

VSE NEWSLETTER #1 2016 - 24 March 2016



From the Editor

Two days after the terrorist attacks in Brussels, our thoughts now are with all those affected. Again these tragic events show how important it is to work closely together to support victims across Europe and beyond.

2016 is already well underway and our first newsletter shows how active our members and Victim Support Europe have been since the beginning of the year, particularly around the European Victims Day in February.

Over the next 2 months, a key event will be our Annual Conference and General Meeting which is co-organized by Slachtofferhulp Nederland and which will take place in Utrecht on 24-27 May. The theme of the conference will be "[Taking victim support to the next level, connect and commit](#)". We very much hope to meet you there to help build and further develop national and international networks where knowledge, resources and experiences can be shared.

This newsletter gives you an overview of recent developments, activities, past and upcoming events and projects. We hope you will enjoy reading it.

*Helgard van Hüllen
Vice President of Victim Support Europe*

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[UPCOMING EVENTS](#)

- **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. Please find all information on the [conference website](#).

- [Seminar Infovictims](#) organized by APAV will take place in Porto on 7 April

- **9th International Conference 2016 of the EFRJ** *Realising Restorative Justice: Human Rights and Personal Realities*, 22-24 June 2016

- Leiden, The Netherlands. Please find all information [here](#).

- **ISEC Project Conference** *The Digital World and Sexual Offending-Policing, Cooperation and Victimisation*, 23 June 2016, London. Please find all information [here](#).

- **EUROCRIM 2016** *Crime and Crime Control - Structures, Developments and Actors*, 21-24 September 2016, Münster, Germany. Please find all information [here](#).

[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

- Project [T@LK](#) - *online support for victims of crime*, promoted by APAV (Portugal); **Transnational partners:** Victim Support Malta (Malta), Human Rights Monitoring Institute (Lithuania), Victim Support Finland (Finland); **Associate partners:** Catalan Victimology Society (Spain); Victim Support Europe

[RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AND ACTIVITIES](#)



[Information on support for victims of 22 March attacks in Brussels](#)

Following the 22 March terrorist attacks in Brussels Victim Support Europe is helping with the coordination of victim support for foreign victims. We do not provide direct support ourselves but we can help them to get the support they need.

Please find [here](#) information about the support services for victims and relatives available in Belgium.



[First Meeting of the European Network on Victims' Rights](#)

Victim Support Europe was invited to the first meeting of the European Network on Victim's Rights (ENVR). The meeting took place on 19 February in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

This conference was organised as part of the Netherlands Presidency of the Council of the European Union and in cooperation with France, Slovakia and Ireland.

The ENVR aims to improve the position of the victim in the European Union and to support Member States in improving victims' access to their rights. It allows Member States to share knowledge and best practices, as well as to discuss dilemmas.

This first meeting focused on the official establishment of the network, awareness of victim's issues and in-depth discussion on topics flowing from the implementation of the EU Victims' Directive.

Please find more information [here](#).



Awareness raising campaign 22 February 2016

On 22 February 2016, the European Day for Victims of Crime, Victim Support Europe launched a video on victims of crime in Europe.

The video explains the problem of victimisation in the EU and describes the potential consequences of victimisation for victims of crime. It also describes the rights of all victims of crime in Europe. Furthermore, the video shows the different ways in which victim support can help victims.

This awareness raising video targets people in Europe and around the world and seeks to shed light on victimisation, victims' rights and victim support in Europe. We hope this video can support professionals working with victims of crime.

Please watch the video [here](#).

Since the launch of this video it has received positive feedback from different European Member States. The video has been subtitled by our Members and partners in [Spanish](#) (A.N.V.D.V. Asociación Víctimas), [Serbian](#) (Victimology Society of Serbian), [Chinese](#) (The delegation of the European Commission in Taipei), English (Victim Support Europe) and [Dutch](#) (Steunpunt Algemeen Welzijnswerk). A Portuguese version of the video will be launched in the near future as well (APAV). The text was furthermore translated in different languages.

