



Victim Support Europe

The EU:

**A Comprehensive
System for Victims?**

Let's start with a 'simple' question:

**HOW WELL ARE WE DOING FOR VICTIMS
ACROSS THE EU?**

VSE RESEARCH

- **Aim** – to support the EU, States, NGOs, and Victims to implement rights and services established under EU Victims Directive
- 2 years, 26 Member States, National researchers, all substantive articles
- Practical implementation, indicators to determine implementation requirements
- Desk research, +/- 800 survey respondents, 130+ interviews

SIGNIFICANT LACK OF DATA

- within proceedings (police, prosecution, courts)
- Lack of bespoke first hand, large scale data collection e.g. surveys of victims

PRIORITISE DATA COLLECTION

- States: consistent, regular data collection exercises
- EU – COM, Eurostat, FRA, EIGE must support this process
- Disaggregated, on specific groups, on all victims across different themes



OVERVIEW OF RESULTS

There has been good progress - but inconsistent across issues and Member States

Overall the results are sobering:

- **None of the Articles of the Directive are fully and satisfactorily implemented for all victims across the EU.**
- **Neither is there a single country that offers full implementation of the entirety of the Directive to all victims on their territory.**
- **There remains plenty to be done to make victims' rights a reality for all European victims.**



OVERVIEW OF RESULTS

Many problem areas – consistently less than 50% positive results

- it's happening, just not enough and not well enough
- In simple terms: a victim is not guaranteed to receive their rights

Some of the areas of concern:

- **Acknowledgment of complaint**
- **Protection – needs assessment, adequate protection from intimidation, emotional harm, separation of victim and defendant, adequate privacy measures, protection of vulnerable (measures)**
- **Cross border victims – information, ability to report, hearing victims abroad**
- **Training**

TIMELINE OF VICTIMS RIGHTS

Why are the results so sobering:

States committed to victims rights 35 years ago and repeatedly

Council of Europe Recommendations – 1985 and 2006

UN Declaration of Basic Principles – 1985

EU – Framework Decision on standing of victims – 2001

EU Victims Directive - 2012 (in force 2015)

Information: Three Goals

A critical right covered by
Articles 3,4,6 and 7.

Understanding of information

Information on first contact

Information on the case

Interpretation and Translation

- Victims get/ **access** the information
- Victims **understand** the information
- Victims can **act** on the information

