

## INTERNATIONAL LABS

### THE VICTIMS' RIGHTS DIRECTIVE:

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR LITIGATING THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

🕒 **When:** Friday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2025, 10am – 1pm (CEST)

📍 **Where:** Online (link received upon [registration](#))

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#### 📁 Background

The EU-funded LITI-GATE project – *Strategic Litigation as a Gateway to address the rights of Persons with Disabilities in the European Union* – is coordinated by Victim Support Europe (VSE) and implemented over a period of 2 years until 31 October 2025. It brings together 6 partner organisations from 5 countries with the aim to promote enforcement of European law with strategic litigation activities to address breaches of the fundamental rights of persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities.

The main rationale for the project stems from the evident **limited use of strategic litigation for the protection and advancement of the rights of persons with disabilities** at both national and European level. The objective of the project is indeed to **mainstream the rights of persons with disabilities** through existing European legislation, including the EU Charter, the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and other directives in areas including victim's rights, the rights of adult suspect or accused in criminal proceedings, cross border administration of evidence in civil and criminal proceedings, conditions of detention of migrants, suspects or accused of crime with disabilities and cross border movement of people with disabilities. The possibilities to litigate disability rights through the above-mentioned legislation are broad and varied, so the project works on the assumption that such opportunities are generally not seized by legal professionals because **they are not known, not seen as relevant or seen as complicated to pursue**.

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#### 💡 Concept of the webinar

Across the European Union, persons with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities continue to face **significant barriers in accessing justice**, despite the guarantees set out in **the Victims' Rights Directive and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights**. These barriers are not only procedural and structural but also deeply rooted in stigma, lack of awareness, and insufficient accommodations in legal proceedings. As the Directive undergoes a major recast, there is the urgency to seize the new opportunities that the revised framework more effectively addresses when it comes to the needs of vulnerable groups, including **persons with disabilities**.

This webinar brings together legal experts, policy professionals, victim support organisations and individuals with lived experience to explore how strategic litigation—grounded in a human rights-based approach—can serve as a catalyst for systemic change. From understanding the evolving legal landscape and crafting compelling arguments to highlighting personal narratives of resilience and exclusion, this session offers rich food for thought for anyone seeking to **use the law as a tool for justice and inclusion**.

## Draft Agenda

### 10.00 - 10.15 - Welcome

- Introduction
- Learning objectives

*Speaker: Aleksandra Ivankovic, Deputy Director at VSE*

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### 10.15 - 10.35 - The Victim's Rights - challenges & opportunities from the point of view of the VRD and VAW

- Major changes to be expected in the Directive's recast
- Relevant provisions for vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities

*Speaker: Efthymis Antonopoulos, Junior Policy Manager at VSE*

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### 10.35 - 11.05 - The Human Rights-based Approach

- What is the human rights-based approach and how it can be used to advance victim's rights
- EU Charter – victims' guarantees for fair trial
- How can it successfully complement litigation arguments

*Speaker: Matylda Pogorzelska, Project Officer at Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA)*

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### 11.05 - 11.20 - Coffee Break

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### 11.20 - 11.50 - Strategic Litigation in practice

- Tips on how to identify a winning case
- Strategies on how to develop a winning argument

*Speaker: Maros Matiasco, Human Rights Lawyer & Director at Forum for Human Rights)*

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### 11.50 - 12.20 - Lived experiences

- Barriers faced by persons with disabilities
- Struggles and successes
- Accessibility and accommodations
- The way forward

*Speakers: Ana Kotur-Erkić, Victim's Rights Advocate and Independent Human Rights Lawyer; Thalín Zarmanian, Victim's Rights Advocate and Criminal Law Litigation Expert*

## Draft Agenda

### 12.20 - 12.50 - Q&A

- Procedural accommodations
- Discrimination
- Access to Justice

*Panelists:* Maros Martiasko, Matylda Pogotzelska, Ana Kotur-Erkić & Thalín Zarmanian

*Moderated by:* Aleksandra Ivankovic, Deputy Director at VSE

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### 12.50 - 13.00 - Conclusion

*Speaker:* Aleksandra Ivankovic, Deputy Director at VSE

## SAVE THE DATE FOR UPCOMING WEBINARS



**Friday 20th June 2025, 10.00 - 13.00 (CEST)**

ENIL: Procedural Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities engaged with Litigation



[For more information click here.](#)



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**Friday 27 June 2025, 10.00 - 13.00 (CEST)**

Validity: Strategic Litigation under the EU Charter



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