VSE was also pleased to hear that the video was used to present victims' rights and victim support in Europe during conferences and lectures across European Member States and worldwide. It also features on websites of many of VSE's members in e.g. Ireland, Croatia, and Denmark. We hope it can contribute to awareness raising on victims' issues in the EU.

VSE warmly invites you to watch, share and use this video to raise awareness on victims' rights and victim

support in the EU. Join us to make sure all victims of crime have strong victims' rights and support!



[The EU Directive on the European Day for Victims of Crime 2016: Infringement cases open against 16 Member States](#)

In 2011, the European Council and European Parliament adopted an historic piece of EU legislation greatly strengthening the **rights of victims of crime**. In this way all European countries (except Denmark) committed themselves to improve the rights and support for all victims of crime **by the 16th of November of 2015**. This Directive, 2012/29/EU, ensures that all victims of crime have **better rights, support and protection**.

On 16 November 2015, Member States were required under the Victims' Directive to communicate to the Commission the legislative texts which transpose (purport to) the Directive.

However, many EU member states did not send a communication or only sent a partial communication. At the end of January 2016 the European Commission had to open **infringement cases for non-communication against 16 Member States for non-communication of the VICTIMS Directive**.

Since then 1 Member State has notified and at the moment they still miss 15 notifications. This does not mean that a Member State hasn't transposed the Directive it only means that they've not communicated what they have done. That's almost 60% of governments that are failing to honour their commitments to their citizens and to victims of crime. The 16 countries currently having infringement proceedings for non-communication of

the victims' directive are: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia.

Over the course of the next two years the Commission will assess in detail every Member States implementing laws (and to some extent the practice). The Commission will then publish an implementation report in November 2017, indicating the state of transposition in all participating states. This report can be used to commence or recommence infringement proceedings against non-compliant States.

More details on the proceedings can be found [here](#).



[VSE present at UN Conference on Human Rights of Victims of Terrorism](#)

VSE was represented by our President João Lazaro at the [UN Conference on Human Rights of Victims of Terrorism](#) that took place on **Thursday 11 February** at the United Nations Headquarters. Victim Support England and Wales was also in attendance to ensure a strong presence of victim support organisations.

The Conference, organised by the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre ([UNCCT](#)) under the auspices of the [CTITF Working Group on Supporting and Highlighting Victims of Terrorism](#) gathered experts from civil society, academia as well as regional and international organisations. The conference aimed to examine how States can strengthen their national legislation, procedures and practices, based on the report on the “Framework Principles for Securing the Human rights of Victim of Terrorism” ([A/HRC/20/14](#)) by the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism.

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



[Victim Support Europe has a new Website](#)

On 29 January Victim Support Europe launched a completely new [website](#).

We hope you are enjoying it and find it informative and helpful!



[VSE 2016 Annual Conference, 24-26 May, Utrecht, The Netherlands](#)

Do not forget to register for our Annual Conference "Taking victim support to the next level, connect and commit" co-organised by Slachtofferhulp Nederland which will be held in Utrecht, The Netherlands from 24 to 26 May 2016!

The conference will focus on proven and new practices which meet the needs of victims. And practices where organisations, practitioners and universities have joined to improve the delivery of justice and support to victims. Participants will have ample opportunity to learn about good practices, innovative services, capacity building, possible funding and state-of-the-art research from all over Europe.

Please find more information on the [conference website](#).

NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS



[National events to mark European Day for Victims of Crime](#)

22 February 2016 marks European Day for Victims of Crime. In recognition of that day, VSE member organisations across Europe held a series of events.

Please find [here](#) information about some of the events that took place in **Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Hungary, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania and Serbia.**



[Austria](#)

Weisser Ring

A dark chapter in the past that can never be closed - Victims of violence and abuse in children's institutions

Since August 2010 [Weisser Ring Austria](#) has been commissioned by the City of Vienna for the project management of the historical reappraisal and compensation for suffered abuse and violence in children's institutions in the first decades of the Second Republic. Until now, more than 3000 victims have reported to Weisser Ring.