WHAT

WHEN

HOW

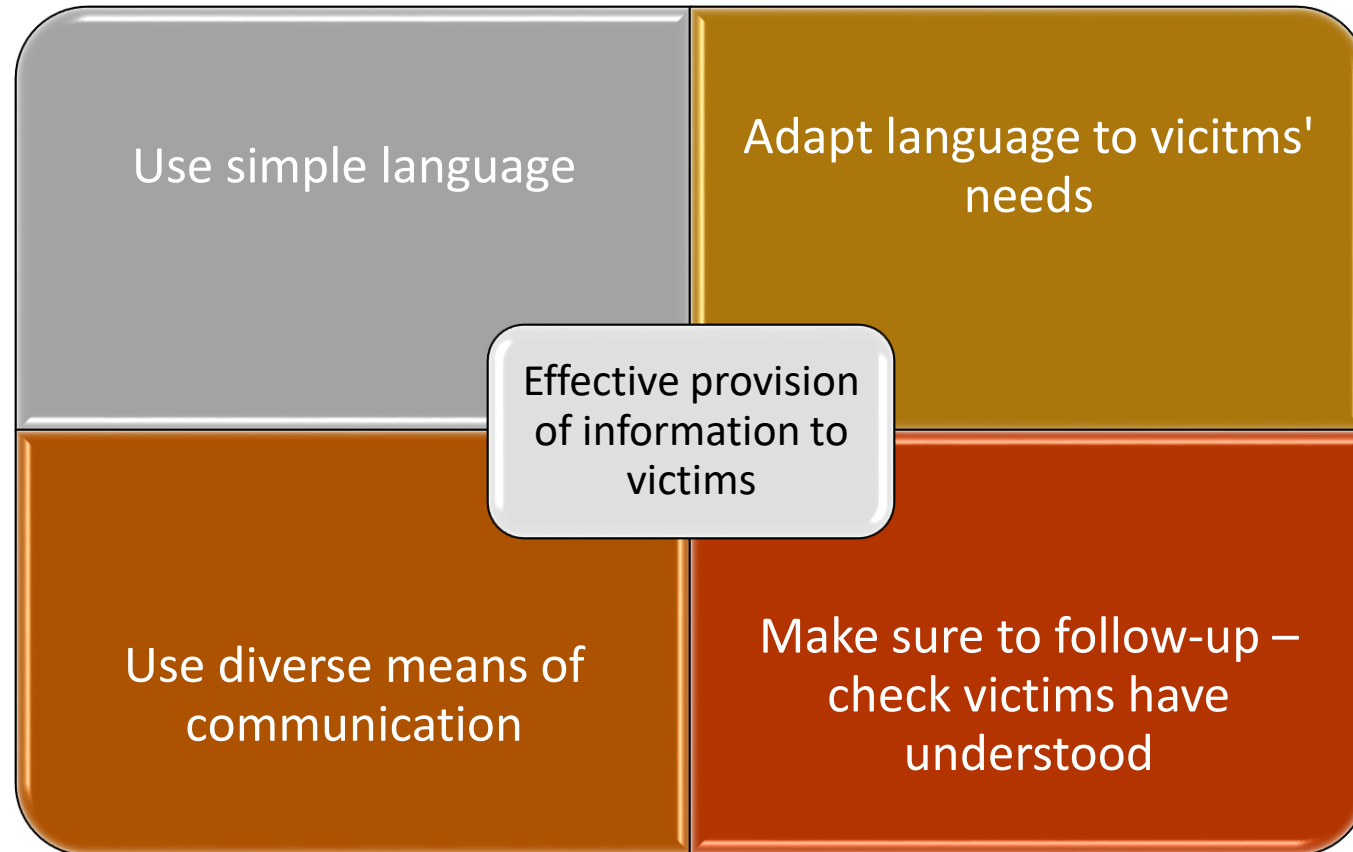
INFORMATION

ACHIEVED BY (Key indicators of success)

- Receipt of
information

- Understanding:

4 Indicators



Information - Challenges

- 1) **Not enough victims are consistently getting all information**
 - **58%** believe **full or most information** is provided to victim
 - Less than **37%** of victims **always receive** information on the **case** when they request it
 - Less than **30%** **always** informed of **prisoner release** when requested
 - Case progress – information provision is burdensome, don't take proactive approach, lack of laws and mechanisms

- 2) **Information is not sufficiently understandable nor adapted**
 - Information is **standardised** – often legalistic and not adapted to different needs
 - **35-50%** believe information is **always/often adapted** to different groups
 - Information mostly provided **orally** or through **written** material (limited diversity)
 - **Timing** and **depth** of information is **not adjusted to needs**
 - Only 21% replied that **interpretation** available for **whole trial**
 - Interpreters and translators **not available**, information **not considered essential**, **lack of sensitivity**

COMMUNICATION NOT INFORMATION

- **Fundamental review of how we communicate with victims, communities, the public**
- **Strategic, comprehensive and long term vision:**
 - **Content development**
 - **Delivery mechanisms – Who, How, Co-ordinated**
 - **Specialisms**
 - **Breadth and depth of information provision**

A brochure won't solve the problem

INFORMATION IS ABSOLUTELY VITAL TO VICTIMS, TO PUBLIC

PRINCIPLES:

- Clarity in objectives for information provisions
- Multi-agency approach with interconnected delivery of and access to information
- Reliability and consistency
- Innovative and diverse – multi-mode, new tech, multi-language
- Follow key principles – needs focused, repeated, consistent, simple, easy, accessible adapted
- Victim sensitive, regular, personal, repeated, by trained personnel
- Personal assistance to understand, tools to support delivery
- Review of success

MECHANISMS

Govt: Government ministries, embassies, victim assistance centre, agencies,
Media: formal, social, informal (tv, radio, web, apps, videos, papers, local, national, films)
NGOS : Victim Support, community groups and specialist groups (disability, lgbti, religious, ethnic)
Transport: train, tram, metro, airport, airlines, travel co's
Services – medical, social welfare etc
Private sector – collaboration, workplace info, new tech, social media

