



VSE NEWSLETTER #4 2015 - 4 DECEMBER 2015



From the Editor

The recent terrorist attacks have shown again how important it is to work closely together to support victims across Europe and beyond.

On 10 November Victim Support Europe elected João Lázaro (Portugal) as the new President, Sabrina Bellucci (France) as a Vice President and 3 new Executive Board Members from Austria, Croatia and the UK. With the Netherlands and Finland still represented, we now have representatives from 8 EU countries on our Executive Board, closely working together for more and better collaboration across Europe. Together, we are stronger!

This Newsletter gives you an overview of recent developments, activities, past and upcoming events, projects as well as relevant new publications. We hope you will enjoy reading it.

We also take this opportunity to wish you a peaceful Christmas break and a good start in the new year.

*Helgard van Hüllen
Vice President of Victim Support Europe*

CONTENT

[UPCOMING EVENTS](#)

[LIST OF ONGOING PROJECTS](#)

[RECENT DEVELOPMENTS, ACTIVITIES AND PUBLICATIONS](#)

- [New President for Victim Support Europe](#)
- [Commissioner Věra Jourová speaks at VSE conference in the European Parliament](#)
- [Workshop on EC funding for VSE members](#)
- [Report on Seminar PROTEUS on online identity theft](#)
- [Exchange of experience on helplines for victims of crime in Europe](#)
- [Solidarity with victims of terrorism](#)
- [VSE campaign 22 February 2016](#)
- [Save the Date: VSE Annual Conference and General Meeting 2016, 24-27 May, Utrecht](#)
- [PICUM's guide on the EU Victims' Directive: advancing protection, services and justice for undocumented victims](#)
- [Final report of Transgender Europe's ProTrans Project published](#)

UPDATES ON ONGOING PROJECTS

- [Project IVOR | Policy Seminar: Services that work for victims | 14 January 2016](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Policy Seminar of Project IVOR: Services that work for victims**, 14 January 2016, Lisbon. Information and registration [here](#).

- **VSE Annual Conference 2016** will be held in the "[Muntgebouw Utrecht](#)", in the Netherlands on 24-26 May. **VSE Annual General Meeting** will take place on 27 May in the same venue.

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

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS, ACTIVITIES AND PUBLICATIONS



New President for Victim Support Europe

On 10 November 2015 João Lázaro, President of the Portuguese Association for Victim Support ([APAV](#)) was elected President of Victim Support Europe at our General Meeting which took place in Brussels. João Lázaro has been working for APAV since 1995, first as Secretary General, then as CEO and since 2013 as President. Over the past year he has been increasingly involved in the work of Victim Support Europe as he, together with Helgard van Hüllen, both in their quality of Vice Presidents, acted on behalf of our former President, David McKenna, who had been on sick leave for almost a year before he passed away in August 2015.

The General Meeting also elected Sabrina Bellucci, CEO of the French National Institute for Victim Support and Mediation ([INAVEM](#)) to the post of Vice President as well as 3 new Executive Board Members from Austria, Croatia and the UK.

8 countries are currently represented on our Executive Board:

- **President** | João Lázaro, President of APAV, Portugal
- **Vice-President** | Helgard van Hüllen, Vice-President of Weisser Ring Germany
- **Vice-President** | Sabrina Bellucci, CEO of INAVEM, France
- Leena-Kaisa Åberg, CEO of RIKU, Finland
- Mark Castle, CEO of Victim Support England and Wales, UK

- Victor Jammers, Member of the Board of Directors of Slachtofferhulp, The Netherlands
- Livija Plančić, President of Bijeli krug Hrvatske, Croatia
- Barbara Unterlerchner, Weisser Ring Austria



Commissioner Věra Jourová speaks at VSE conference in the European Parliament

On 9 November 2015 VSE organized a conference "Putting victims' rights into practice: where are we?" in the European Parliament. The event was hosted by Teresa Jiménez-Becerril Barrio, MEP and co-hosted by Axel Voss, MEP.

