



SAFE JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS:
Transforming Justice Systems/Future Trends

VSE Autumn Conference 2021

ONLINE 3 December | Live in Central European Time

VSE Autumn Conference 2021 Feedback Report

VSE's Autumn Conference entitled "Safe Justice for Victims: Transforming Justice Systems/Future Trends" was organised and planned as an in-person event in Belgium, however, due to the deteriorating COVID-19 situation, the event was held online on December 3rd, 2021.

The event was held on Zoom and was free for all to attend. While VSE was saddened to make this decision, it also readily accepted the challenge to transfer the conference online and welcome everyone – including those who would not have been able to attend in person – in a virtual setting. The VSE team is grateful for everyone's understanding and active participation in the conference as well as to the speakers' flexibility and commitment to make this conference a valuable event.

The conference was attended by 103 people, hosted more than twenty speakers from diverse fields and consisted of four main content parts:

1. Safe reporting as the first step in seeking justice
2. Modern solutions to effectively support victims in criminal proceedings (in two parts)
3. Collaborative working to achieve better justice for victims
4. What can we do to make the criminal justice system work better? (live debate)

Additionally, on the eve of the conference, on December 2nd, a Safe justice workshop was held by VSE for its members which enabled a lively exchange of challenges and solutions with regard to victims' experiences and access to safe justice.

During and after the conference, participants were asked to fill out a short feedback form to share their thoughts on the conference as well as on the safe justice workshop. The feedback

form was shared as a QR code and as a link in the Zoom chat and on VSE’s communication channels. The survey received 18 responses. Interestingly, even though the Autumn Conference is mostly tailored towards VSE members, 61% of respondents indicated they were not VSE members. This can likely be explained by the shift to the online format.

The feedback received from the participants of the Autumn Conference was overwhelmingly positive. 94.4% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “The conference was well organised”. The strongest agreement was displayed with the statement “The content was interesting to me” (77.7% strongly agree and additional 16.6% agree) and with the statement “The online platform worked well for the conference’s purposes”. While still largely positive, the agreement was a little weaker with the statement “Participation and interaction were encouraged” (44.4% strongly agree and additional 38.8% agree), which can be explained by the last-minute adjustments necessary to shift the event online. Time management was rated highly by the participants.

When asked to rate the four individual content parts of the conference, participants responded overwhelmingly positively, being either satisfied or extremely satisfied with the content of the sessions (see, for instance, Figures 1 and 2 on satisfaction with Part 2 and Part 3, respectively).

Part 2: Modern solutions to effectively support victims in criminal proceedings (before lunch)
18 responses

