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**BRIDGING
HIGH-TECH
AND
VICTIM SUPPORT
SERVICES**

Victim Support Europe
Annual Conference 2020
ONLINE 19 November

VSE Annual Conference Evaluation Report

On November 19th, 2020, VSE held its first-ever online conference. The event was themed around bridging high-tech and victim support services. The conference was attended by nearly 300 participants who enjoyed presentations, discussions, and side events with 36 speakers in various sessions over the course of the day. VSE's team worked tirelessly to ensure the event ran smoothly and offered a diverse selection of topics, approaches, and areas of intervention where technology can be used to improve victims' experiences and lives from the moment they become a victim of crime until the last stages of recovery and beyond.

A survey was sent out to participants asking them to evaluate the different aspects of the conference, and the speakers also provided their input. The conference received overwhelmingly positive feedback both from the participants and from the speakers. 85% of survey respondents said the conference was well-organised (Agree or Strongly agree), and 85% found the content interesting to them. 90% of respondents said the speakers were knowledgeable and presented professionally, while 70% believe the information they have learned at the conference will be useful in their work.

Katarzyna Janicka-Pawłowska, the EC Coordinator for victims' rights, who opened the conference, stated that the conference was motivating and inspirational, as well as gave a good overview of what is possible if we bring new technologies to the application of victims' rights. Dan Klein, who spoke at the conference as a representative of the Security

and Crisis Centre by the European Jewish Congress, thanked VSE team for organising such a high standard and very interesting event.

With regard to time management, there were both positive and negative aspects. While the absolute majority of respondents (85%) agreed that overall time management during the conference was good, some felt that the breaks were not enough. Specifically, 20% felt they were not enough, 15% said they felt neutral, and the remaining 65% of respondents still found the pauses between different sections sufficient.

When asked what they liked most about the conference, many participants noted the quality, depth, and diversity of speakers and topics addressed. Additionally, participants commended the amount of international speakers and organisations as well as the overall organisation of the event. Finally, participants were impressed by all the new technologies being developed in the intersection of the fields of high-tech and victim support, with particular attention paid to VR-related technology. The speakers shared similar testaments, and many expressed their wish to participate in VSE events in the future and to continue sharing perspectives and knowledge with each other, as pointed out by Eduardo Mateo Santamaría from the Fundación Fernando Buesa Blanco, Gigi Guizzo from CEPS Projectes Socials, and Danny Nachmuly from Octopus Systems, among others.

With regard to aspects of the conference which could be improved, a very large portion of the feedback had to do with technical issues such as Internet connectivity and quality. Equally, many participants pointed out that it was difficult to remain focused and absorb so much information in such a short period of time and suggested that having another break between sessions would have been helpful. Finally, some participants expressed their desire for more interactivity, including more tools for asking questions and discussing topics of interest with each other. These suggestions will be taken into account and implemented in VSE's future events.

Overall, the participants and the speakers expressed their gratitude for organising a conference of such a large scale "during this difficult period", thanked the team and each other for interesting presentations, inspiring organisation, as well as "being lovely, warm and friendly", as Jennifer Davidson, the Executive Director of Inspiring Children's Futures put it, and expressed their hope to meet again in the future.

The VSE team extends its deepest gratitude to all speakers and participants without whom this event would not have been possible, and we hope to see you again soon!