The conference focused on the Victims' Rights Directive that must be implemented by 16 November 2015. The different speakers addressed how the Directive can meet the needs of victims, what problems victims are facing and what governments must do to ensure victims have rights.

Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality Věra Jourová spoke about the expectations and the challenges that arise from the new EU rules on victims' rights.

Commissioner Jourová underlined that the Member States must transpose the EU rules on time. While recognizing that many countries are on a good path she called upon those countries that have not yet fully transposed the EU rules on victims' rights to do so as soon as possible.

She highlighted the huge task ahead for civil society, including the victim support organisations, to support victims and to report back on the situation on the ground. She said that the European Commission will actively support these organisations to carry on their good work and she stressed that the implementation of the Victims' Rights Directive is one of her key priorities for 2016.

Commissioner Jourová also intends to further encourage better cooperation among the Member States on cross-border compensation of victims and sees that this can be done through Victim Support Europe, the European Victims' Network: "I believe that only by joining forces we can realise the full potential of the EU rules on victims' rights. This is only the beginning of a longer process, a process that can change the lives of millions of victims".

The full speech of Commissioner Jourová can be read [here](#).

Financing your ideas...



Workshop on EC funding for VSE members

On 28 October VSE organized a workshop for VSE members on EC Funding for Action Grants and other potential sources of funding. The workshop took place in Lisbon and was led by Carmen Rasquete, APAV's Secretary General. It was attended by VSE members' representatives from Croatia, Hungary, Italy, Malta and Romania and by VSE Executive Director Levent Altan.

The workshop was an excellent opportunity for VSE members to learn more about EC action grant applications and upcoming calls for proposals. Participants also got the chance to discuss their project ideas and to receive tips to increase the quality of potential applications for funding.



Lisbon, 29-30 October 2015

Report on Seminar PROTEUS on online identity theft

The Seminar PROTEUS, "Online identity theft: preventing, fighting & supporting victims", took place in Lisbon on 29-30 October 2015. This Seminar was developed under Project Proteus – supporting victims of online identity theft which is co-financed by the European Commission under

the Prevention of and Fight against Crime Programme and promoted by the Portuguese Association for Victim Support (APAV) in partnership with the Portuguese General Prosecutor's Office, the Spanish General-Prosecutor Office, the General Inspectorate of the Romanian Police, the Portuguese Judiciary Police and the Pärnu Centre for Gender Based Violence from Estonia.

For the past several years, identity theft and identity fraud have become a more sophisticated and transnational crime across the globe. The generalized use of information and communication technologies and Internet allows for the internationalization of criminality and the constant appearance of new ways to commit such crimes, often perpetrated by highly sophisticated criminal organizations. The growth of social networks is making it easier for identity thieves to manipulate human behavior in order to get the information needed to perpetrate the offenses. Cybercrime victims are particularly unprotected and in urgent need of specialised and individualised support, support that the professionals involved are not yet prepared to give.

The PROTEUS Seminar | Identity theft online: preventing, fighting & supporting victims counted with the participation as speakers of representatives of police enforcement, judicial authorities, service providers, scholars and victim support. Levent Altan, Executive Director of VSE was one of the invited speakers and focused his presentation on the support of identity theft victims. All presentations can be found [here](#).

One of the activities of this project was the development of best-practice guides aiming to convey the basic information on the phenomena and prepare victim support staff to provide support to victims of this specific type of crime. These manuals are already available [online](#) in Portuguese, Estonian, Spanish and Romanian. The English Version will be available soon.



Hildegard van Hüllen (right), Marion Melchior (second right), Helga Schäfer (far left) and Barbara Albers (far right) during the exchange of helpline standards.

Exchange of experience on helplines for victims of crime in Europe

On 2-3 November the German victim support organization WEISSE RING and Victim Support Europe jointly organized a workshop on best practice in operating helplines for victims of crime. To this purpose VSE members' representatives from organisations which run helplines for victims of crime in the Czech Republic, France, Sweden, Ireland, Denmark, Croatia, Portugal, Belgium and Germany came together in Mainz (Germany) to exchange standards and experiences.

