

Dear Member of the European Parliament,

**In these unprecedented times, we need your support to ensure that all victims of crime are protected and supported across Europe. Every year more than 75 million EU citizens fall victims of crime and millions more still suffer from past crimes. With countries in lockdown, we have seen significant rises in domestic violence and online crime. With the shadow of economic crisis and unemployment looming, we are also likely to see rises in general crime.**

Despite wide ranging EU legislation, a large number of Member States are still **failing to support and protect victims of crime in the EU. The cost to society and to our economies of these failures is enormous.**

The European Parliament has a crucial role to play in defending victims' rights; standing up for all victims. Despite a highly packed agenda, **victims' rights must not be forgotten** as they are a critical part of the solution.

We call on you to support and raise the following key priorities in your work as Member of the European Parliament:

- **All victims of crime** should benefit from EU actions and policies, this includes the most vulnerable, specific groups of victims who may not be regarded as vulnerable, and all victims as a whole. No victims should be forgotten in EU action;
- **All existing EU legislation related to victims should be fully implemented in practice**, in particular the Victims' Rights Directive, the Compensation Directive and the EU Strategy for Victims' Rights;
- **Comprehensive systems of support**: the EU must act to ensure that in every Member State victim support services exist across those countries, that they operate effectively and that the public and victims are informed of these services and have easy access to them, including via the establishment and funding of the European helpline for victims of crime 116 006 in all EU Member States;
- **Access to safe justice and compensation**: the EU must act to ensure that victims are supported in seeking justice, are properly protected in the system and that compensation schemes are accessible and victim friendly.
- A **fully inclusive approach** to ensure civil society and State actors are part of the solution and **cooperation between them** is supported;
- **Funding mechanisms** should be adjusted to cover victims' issues in all EU policies. This should be considered as a priority within the multiannual financial framework;
- **Research and training** to better cover victim priorities in order to ensure a better understanding of problems and gaps, evaluation activities, develop innovative solutions and carry out longitudinal studies.

### How can you support?

- Actively call for and support the creation of an **inter-group on victims' rights** that will mainstream victims' rights and assess the impact of legislative and non-legislative work on all victims of crime;
- Call for more **research and policy work in the victims' field**, such as the research carried out by VSE for the LIBE Committee on [\*How can the EU and the Member States better help the victims of terrorism\*](#) in 2017;
- Present **parliamentary questions** to the Commission and Council on concrete actions for the full and effective implementation of the EU Victims' Rights Directive, the establishment and funding of 116 006 helplines for victims of crime, or on the existence of generic and specialist victim support services in all EU countries;
- Call for the set-up of a **pilot funding program** to establish and run 116 006 helplines for victims of crime in all EU Member States.

How victims are supported and empowered today will be of decisive importance for their lives and for the whole of society – now and in the future. Therefore, the right investment in victims' rights and support services is the best way to ensure a high return for society and to overcome social and economic inequalities in the long-term. EU policies, legislation and funding must promote a positive, immediate and lasting impact on victims' rights and well-being.

If you have questions about victims' rights or feel that you need more information, please do not hesitate to contact Victim Support Europe: [info@victimsupporteurope.eu](mailto:info@victimsupporteurope.eu).

Sincerely yours,