Under the lead of Udo Jesionek, President of Weisser Ring, an expert committee was established, whose members have been working in detail on each case. In carefully documented meetings, trained psychologists asked victims about their experiences and assessed physical, psychological and social consequences as a result of the suffered mistreatment and abuse. Their statements were verified by archived files of the youth welfare office in Vienna. In regularly scheduled board meetings the expert committee decided on the

granting and the amount of financial support or psychotherapy and legal advice.

In more than 2,700 cases financial support was granted and in over 1,570 cases it was decided to cover psychotherapy costs. Overall, the city of Vienna has provided funds in the amount of 52.53 million euros over the last six years.

At the moment Weisser Ring is coordinating the final stage of the project as the closing date for victims to be compensated is 31 March 2016.

For the victims financial compensation is clearly important, even if it comes at a very late stage of their lives. However, the possibility to be heard and the official recognition of their suffering and experienced injustice is considered to be most significant.

UDRUGA ZA PODRŠKU
ŽRTVAMA I SVJEDOCIMA

Croatia

Croatian Victim and Witness Support Service

After many years in victim support, Barbara Đurić stepped down from her position as Executive Director of the [Victim and Witness Support Service](#) (VWSS). Miren Špek was involved in VWSS as a volunteer and a board member. Through his professional work and activism, he became familiar with the victim and witness support system in Croatia and was appointed unanimously as the new Executive Director.

Currently, VWSS is implementing the project “Strengthening the capacities of CSOs for providing support” (July 1st 2015- July 31st 2016). This project is funded by National Foundation for Civil Society Development that has been accredited as the operator of the EEA and Norway grants in Croatia. The main goal is to strengthen the capacity of CSOs for providing victim and witness support in areas where the support is insufficient or non existing. Activities are aimed at selecting and training volunteers in the area of law and psychology in order for them to be able to give

emotional support, legal information and practical guidance to victims and witnesses. So far, support is implemented in Dubrovacko-neretvanska and Pozesko-slavonska county and by the end of the project, it is going to be implemented in Varazinska and Istarska county.

VWSS organized a round table on “Development of Victims and Witnesses Support System in Croatia“. It was held on February 26th in Zagreb. It was meant to raise awareness and was connected with the European Victims Day. Representatives of respected NGOs and institutions, whose activities are closely connected with victims and witnesses, shared their experience and challenges which are arising in support system in Croatia. The main goal was to emphasize the importance of psycho-social support and to establish goals for further improvement of victim and witness rights.

For more information, please visit our [website](#) and [facebook page](#).



[Czech Republic](#)

Bily Kruh Bezpeci

[Bílý kruh bezpečí](#) (BKB) together with the members of the Board of constitutional law organized a **seminar on the topic of “Petty crime does not exist”** on February 22nd. The seminar took place in the Chamber of deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic. There will be three more seminars every three months this year. The next one will be focused on domestic violence.

Our 24/7 **helpline 116006** for victims of crime answered nearly 4000 calls during the first year in service. The busiest days on the helpline were Mondays and Fridays. The ¾ of all callers were women. Establishment and operation of this new service is realized with the support of the Open Society Fund Prague and Norway grants.

BKB is preparing a **meeting of eight European helpline 116006 providers** (Austria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Germany, Denmark, Ireland, the

Netherlands, and Portugal) in Prague in May. We are keen to build up on the workshop organized by Victim Support Europe and Weisser Ring Germany in Mainz in November 2015. The event is under the patronage of MEP Jiří Pospíšil (former Minister of Justice).

The BKB media campaign on the occasion of 25 years in service is starting these days.

More info at www.bkb.cz



[Denmark](#)

Offerrådgivningen i Danmark (OID) - Victim Support Denmark

The national election of 3rd December 2015 became a “NO”

The national election on 3rd December became a "NO" confirming the Danish status regarding the directives. The Victims Directive though was already withdrawn from the election. However, there are still some positive developments related to victims' rights. The minister of Justice delivered in January a parcel of 5 initiatives on rape, including the counsellor's role and the police attitudes and reception of reports.

[Offerrådgivningen i Danmark](#) (OID) was taking part in meetings leading up to this and will be part of a group that will meet semi-annually to follow the implementation. Likewise, the police has started a specific group on their tasks, also inviting OID.

