

Victim Support Europe (VSE) Recommendations for Strengthening Victims' Rights in the Post-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)

Introduction

Victim Support Europe (VSE) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the European Commission's consultation on the post-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), and to provide with preliminary reactions and recommendations to the proposed Framework, as a follow up to the previously submitted pertinent [response](#)¹. As the EU prepares its next long-term budget, it must ensure that the protection and promotion of victims' rights are central to all funding priorities and programmes.

The next MFF should be a framework that invests not only in growth and innovation but also in **justice, safety, well-being, empowerment, solidarity, and human dignity**. A strong victims' rights dimension across all EU funding instruments is essential to achieving a Union that truly leaves no one behind.

To meet victims' needs, the new MFF should be guided by the following goals:

1. Facilitate the implementation of victims' laws and promote the strengthening of victims' rights.
2. Mainstream victims' rights by enhancing multi-sectoral engagement and coordination across justice, health, education, and social policy.
3. Amplify victims' voices and engagement while fostering a culture of respect, recognition, and solidarity with victims.
4. Maximise access to high-quality support for all victims, regardless of crime type or personal circumstance.
5. Pursue victims' issues and victim-centred solutions in the wider world.
6. Build individual resilience frameworks and strengthen responses to terrorism and mass victimisation.

Mainstreaming Victims' Rights Across EU Policies and Programmes

The new MFF should embed victims' rights as cross-cutting priorities in all relevant EU policies and programmes. This means integrating a *Victim Angle* across all funding instruments, ensuring that victims' needs and perspectives are considered at every stage — from programming and budgeting to implementation and evaluation.

To safeguard victims' rights and prevent exclusion or discrimination, the MFF Regulation should include **horizontal and thematic enabling conditions** applicable across all sectors. Funding frameworks should promote trauma-informed, victim-centred, and empathy-based approaches, ensuring that every EU investment contributes to a culture of respect, dignity, and justice.

Strengthening Implementation and Coordination of Victims' Legislation

The MFF should support the **effective implementation of the revised Victims' Rights Directive** and reinforce national coordination mechanisms. Dedicated funding is needed to translate EU legislation into meaningful, practical outcomes for victims across all Member States.

¹ <https://victim-support.eu/publications/contribution-to-the-multiannual-financial-framework-mff-2027-2033/>

Future financial programmes should also be aligned with other key EU strategies, including the **Anti-Racism Action Plan**, **LGBTIQ+ Equality Strategy**, **Anti-Trafficking Strategy**, and the upcoming **Victims' Rights Strategy**, to ensure coherence and complementarity. Such alignment would enable more efficient use of resources and more consistent protection of victims' rights across the Union.

A Whole-Society Early Intervention, and Prevention-Oriented Approach

Preventing victimisation and supporting recovery requires a **whole-of-society effort**. The MFF should invest in systems that engage families, schools, workplaces, and communities in building safer environments and preventing both primary and secondary victimisation.

This includes funding for trauma-informed education and awareness initiatives, promoting empathy, non-violent communication, and resilience. A prevention-oriented MFF should also invest in early intervention, family and school-based initiatives, and community networks that, e.g., help prevent **adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)** and strengthen social cohesion and build resilience.

Sustainable Funding for Victim Support Services

Stable and predictable funding for victim support services is essential to ensure that all victims in Europe can access help when they need it. The MFF should provide **sustainable resources** for specialised services such as multidisciplinary support centres, 116 006 helplines, shelters, and national victim support organisations.

To ensure consistency and accountability, the EU should promote coordinated national frameworks aligned with the revised Victims' Rights Directive and introduce **EU-wide minimum quality standards** and monitoring mechanisms. Funding programmes should encourage the establishment of integrated support systems, ensuring that every victim, regardless of location, can rely on quality and timely assistance.

Investing in Education, Mental Health, and Resilience

Investments in education and mental health are vital to breaking cycles of trauma and building long-term resilience. The MFF should support **trauma-informed principled mental health programmes** that enable schools to identify and respond to victimisation, strengthen coping skills, and promote recovery.

Empathy, emotional literacy, and online safety should be integrated into educational curricula, while access to psychosocial and psychological assistance must be expanded through community-based services. Such investments will not only prevent victimisation but also reinforce resilience within families and communities.

Empowering Civil Society and Victims' Participation

Civil society organisations play a critical role in implementing EU priorities and bridging the gap between victims and institutions. The next MFF should therefore **empower victim-focused NGOs and community-based organisations** through simplified access to funding, reduced co-financing requirements, and enhanced technical support.