IMPLEMENTATION - Support

- All Victims
- Specialisation
- National
- Accessible
- Multiple forms of assistance

Availability of support services

- 25% say victims always referred to victim support by authorities
- 50%w say often referred.
- 25% say victims are rarely or never referred to victim support services.
 - Consistency, guidance, tools
- AT, BE, CY, CZ, DE, EE, ES, FI, FR, HR, HU, IE, IT, MT, NL, PL, PT, SE, SI - generic and specialised support services are available.
- IT - no universal generic support service provider. This is provided by different organisations at the regional and provincial level
- LV – only an NGO is operating the 116 006 helpline
- BG, EL, LT, RO, SK - only specialised support services are available.
- REPORT IS GENEROUS: ACCESS, COMPREHENSIVENESS, QUALITY

Coverage of Victim Support

- AT, CZ, EE, FR, HU, MT, PL, SE, SI - services cover entire territory
- BG, HR, CY, EL, ES, IT, LT, LU, RO, SK - services located in mainly urban areas, in the capital or other major cities: rural areas deprived
- IE, FI, NL, PT – adopted non-face to face solutions e.g. helplines, house visits and itinerant services.
- Also adopted by - AT, BG, CY, CZ, DE, EE, EL, FR, FI, HU, HR, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, MT, NL, SE, SK)

Specialised Support

- Lack of systematic implementation

To the best of your knowledge and experience, do all victims receive the following services?	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Information, advice and support relevant to the rights of victims	33,2%	40,9%	19,5%	5,8%	0,6%
Information about direct referral to existing relevant specialist support services	27,6%	41,3%	21,3%	9,2%	0,6%
Emotional and psychological support	26,9%	37,0%	25,0%	9,7%	1,4%
Advice relating to financial and practical issues associated with the criminal offence	17,3%	42,0%	27,5%	10,9%	2,2%
Advice relating to the risk and prevention of secondary and repeat victimisation, of intimidation and of retaliation	21,5%	32,3%	29,7%	13,7%	2,8%

What is needed to improve victim support services

	n	%
More funding	744	96,25
Better legislation	208	26,91
Better policies	225	29,11
More government involvement in providing offers of support	169	21,86
More involvement of non-governmental organisations in providing offers of support	123	15,91
Better geographical coverage	213	27,55
More professionals	303	39,20
More training offers	177	22,90
More volunteers	102	13,20
Quality standards for services	151	19,53
Better services for certain groups of victims (which – open question)	140	18,11
Do not know	29	3,75

Support

A comprehensive vision of national victim support services

Policy and Law making tools

- Ownership and leadership
- Strategic and long term planning – Victim Support is not a project
- Policy development processes
- Evaluation tools

IMPLEMENTATION IN FINLAND - Support

A comprehensive vision of national victim support services

Service Delivery and Quality control

- What are the constituent parts of a national victim support service
- How should generic services be organised
- Development of specialist services
- Different channels of services
- Accessibility of services
- Core principles for running quality services
- Funding of services

Evaluation of services – accreditation and monitoring

Some core principles in the delivery of effective services

All victims

- Universal/ generic and specialist services
- Foundation for all
- Accessible for all: geographical scope, reach out, referral, help them come forward
- Co-ordination of services
- At home and abroad
- Free of charge

Respect

- In direct interactions
- Institutionalised in structures
- Transparent
- Communication and information – multi-format, simple and accessible
- Non-discriminatory