The rights policy-working group in OID has held separate meetings with the spokespersons on rights in 4 of the political parties and with others to come, as well as with the Minister of Justice and the chairman of the Rights Council, where issues pertaining to the Victims Directive were raised in different ways. Issues that we have focused on so far are on the counselor position, the rights to information including interpretation, the implication of reducing the education of the police and the OID's financial situation.

Lately, we held a planning meeting with a smaller team of 5 parties that had originally initiated the Victim Foundation, where speeding fines constitute a fund for activities and research relating to victims and from which OID receives funds for education, campaigns, some specified courses etc. but not for administration.

New projects approved by the Victims Fund 2016

We are happy that the Victims Fund has approved the 4 new following projects of OID for 2016: education in press and media training, upgrade of our intranet, management consulting for distressed (ailing) children and their parents and a nationwide cinema advertising about offering advice.

OID now has 36 trained Mentors

In a previous newsletter we presented our new Mentoring programme. We have just completed the last training of 15 Mentors, which means that we now have 36 Mentors.

The Mentors and victims are part of a process over time, where the Mentor helps the victims to get on with life and complement existing counselling with personal meetings, communication and contact with the victims' network.

We already have good experiences and are very pleased with the Mentoring.

Annual meeting

We look forward to our annual general meeting on 16th April – it is always pleasant to get together with our voluntary advisors.

Victim Support in Denmark / Offerraadgivningen in Denmark

Date: 8th March 2016



[Finland](#)

Rikosuhripäivystys Suomessa - Victim Support Finland

Implementation of the Directive in Finland

Over 10 laws were changed in early 2016 to implement the Victims Directive into Finnish legislation. The law changes focus on more information for victims, on the procedure for the individual evaluation to identify specific protection needs and on specific rights in the criminal proceedings such as audiovisual recording as evidence.

Also the resources of [Victim Support Finland](#) were almost doubled for the year 2016 in order to fulfil the requirements of articles 8 and 9 concerning general support services. Victim Support Finland is currently recruiting new staff and volunteers in its offices all over the country. It currently has 29 service points where victims can receive personal assistance. In addition, the services include a help line, a legal assistance help line, a chat service, an anonymous web based question & answer service and visiting services in police stations and shelters.

New project to support witnesses

Victim Support Finland has received funding from the national part of the EU Internal Security Fund (ISF) for a 2-year project to develop support to witnesses. Victim Support Finland has experience with witness support in 3 cities but now a support model in cooperation with different learning institutions will be developed in 5 new courts. Volunteers will be trained to become support persons in the courts and a plain language guide for the witnesses will be produced as part of the project. The project will start in April 2016.



[Ireland](#)

AdVIC - Advocates for Victims of Homicide

An Update on the Implementation of the Victims Directive in Ireland (by Maria McDonald BL)

On 27 January 2016, the EC opened infringement proceedings against 16 Member States, including Ireland, for non-communication on the Victims Directive (please see more information [here](#)). Ireland has not implemented legislation to give effect to the Directive, notwithstanding indications that the Criminal Justice (Victims of Crime) Bill 2015 (Criminal Justice Victims of Crime Bill 2015, General Scheme, 8th July 2015, please see [here](#)) would be published before Christmas 2015. In July 2015, Ireland published the Scheme of the Bill, but to date has failed to publish a Bill or implement legislation giving effect to the Directive.

Despite implementation of the Victims Directive on the 16 November 2015, not all victims are obtaining the information they are entitled to under the Directive. The Gardaí (Police) have prepared an information leaflet, but this is still not available to the Gardaí (Police) on the ground to provide to victims of crime. At the time of writing, we understand that the information leaflet is being translated and its publication is imminent.

The Director of Public Prosecutions [DPP] published a booklet on the Role of the DPP. Within that the DPP has imposed a 28 day time limit on victims to appeal a decision not to prosecute. The Booklet does state that “[i]n some cases the DPP may extend these time limits, but only if there is a good reason and it is in the interests of justice” (The Role of the DPP, para 17, pg 16, available [here](#)). This time period is extended to 56 days to persons who do not fall under the Directive [in advance of 16 November 2016].