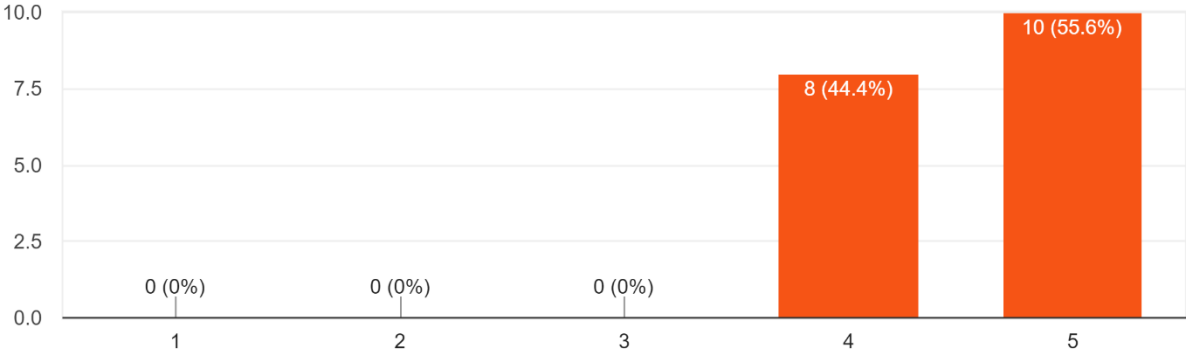


Figure 1: Session satisfaction, Part 2

Part 3: Collaborative working to achieve better justice for victims

17 responses

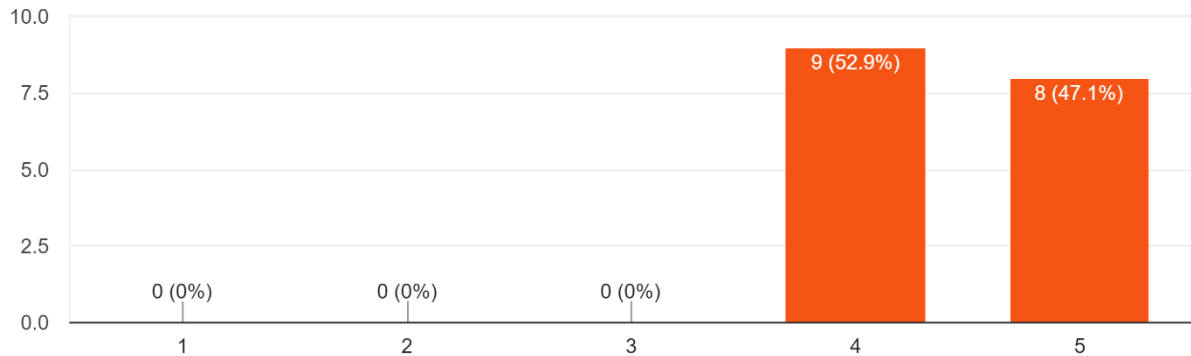


Figure 2: Session satisfaction, Part 3

Further, participants enjoyed the range of topics and the quality of the speakers presented to them during the conference. Notably, the victim testimonies were very well received and yielded many comments from the participants appreciating being able to hear from the victims themselves.

When asked which aspects of the conference they enjoyed the most, in addition to victim testimonies, participants highlighted the relevance of the content to any organisation coming in contact with victims of crime, the overall approach to the conference, and the ability to “attend smoothly online when everything changed just few days before the conference”. While participants were largely satisfied with the event overall, some wished for more interaction and networking opportunities, as exemplified by the quote below:

Breakout' type rooms during breaks could give people the opportunity to network. This could be done an hour before the conference is due to start and over lunch - people can chat over a coffee or lunch. It was really the one thing missing but VSE did so well in pulling things online in such a short space of time.

Participants were also asked to rate the Safe justice workshop if they attended it. Of those who filled out the feedback form, five people attended the workshop. The respondents rated the workshop very highly as a whole (see Figure 3). More specifically, participants enjoyed the format of the workshop and the level of interaction it produced. Answering the question “What did you like most about the workshop”, one participant wrote:

Hearing the different views from all participants. I like the fact the hosts moved breakout rooms rather than the other way around. I liked the fact that as you changed topic you were building on what the previous group had come up with, so there was little repetition of points. I will use this in our own meetings/training!

How would you rate the workshop as a whole?
5 responses

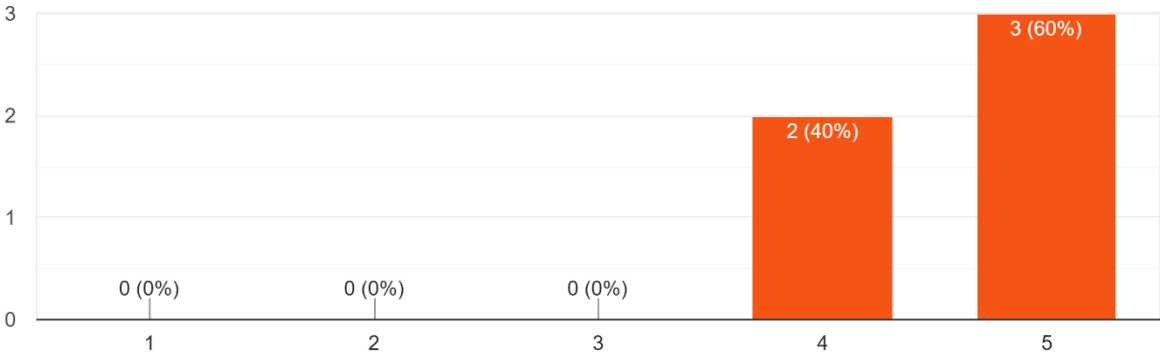


Figure 3: Safe justice workshop overall satisfaction

Finally, conference participants expressed gratitude to the VSE team for organising the events, praising the “very impactful presentations”, the “variety of presentations”, “victim testimonies”, and the “music during the breaks”. Overall, the conference can be considered a success and a celebration of the victim support family and its resilience in the face of challenges.

You can rewatch the conference again on [VSE’s YouTube channel](#).