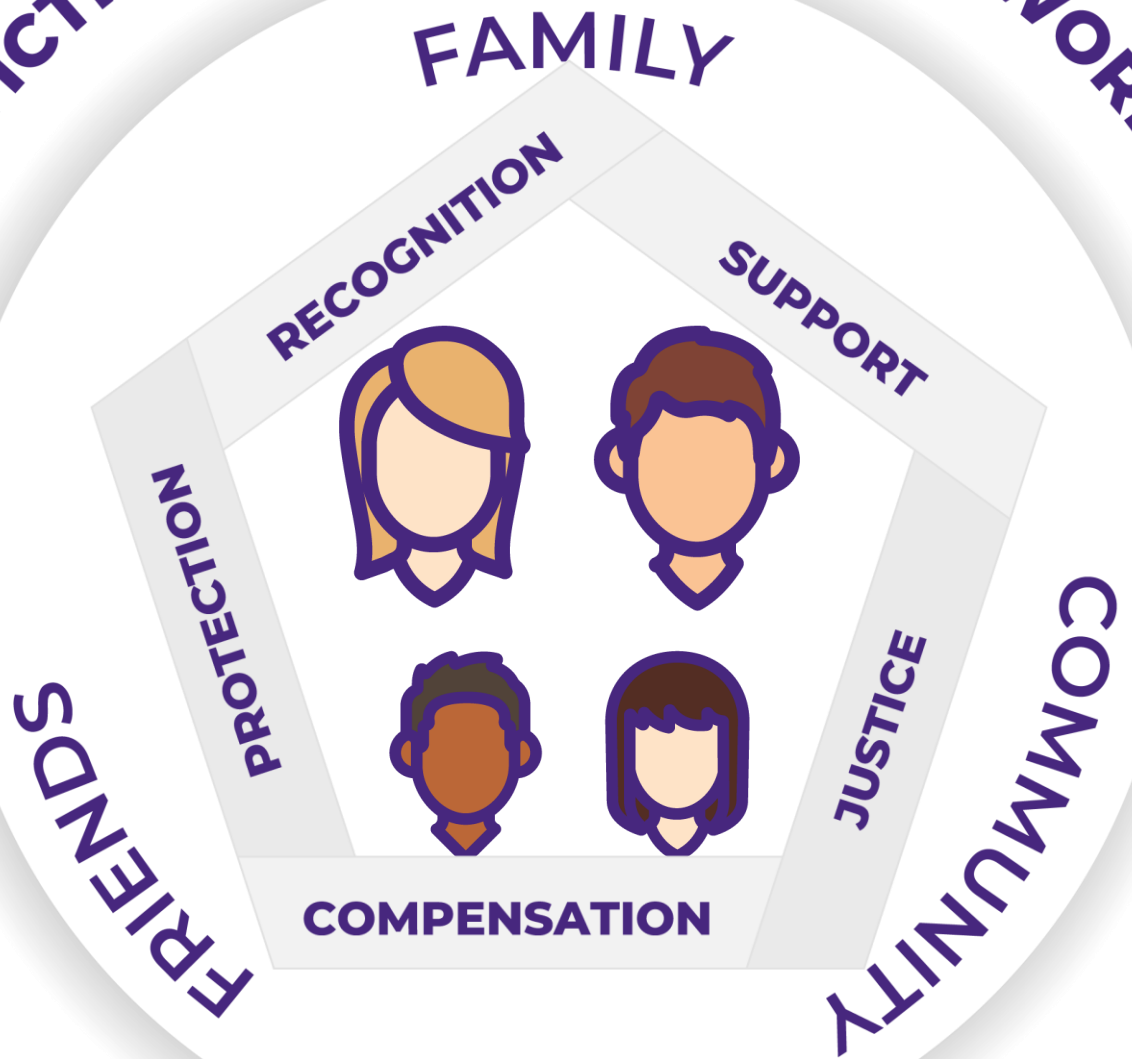
Empower

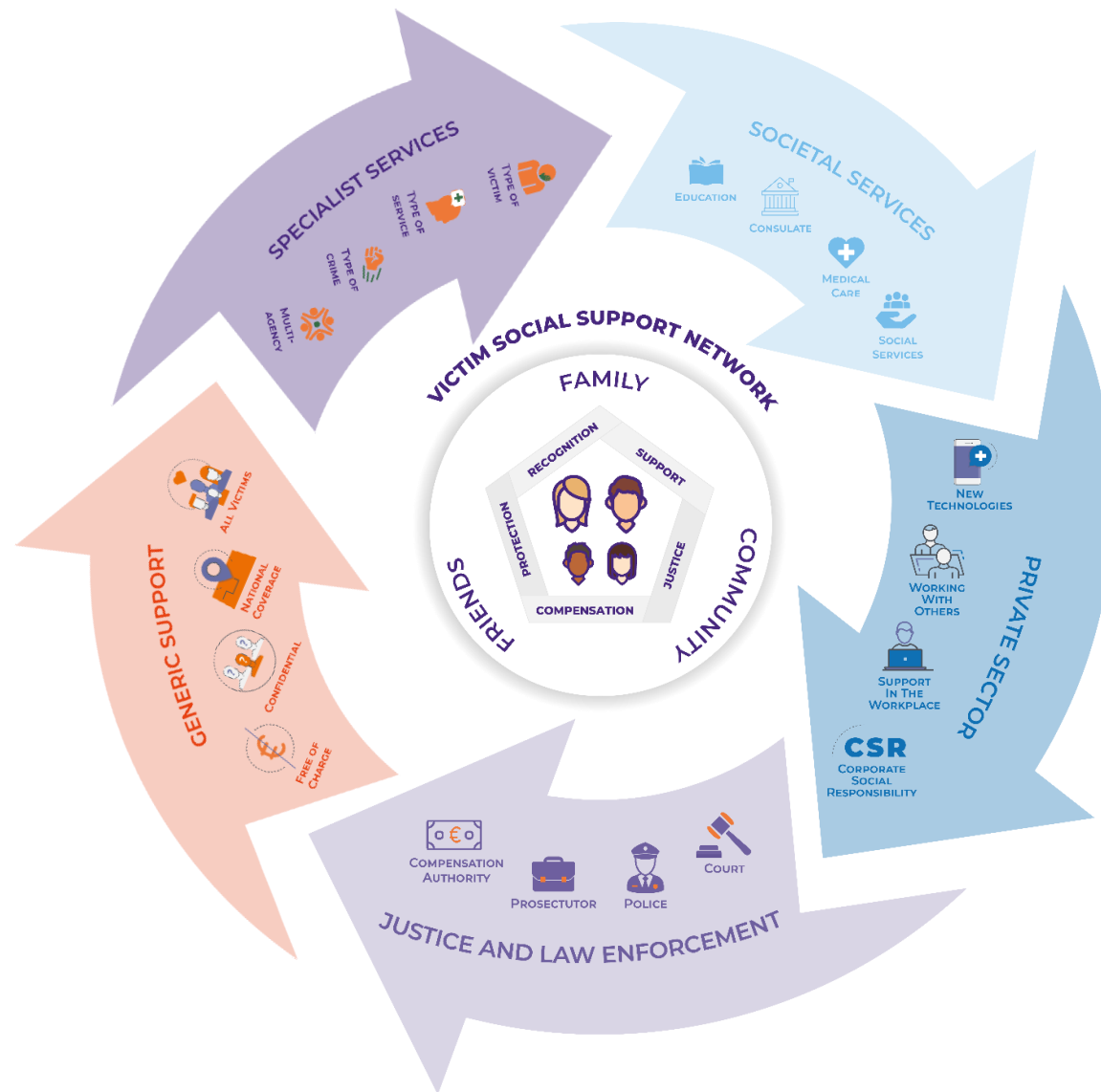
- Listen
- Consult
- Participation
- Education

Relevant

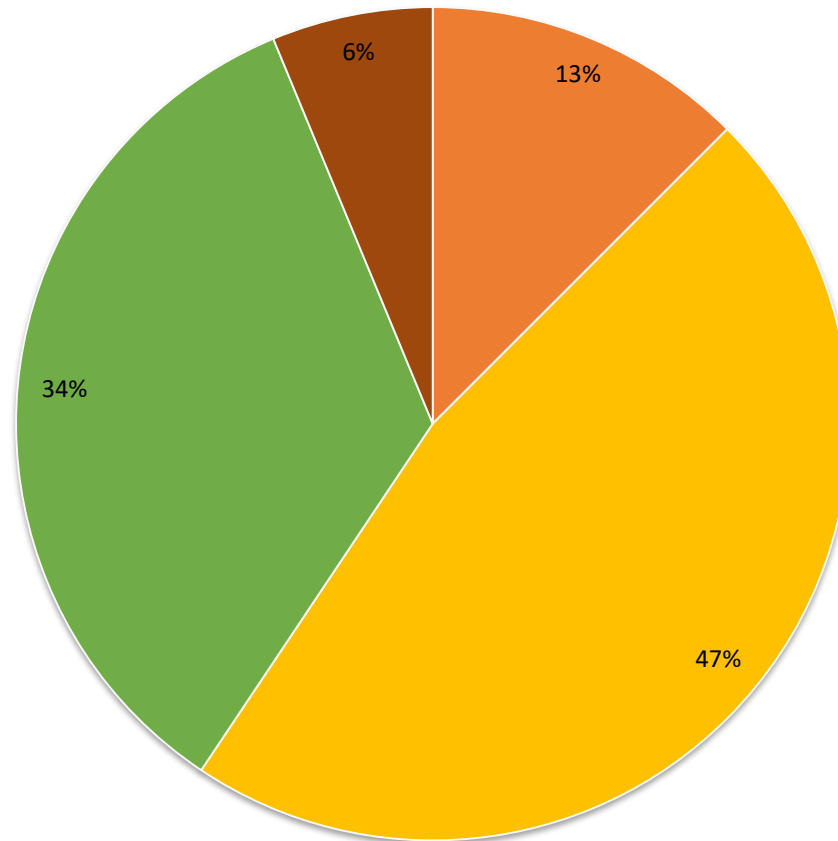
- Individualised
- Flexible
- Targeted
- Based on need (assessment)
- Regularly reviewed
- For as long as needed
- High quality, consistent standards