The Directive is being used regularly before the Irish courts, particularly in relation to Article 10 of the right of the accused to be heard. The lack of legislation is causing some confusion particularly in relation to the extended use of Victim Impact Statements [Victims Personal Statements] before the courts.

It is hoped that a Bill will be published in the coming months around April/May. However, this may not be possible given the uncertainty surrounding the recent outcome of the Irish General Election. One can only hope that the forthcoming Minister for Justice and Equality will commit to and prioritise the Criminal Justice (Victims of Crime) Bill 2015 in the new programme for government so that victims have the full protection and supports afforded to them under the law.



Italy

Associazione LIBRA Onlus

LIBRA Association organized the international conference “*Alternative to imprisonment: Identification and Exchange of Good Practices*”, held in Milano from 11th to 12th of March 2016. It was organized as final event within the European Project “**Alternative to imprisonment: Identification and Exchange of Good Practices**”.

The event provided a space for reflection among professionals, Policy Makers and Authorities as well as Third Sector Organizations and Civil Society. Clearly the role of the victim in the process of the restorative justice was not forgotten. On the first day of the conference a specific session was related to “Probation: Victims and Society Safeguards”. But also the other sessions took in consideration the restorative justice process with a view on the Civil Society as a whole, and victims represent an actor of the community and of the crimes.

The EU project deliverables are a brochure and a guide. The brochure is already available on the website page of the project <http://www.associazionelibra.com/en/project/602/>, and the guide will be shortly available for download in Italian, English, Spanish and Bulgarian.

The working group of the project involves Associazione LIBRA Onlus (IT) as leader, SVCCC Foundation (BG), University of Tilburg (NL), Federación Andaluza ENLACE (ES) as co-

beneficiary and SLAM – NHS | South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (UK), University of Rijeka (HR), ACT | Associazione Carcere e Territorio di Brescia (IT), AIGA | Associazione Italiana Giovani Avvocati (IT), Provincia di Mantova (IT), Offender Supervision in Europe (IRLAND) and DAP Regione Lombardia (IT) as associate.



Spain

ANVDV

We would like to provide a short update on the everyday activities of our association (please see our [website](#)) and especially with regard to our dealings or relationships with victims. Our team of psychologists often receive requests for advice on how to give information about a violent death to relatives of the deceased; they especially ask how to inform minors who are very close to the direct victim. It is obvious that these kinds of questions could not be asked to the police or court personnel. The victims do not even dare to ask the victims' bureaucratic services. They are intimate issues that can only be disclosed in an empathetic environment, such as NGOs, volunteers or professionals. It is noteworthy that mostly women are concerned about these issues that are fundamental for us, because information expressed improperly can cause further damage to the victims. Of course psychologists advise that the "news" should be given to the closest relatives avoiding giving lurid details or victimizers, but offering them the truth, and preventing rumors or slanders from assaulting them through their classmates, the media and the internet. NGOs therefore cover real needs of the victims which cannot be covered by other services and this gives us strength.



[UK](#)

Victim Support England and Wales

Over the last couple of months we have increasingly seen the issue of support for victims of terrorism feature in policy discussions. Of particular interest is the draft EU Directive on Combatting Terrorism which the UK Government is currently considering the merits of opting into. As [Victim Support England and Wales](#) continues to support victims of the terrorist attacks in Tunisia and Paris, we know just how beneficial to victims the proposed provisions could be. To urge the Government to sign up to the proposed Directive and highlight the importance of immediate access to support for such individuals, Victim Support's Chief Executive, Mark Castle, recently wrote to the Security Minister John Hayes.

Aside from these developments, candidates for the upcoming police and crime commissioner elections on May 5 continue to be announced. We believe it is in the best interests of victims and witnesses that all PCC candidates are as well informed as possible about the wide range of issues which affect their experience of the criminal justice system. Mark Castle has therefore taken this valuable opportunity to write to all candidates highlighting the needs of victims and witnesses of crime and urging them to support the introduction of a Victims' Law that delivers tangible improvements.