Moreover, meaningful participation of victims and CSOs must be built into the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of EU-funded programmes. Establishing **transparent and structured participation mechanisms** from the outset will help ensure that funding truly reflects victims' lived experiences and needs.

Addressing Inequalities and Protecting Vulnerable Victims

EU funding must ensure that victims' rights are equally upheld across all Member States. The MFF should allocate targeted resources to support groups at greater risk of human rights violations — including children, women, migrants, victims of hate crime, trafficking, and gender-based violence.

Programmes should promote inclusive and intersectional approaches, ensuring that support services are accessible and tailored to the specific realities of each victim group. By doing so, the EU can reduce disparities in access to justice and protection, and promote equality across all Member States.

Conclusion

The post-2027 MFF presents a unique opportunity to make the European Union a global leader in victims' rights protection. By integrating a **victims' rights and protection target** across all funding instruments, the EU can strengthen social justice, build trust in its institutions, and ensure that every victim in Europe receives the compassion, recognition, and support they deserve.

A Europe that invests in its victims is a Europe that invests in its values.

About Victim Support Europe

Victim Support Europe (VSE) is the leading European umbrella organisation advocating on behalf of all victims of crime, no matter what the crime, no matter who the victim is. VSE represents around 80 member organisations in 36 countries, providing support to around 3 million people affected by crime every year. Founded in 1990, VSE has been working for 35 years for a Europe, and a world, where all victims have strong victims' rights and services, whether they report the crime or not. We work towards this mission through advocacy to improve European and International laws, through research and knowledge development and through capacity building at national and local level.

Annex-Recommendations

Key Recommendations

1. Mainstream Victims' Rights Across All Policy Sectors and Strategies

- Embed victims' rights as cross-cutting priorities in all relevant EU policies, particularly in the implementation of the **Victims' Rights Strategy**.
- Ensure that the MFF Regulation includes **horizontal and thematic enabling conditions** to safeguard victims' rights and prevent exclusion and discrimination.
- Integrate **trauma-informed, victim-centred, and empathy-based approaches** across all funding strands.

2. Strengthen Implementation and Coordination of EU Victims' Legislation

- Allocate dedicated funding to support the **effective implementation of the revised Victims' Rights Directive** and national coordination mechanisms.
- Ensure that investments align with the **EU's strategic frameworks**, including the **Anti-Racism Action Plan, LGBTIQ+ Equality Strategy, Anti-Trafficking Strategy**, and other human rights initiatives.
- Prioritise funding for **monitoring, evaluation, and knowledge exchange** to enhance the quality and consistency of victims' services across Member States.

3. Adopt a Whole-Society and Prevention-Oriented Approach

- Promote **whole-society support systems** that involve families, schools, communities, and digital platforms in preventing early victimisation and secondary trauma.
- Introduce a **Victim Angle approach** across all funding instruments to ensure that victims' needs are considered at every stage of programming, budgeting, and implementation.
- Require trauma-informed, victim-centric methodologies in all EU-funded projects.

4. Prioritise Sustainable Funding for Victim Support Services

- Ensure **sustainable MFF funding** for specialised victim support services in every Member State, including multidimensional support centres, 116 006 helplines, and shelters.
- Promote coordinated national frameworks for all victims, aligned with the revised Victims' Rights Directive.
- Introduce **EU-wide minimum quality standards** and monitoring mechanisms to guarantee access, consistency, and accountability.

5. Invest in Education, Mental Health, and Resilience

- Fund **trauma-informed education** and **mental health programmes** to help schools identify and respond to child victimisation.
- Integrate empathy, resilience, non-violent communication, and online safety into education systems.
- Support community-based psychosocial and psychological assistance for children and families, focusing on preventing **Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)** and building resilience.

6. Empower Civil Society and Amplify Victims' Participation

- Ensure **meaningful participation** of civil society organisations (CSOs) and victims in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of EU-funded programmes.
- Establish **robust and transparent participation mechanisms** within all relevant financial instruments.
- Simplify access to EU funds for victim-focused NGOs, including **reduced co-financing requirements** and enhanced technical support.
- Provide **capacity-building** to Member States and CSOs to strengthen the design, delivery, and evaluation of victim-oriented investments.

7. Address Inequalities and Protect Vulnerable Victims

- Allocate targeted resources to ensure that victims' rights are equally upheld across all Member States.
- Pay particular attention to groups at **greater risk of human rights violations** — such as children, women, migrants, victims of hate crime, trafficking, and gender-based violence.
- Support tailored, inclusive, and intersectional responses to ensure their rights are realised in practice.