301.287,24 |
| Trade debts | 44 | 43.001,23 |
| Suppliers | 440/4 | 43.001,23 |
| Taxes, remuneration and social security | 45 | 4.731,27 |
| Remuneration and social security | 454/9 | 4.731,27 |
| Miscellaneous amounts payable | 48 | 253.554,74 |
| Miscellaneous interest-bearing amounts payable | 4890 | 253.554,74 |
| Accruals and deferred income | 492/3 | 12,31 |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES | 10/49 | 373.208,18 |
| INCOME STATEMENT | | |
| Operating income and charges | | |
| Gross operating margin | (+)/(-) 9900 | 65.583,15 |
| Remuneration, social security costs and pensions | (+)/(-) 62 | 49.263,60 |
| Depreciation of and other amounts written off formation expenses, intangible and tangible fixed assets | 630 | 1.100,29 |
| Other operating charges | 640/8 | 9,72 |
| Operating profit (loss) | (+)/(-) 9901 | 15.209,54 |
| Financial income | 75 | 306,84 |
| Financial charges | 65 | 460,74 |
| Gain (loss) on ordinary activities before taxes | (+)/(-) 9902 | 15.055,64 |
| Gain (loss) of the period | (+)/(-) 9904 | 15.055,64 |



Executive board members

David McKenna, President

João Lázaro, Vice-President

Helgard van Hüllen, Treasurer

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