For further information about the work of Victim Support or current policy developments relating to victims of crime in the UK, please contact the Victim Support Policy Team at policyteam@victimsupport.org.uk.



[UK](#)

VSE has a new associate member in the UK: Supporting Justice

[Supporting Justice](#) is a Community Interest Company; we work mainly in the criminal justice

arena specialising in issues affecting victims and witnesses and are currently working closely with the large UK charity Citizens Advice on the redesign of their Witness Service service, the development of internal and externally facing policy and procedures, and the design and delivery of training for their almost 2,500 volunteers delivering the service in all criminal courts in England and Wales. Supporting Justice has a simple and clear vision: to help make the justice and social sectors work more effectively for everyone. We offer guidance and advice to help achieve the best outcomes for those affected by crime and we believe that unless people understand how and why things are as they are, and unless a deep and strong focus on outcomes is developed and maintained, the criminal justice system will never deliver what it promises: transparency, fairness and justice. Supporting Justice brings unrivalled experience of the end to end victim and witness journey that includes the political, the policy and the operational environments. What makes us unique is that we have operated in the sector in a variety of senior and challenging roles for over twenty years. Everything we do is grounded in this real life experience that drives our ambition that improvement is both necessary and possible. This mix of ambition and realism can help organisations and agencies utilising our expertise, deliver better services for victims and witnesses and drive solutions that are pragmatic and impactful.

UPDATES ON ONGOING PROJECTS



[Seminar Infovictims | Innovation in promoting victims' rights - Porto, 7 April 2016](#)

APAV will be promoting **Seminar Infovictims: Innovation in promoting victims' rights**, taking place in **Porto**, on the **7th of April 2016**. This

Seminar is developed under ***Project Infovictims II*** (co-financed by the Criminal Justice Programme of the European Union), promoted by the Portuguese Association for Victim Support (APAV) in partnership with Victim Support Scotland (Scotland), Subvenia Victima (Poland), Weisser Ring Germany (Germany), Weisser Ring Austria (Austria), Victim Support Europe, Public Security Police (PSP) and the Directorate-General of Justice Administration (DGAJ).

We are living in a crosscutting moment in what concerns the rights and support to victims of crime. This paradigm shift, mostly in result of the EU Member States implementation of the Directive of the Parliament and of the Council establishing minimum standards on rights, support and protection of victims, brought additional challenges and an urgent need for (re) adaptations on both the criminal justice system and on victim support services.

At the same time, the growing importance of the information and communications technologies triggered the promotion of new victim support models. These new models are mainly focused on the search for innovative responses and services closer to victims, their families and friends.

What is the state of the art concerning victims' rights in Europe? Which are the most pressing challenges?

Which innovative ways are Member States drawing to improve the provision of information, support and manner of dealing with victims?

How to reach even more victims? Which new forms of providing information and support are raising in the field?

In **Seminar Infovictims | Innovation in promoting victims' rights** we will analyse the state of the art concerning victims' rights in Portugal and in Europe, as well as reflect on innovative aspects and effective ways of providing information, support and protection to victims of crime.

Don't miss the opportunity to visit beautiful Porto and come join us for the seminar! More information [here](#).



Implementing
victim-oriented reform of the criminal
justice system in the European Union



[Project IVOR | Policy Seminar | 14 January 2016](#)

The **Seminar IVOR: services that work for victims**, which took place in **Lisbon**, at the **Hotel Olissipo Marquês de Sá**, on the **14th of January 2016**, was the final seminar of **Project IVOR - Implementing victim-oriented reform of the criminal justice system in the European Union**, promoted by the **Portuguese Association for Victim Support**, co-financed by Criminal Justice Programme of the European Union and developed in partnership with the INTERVICT – University of Tilburg (The Netherlands), the University of Leuven (KU Leuven, Belgium) and Victim Support Europe.