The main topics of the workshop included the organization of the services, technical requirements and quality management. Workshop participants underlined the importance of selecting and training helpline operators to ensure the quality of the services.

„It was interesting to get to know how different the implementation of the services is realized in the different countries”, said Helgard van Hüllen, Vice Chairwoman of WEISSE RING and Vice President of Victim Support Europe. For example Croatia is recruiting students of law, psychology and social work for operating the helpline while the work in Germany is done by volunteers with diverse professional backgrounds. But there are also many common features, e. g. services are free of charge and guarantee constant availability. “The workshop gave space for an important exchange which will benefit victim support in Europe”, concluded Helgard van Hüllen.



Solidarity with victims of terrorism

Over the last weeks, we have seen several terrible terrorist attacks that have killed and injured

hundreds of people. Our thoughts and deepest sympathies are with all those affected by these barbaric acts.

The people who have been injured or who witnessed the attacks, as well as the loved ones of those affected will need support from their family, friends, community as well as from professional supporters.

States must ensure this support is available and accessible to them not just in the coming days but also over the following months and years. If you have been affected by any of the recent attacks, victim support organisations around Europe may be able to help you or help you find assistance. If you cannot find support in your country, we will do our best to help you find it.

Please find here victim support organisations near you: <http://victimsupporteurope.eu/members/>



VSE campaign 22 February 2016

Monday 22 February 2016 will mark the next European Day for Victims of Crime. For all people in Europe it is a day to remember the millions who have fallen victim to crime in Europe. VSE wants to raise awareness on victimisation in Europe and advocate for strong rights and good support for victims. Therefore we are planning a campaign for the European Victims Day 2016.

Together we raised our voice for #VictimsRights on the 16th of November. Thanks to your support we were able to reach all EU governments, political leaders, individuals and many national and international organisations. [The petition by European organisations](#) calling for implementation for Victims' Rights sent a very strong message to EU governments and leaders. Through the [Thunderclap campaign](#) we reached over 300.000 individuals and organisations with our message on the

implementation of the Victims' Rights Directive!

After the successful campaign around the 16th of November 2015, VSE is now preparing a campaign that aims to involve and reach many more people. For the 22nd of February 2016 we want to raise our voices even louder: Calling together for rights and support for victims of crime!

Around this date we want to reach out to more members of the public. The campaign strives to make the 22nd of February a day on which Europeans commemorate all Victims of Crime, in all EU Member States. We want to achieve action and to help your organisation to raise awareness and celebrate the 22nd of February by supporting you in making your events successful. VSE is currently planning for this publicity campaign and would welcome your ideas for collaboration and input to make sure the European Day for Victims of Crime becomes a day to remember!

Let's join together to Raise our voices for all victims of crime on the European Day for Victims of Crime. Stay informed on the campaign and our activities around the 22nd of February by visiting our [website](#) or following us on [twitter](#) or [Facebook](#)!



VSE 2016 Annual Conference, 24-26 May: Taking victim support to the next level - Connect and commit

The VSE 2016 conference will be co-organised by Slachtofferhulp Nederland. The event will be held in Utrecht, The Netherlands.

Theme of the conference is '*Taking victim support to the next level, connect and commit*'. Victim support organisations in Europe need to **connect** with each other throughout Europe to learn and develop. To develop as an organisation and to develop to improve its support to victims. Victim

support organisations need to **connect** in their own countries and Europe-wide with other organisations in the criminal justice system and organisations that provide specialised victim support. They need to **connect** with the national government and European institutions. Governments should **commit** themselves to facilitate the work of the victim support organisations in their country. But first of all our staff (paid, volunteer) always need to **connect** with the individual victim and those who lost their loved ones by crime. That's our **commitment** to the people we work for.

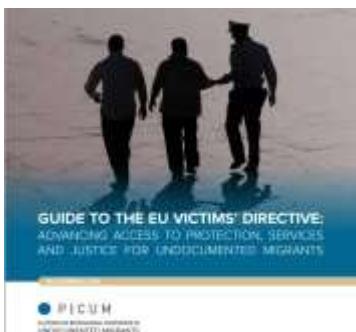
All this is only possible when we build networks where expertise, practices and resources can be shared. By **connecting** on different levels and different scales we will develop and take support and justice for victims to the next level.

