

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

14 June 2019 (9:00 – 13:00)

Held at Centre Administratif – Vile et Eurométropole de Strasbourg
67000 Strasbourg, France

KEY		
João Lázaro	JL	President
Helgard van Hüllen	HVH	Vice President
Richard Olszewski	RO	Vice President
Levent Altan	LA	Executive Director
Geraldine Hanna	GH	Treasurer
Gabor Veisz	GV	Executive Board Member
Aleksandra Ivankovic	AI	Deputy Director
Ruth Shrimpling	LS	Policy Officer
Léa Meindre-Chautrand	LMC	Policy Officer
Marina Kazakova	MK	Communications Officer

1. President's Welcome Speech

President JL welcomes all those present for the Annual General Meeting and thanks the VSE TEAM for organizing the annual conference which took place on June 12-13, 2019. JL gives the floor to LA.

2. Minutes

LA greets everyone present and asks to look at the minutes of the last General Meeting dated 11 December 2018 in Brussels. LA goes through the minutes and they are approved unanimously with no corrections. LA hands over to JL who is going to provide an overview of VSE's main 2018 activities.

3. VSE Management Team Report

3.1. Annual Report – Achievements in 2018

JL introduces the expanded board: Helgard van Hüllen (Vice President), Richard Olszewski (Vice President), Geraldine Hanna (Treasurer), Leena Kaisa Åberg (Executive Board Member),

Livija Plančić (Executive Board Member), Olga Kostina (Executive Board Member), and Tobias Koertner (Executive Board Member). JL welcomes new members of the VSE Brussels office team and the team introduces itself. VSE has recently moved to a more functional office in the European Quarter of Brussels.

In 2018, VSE continued working on creating synergies with European and global organisations, including new connections with DG Home, supporting the European Commission and European Parliament, organising the regional exchange for the Balkans in Croatia, and a staff exchange between member organisations in Portugal and Northern Ireland. JL summarises other partnerships with NGOs and the private sector. GV provides an overview of the key figures. This year, VSE produced 26 reports, 96 web-articles, and 4 newsletters with 4800 subscribers. VSE also held many events, including the VSE Annual International Conference, VSE Annual Autumn Conference, three Centres of Excellence meetings, numerous workshops and trainings, as well as three social media campaigns. Four new members joined VSE in 2018, bringing the organisation to the total of **54 members from 29 countries**.

3.2. Financial Report and Approval of Annual Accounts

GH introduces the 2018 financial report, pointing out that VSE has increased its income over the past year, allowing for new projects and an expanded staff. GH calls a vote to approve the financial report. With 13 full members present, the report is approved (13 votes in favour). GH introduces the external audit report and reminds those present that the updated report is now published and available online. A vote is called on the audit report. The vote passes with 13 votes in favour and the report is approved.

4. Presentation of New Members

RS welcomes the new members. One of them is NATAL – Israel Trauma Center for Victims of Terror and War. A video presentation from NATAL is shown. Another new member is an individual associate member Olivier Laurence from Belgium who works for the Belgian Ministry of Justice and is the head of the Victims of Terrorism Compensation Unit. A video presentation from Olivier Laurence is shown.

5. Overview of VSE's 2019 Activities

LA provides an overview of VSE's activities planned for 2019, pointing out the need to influence the new MEPs and Commission and be proactive rather than reactive. The thematic priorities for the year can be found in the table below.

Thematic Priorities for the Year

Cybercrime	Ongoing priority - we will next produce an international strategy to guide our actions, and will re-engage with social media to develop training relevant to your needs.
Terrorism	We will strengthen our response network, continue engagements with world experts, publish guidance and participate in new counter terrorism projects
Hate crime	New focus on hate crimes. We will start with understanding better victims issues and the needs of members
Enforcement of rights	Making rights a reality: we will publicise findings on the implementation of the Victims' Rights Directive, press for implementation by States and will develop a clearer vision on what should constitute national victim services
Influencing the next 5 years: new Commission and Parliament	We will develop materials to engage potential MEPs and will develop specific calls for the new Commission and Parliament (e.g. Compensation, Helplines across Europe)

6. Capacity Building Activities

AI presents VSE's capacity building activities carried out in 2018. The two Centres of Excellence on distance support and the 116006 helpline have been merged into one single Centre of Excellence in order to enable a broader approach to all forms of distance support. AI outlines the plans for the online meetings and a workshop which will be held in 2019.

7. Regional and National Coordination

AI reviews the national and regional events which have already taken place in 2019. One of them was the Regional event which took place in Zagreb and welcomed participants from eight South-East EU Member States. The second National meeting was organised in partnership with Bijeli Krug for Croatian organisations including NGOs and State authorities. LA adds that VSE aims to establish a larger dialogue among the Member organisations.

8. Standards and Accreditation

LA introduces VSE's first accreditation of the full member Bijeli Krug in Croatia, which took place in December 2018. In 2019, VSE will continue its accreditation process with France Victimes and Slachtofferhulp Nederlands. VSE aims to accredit two members per year.

9. VSE Training

RS talks about the development of VSE's training capabilities. One innovation this year has been the partnership with Victim Support Asia and Korean Police which resulted in a three-day training programme for the Korean delegation on European best practices in supporting victims of crime. Another training is in the preparatory phase. VSE is working on establishing a capacity-building workshop for its Member organisations on the topic of online hate speech. The campaign "Crime is Crime. Even Online." will later be developed into a workshop and made available for the members.