The event counted with **153 participants** both Portuguese and from Europe-wide. Experts on victimology, criminal justice, EU law, practitioners and victim support workers came together and worked on identify measures, solutions and ready-to-use recommendations to foster the implementation of the Victims' Directive, drawn upon essential themes such as the participation of the victim in the criminal justice system, restorative justice and access to victim support services, amongst others.

During the Seminar there was also time for the presentation the **Project IVOR preliminary results on the implementation of the EU Directive** and for a fruitful debate on current state of play of victims' rights in Europe, along with thoughts and hope of what could be the future and the concrete reality of victims beyond November 16th 2015.

The Final Report of Project IVOR is about to be launched and just to unveil some of the results of this important project we might say that it made it

possible to develop the first preliminary analysis of victim assistance models throughout the EU Member States and the assessment of the social and juridical realities of victims' of crime in the different countries. A rich and analytical overview of the recent developments on the victim assistance models in the EU MS, with a particular focus on clusters of information such as the definition of victim, the victim support, restorative justice, victims resident in another EU MS, individual needs assessment and vulnerable groups, training and cooperation, was drawn in the Final Report.

Complementarily and through a revision of the existing victimological knowledge underlying the impact of the implementation of victims' rights on victims' needs and victims' experience and of the societal ecology of the position of victims, allowed a further understanding of the manner in which victim-oriented reform in the diverse countries in Europe could succeed, aligned with practical recommendations and measures to promote the transposal of the EU Directive 2012/29/EU establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime.

If you didn't have the chance to come to Lisbon for the Seminar, you may still access the presentations made by our invited speaker and have a glimpse of what the event was all about. Also, to have more information on the Project and its results, please have a look at the [IVOR's website](#).



[Project PROTEUS | Supporting Victims of Identity Theft and Identity Fraud](#)

For the past several years, identity theft and identity fraud have become more sophisticated and transnational crimes 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. Cybercrime victims are particularly unprotected and in urgent need of specialized and individualized support, support that the professionals involved are not yet prepared to give.

Focused on different countries (Portugal, Spain, Romania and Estonia) the recently ended **Project Proteus**, promoted by APAV and developed in partnership with the General Prosecutor's Office – Cybercrime Unit (Spain), the General Inspectorate of the Romanian Police (Romania), the Pärnu's Centre of Gender Based Violence (Estonia), the General Prosecutor's Office – Cybercrime Unit (Portugal) and the Judiciary Police (Portugal), aimed at raising awareness and promoting the prevention of identity theft and identity fraud, to help the targeted professionals to properly intervene in cases of identity theft and identity fraud, to promote and develop horizontal methods, tools and best practices to prevent identity theft and identity fraud and to promote and support the cooperation between relevant stakeholders on preventing identity theft and identity fraud.

The implementation of this project allowed us to develop a **best practice guide - Proteus Manual - Prevention, Information and Support to Victims of Online Identity Theft**, which portrays the main characteristics of the phenomenon, explains its national and international legal framework, besides establishing preventive measures and strategies to recovery after the crime. A **training manual – Prevention, Information and Support to Victims of Online Identity Theft – Training Manual**, was also developed. It comprises information and hints on how to organize a training course on online identity theft. You may find the Best Practice Guide (available in PT, EN, EE, ES and RO) on the following website: www.apav.pt/proteus

Another main result of Project Proteus was the **raising awareness campaign**, designed and developed by using several dissemination means, such as leaflets, posters, press ads in well-known magazines, bus ads, outdoors and a website, which provides relevant information about online identity theft and cybercrime targeting the general public

(available only in Portuguese) -
www.apav.pt/cibercrime.

A Final Seminar of the Project "**Seminar PROTEUS | Online identity theft: preventing, fighting and supporting victims**" took place in Lisbon, on the **29th and 30th of October 2015**, and constituted a groundbreaking time to debate cross cutting issues related with identity theft and its legal framework, modi operandi, investigation, international cooperation and support to victims. If you didn't have the possibility to attend, you may still hear our interesting speakers and access their presentation on the seminars' [website](#).

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[About Victim Support Europe](#)

Victim Support Europe is an umbrella organisation which currently consists of 41 national and regional victim support organisations in 26 countries.

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