The conference will start with a social event on Tuesday May 24. The Dutch Minister of Safety and Justice will open the conference on Wednesday May 25 at 09:00. Closing of the conference will be on Thursday May 26 at 17:00. The Annual General Meeting of Victim Support Europe will be held in the morning of Friday May 27.

Venue of the Annual Conference will be the "[Muntgebouw Utrecht](#)". The conference website will be available from January 4, 2016. From that day you will be able to register for the conference.

If you have any questions or suggestions at this stage, please send an email to VSE2016@slachtofferhulp.nl

We look forward to seeing you in Utrecht!



PICUM's guide on the EU Victims' Directive: advancing protection, services and justice for undocumented victims

PICUM – *Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants* – has launched a new Guide to the EU Victims' Directive aiming to provide organisations that support undocumented victims with practical tools and information for advancing their rights in the framework of the Directive. The guide highlights particular challenges faced by undocumented migrants based on their status and circumstances in getting the protection and support to which they have a right.

PICUM has created a **toolkit** with resources for members and partners, to inform and to inspire action to advance the rights of undocumented victims of crime. The toolkit includes the following resources in English, French and Spanish:

- [Guide to the Victims' Directive](#)
- [One-page summary](#) of the Guide
- [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#) about the Guide, and the Victims' Directive
- [Video](#) on why the Directive is an important tool to ensure undocumented migrants' access to justice
- [Version française ici](#); [Versión en español aquí](#)



Final report of Transgender Europe's ProTrans Project published

Since 2008, Transgender Europe (TGEU) has been a pioneer in research on trans people's experience of violence and crime. In 2012, the [EU Fundamental Rights Agency's \(FRA\) LGBT survey](#) also identified transgender persons as particularly vulnerable to hate crimes and unlikely to report them in the European Union.

In line with the FRA's recommendations on focusing on improving the reporting rates of hate crimes and improving systematic recording, TGEU has gradually been placing more emphasis on

monitoring and reporting transphobic incidents in the form of discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes, focusing on Central-Eastern European countries as data in this region is extremely scarce. By working together with LGBT and trans groups and NGOs within the framework of the ProTrans project – which started in early 2014 and which is funded by the US Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor – TGEU aims to provide systematic and credible data needed to improve public policies to prevent and tackle discrimination and violence against trans people.

"For the Record", the final report of the ProTrans project, has recently been published and can be downloaded [here](#).

UPDATES ON ONGOING PROJECTS



Project IVOR | Policy Seminar: Services that work for victims | 14 January 2016

As a partner of the IVOR project – promoted by APAV and co-financed by the European Commission under Criminal Justice Programme – VSE is delighted to announce the IVOR Policy Seminar "Services that work for victims" which will take place on 14 January in Lisbon.

How is the victim actual experience improved in practice through the transposition of the Victims' Directive?

How do economical, historical and social backgrounds of each Member State influence the transposal of the Directive's Articles?

What solutions and best practices can be adopted and shared between Member States?

To ensure that the Victims' Directive will reach its potential it is vital to understand what works in improving the position of victims in each Member State, how it works, what works together and what

works under which conditions. Thus, it is important for practitioners and decision-makers to join us on the 14th of January 2016, work together and identify measures, solutions and ready-to-use recommendations to foster the implementation of the Victims' Directive.

APAV is therefore much pleased to promote the Policy Seminar: services that work for victims, taking place in Lisbon, at the Hotel Olissipo Marquês de Sá. The event will be a unique timing opportunity to best practices exchange and for all of us to come together and have a real impact on victims' actual experience.

Save this date and guarantee your presence by registering at www.apav.pt/ivor.

The seminar registration fee is 10€ and includes: – a participant kit (bag, pen, notebook, booklet); – access to all official seminar sessions; – coffee break; – 1 admission to the lunch buffet.

We look forward to seeing you in Lisbon!
Information and registration [here](#).

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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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