10. Policy Papers and Reports

RS provides an overview of the policy papers and reports written by VSE, including the report on challenges and best practices in national compensation schemes. LMC speaks about VSE's work on terrorism, including a report and a guidance document on remembering of victims of terrorism. LA calls for members to coordinate their efforts in this field.

11. VSE's Work with Others

LA summarises VSE's continuous extensive engagement with various institutions and organisations.

11.1. Working with EU Institutions

With 2019 being the EU election year, VSE coordinated its advocacy plans in advance, conducting a pre-election campaign to promote the VSE Election Manifesto to ensure an agenda for victims' rights in Europe. VSE has also strengthened its relationship with the Council of Europe.

11.2. International Engagements

LA speaks about VSE's work on the international arena, including strong collaborations with the World Bank and the UN. In 2019, VSE will continue to promote knowledge exchange and help strengthen services for victims around the world.

11.3. Work with Victim Support Asia

LA presents the establishment of Victim Support Asia, which took place in 2018 and was assisted by VSE. In just over six months, VSA has eighteen members. In March 2019, the President of Victim Support Europe João Lázaro and the Executive Director Levent Altan attended the 1st International Conference for Victim Support Asia. LA expresses a strong belief that VSA will enable a creation of a new approach for victims of crime in Asia.

11.4. Work with the UN

LA speaks about VSE's efforts to increase work with the UN Victims Advocate, the UNODC and the UN's Counter Terrorism office to promote rights for all victims and to support policies for victims of terrorism.

11.5. Terrorism

LA introduces VSE's extensive work in supporting victims of terrorism as well as its cooperation with other organisations which provide support. In June 2019, a Symposium focusing on international cooperation in providing better support for victims of terrorism was held in Strasbourg. In 2019, VSE has responded to various terrorist attacks and incidents, including the Utrecht shooting, the Christchurch mosque shooting, the Sri Lanka attacks, and the boat tragedy in Budapest, Hungary.

11.6. Collaboration with other NGOs and sectors

LA speaks about VSE's collaboration with NGOs, pointing out the regular partnerships with the Age Platform, Ilga Europe, Social Platform, Women's Lobby, FRA, and Inclusion Europe. VSE is also cooperating with the private sector, planning to launch a new campaign-in-collaboration with Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube on cybercrime and hate crime. Finally, VSE has established a sponsoring partnership with two international law firms: DLA Piper and Osborne Clarke.

12. Communications and Events

MK presents the efforts taken by VSE in its internal and external communications as well as event organisation. The new website for VSE is currently being developed and will include more guidance information for victims and an improved membership registration procedure. The interactive online map with 54 member organisations is already available.

12.1. Intranet

In 2019, the new Intranet was developed for VSE's internal communications. It contains information about VSE and its activities and provides an efficient way to get updates on the organisation's news, events, and publications. MK demonstrates to everyone present how the Intranet looks and functions.

12.2. Campaigns

MK provides an overview of VSE's social media campaigns, including the #EuropeanDayForVictimsofCrime campaign in February 2019, one-day campaigns honouring victims of terrorism in March 2019, and the pre-EU elections campaign. MK also advertises the new campaign "Crime is Crime. Even Online" which is coming up in the near future.

12.3. VSE Autumn Conference

MK announces that VSE will organise its next Autumn event at the Permanent Portuguese Representation to the EU. The theme of this year's event will be dedicated to hate crime, one of VSE's 2019 priorities.

13. Projects

AI outlines the projects VSE has been engaged in in 2018 and 2019. VOciare project is now in its final stages and VSE is going to coordinate with its members the dissemination of the important findings of this massive work. Project VICATIS (Victim-centred Approach to Improving Support Services), which was coordinated by the Croatian Law Centre, has been successfully concluded. Together with EIPA, V-Europe, and other partners, VSE is working on a contract for the European Commission to support MME Milquet in her report on compensation for victims of crime. Project VICTORIA, which had slowed down in 2018 due to administrative issues, has been reactivated, and the majority of the work will take place in 2019. Finally, VSE is partnering with the Maltese government in a new hate crime-related project. AI points out the importance of maintaining a strategic approach to projects in order to assure high-quality cooperation and make the results of the projects VSE engages in useful for its members and other partners.

14. Future Plans

LA speaks about VSE's plans for the future, including the 5-year strategy, VSE's work on the future of compensation, and the European Commission's 5-year work programme and financial framework. Additionally, LA announces that VSE's 30th anniversary is going to be celebrated next year – On 12th-15th of May, 2020. The reservation for the location in Berlin has been made by

Weisser Ring Germany. VSE is going to begin the preparations in 2019. LA also mentioned that there will be a focus on influencing the new EU commissioners and highlights the need for a push for greater funding of programs as well as a push for victims' to be a focus of EU politicians.

15. Concluding Remarks

HVH concludes the Annual General Meeting by thanking everyone present for their work. She stresses that VSE remains highly committed and ambitious in its activities and plans for 2019 and beyond. While expanding quickly has been good for VSE, it also poses challenges, particularly, in communication with the members, therefore, VSE is going to dedicate more resources to improve its communication mechanisms. HVH thanks everyone once again for their support and looks forward to seeing everyone in Berlin in 2020.