VICTIM SOCIAL SUPPORT NETWORK





Who provides generic services

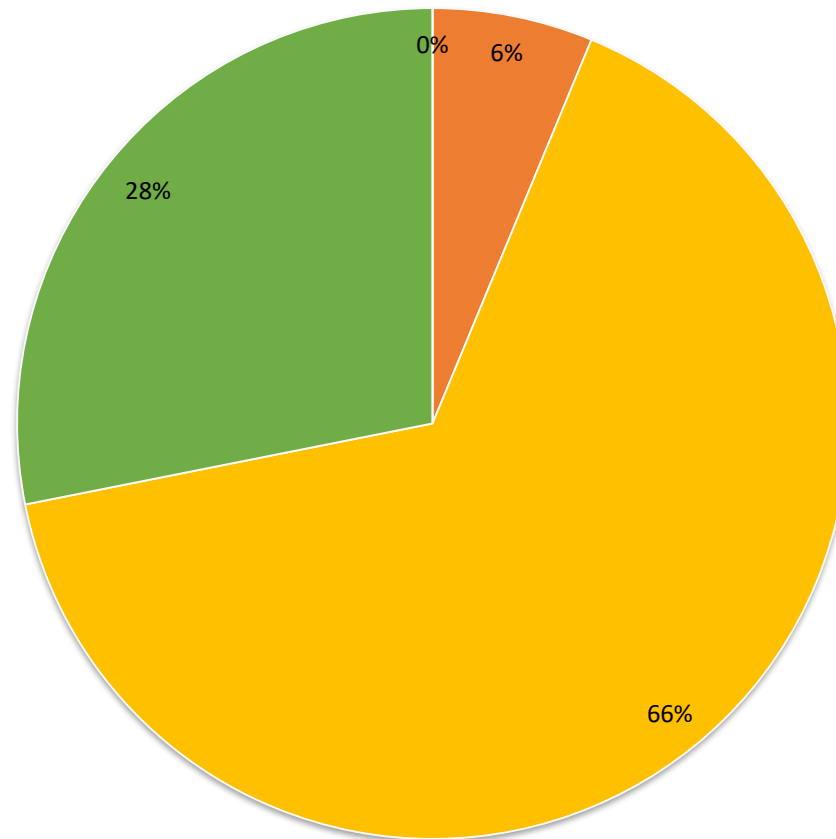


81% of services provided through cooperation between NGOs and the government

■ Yes, ALL services are provided by NGOs
■ Yes, SOME services are provided by NGOs

■ Yes, MOST services are provided by NGOs
■ No, NGOs do not provide generic services in my country

Who provides specialist services?



72% of specialist services are provided predominantly by NGOs

- Yes, ALL services are provided by NGOs
- Yes, MOST services are provided by NGOs
- Yes, SOME services are provided by NGOs
- No, NGOs do not provide generic services in my country

OVERSIGHT, MONITORING AND REVIEW



01
Accessible to all victims

02
Respect & dignity

03
Victims are safe

04
Individual's needs

05
Diverse services

06
Referrals & coordination

07
Good governance

08
Quality through training

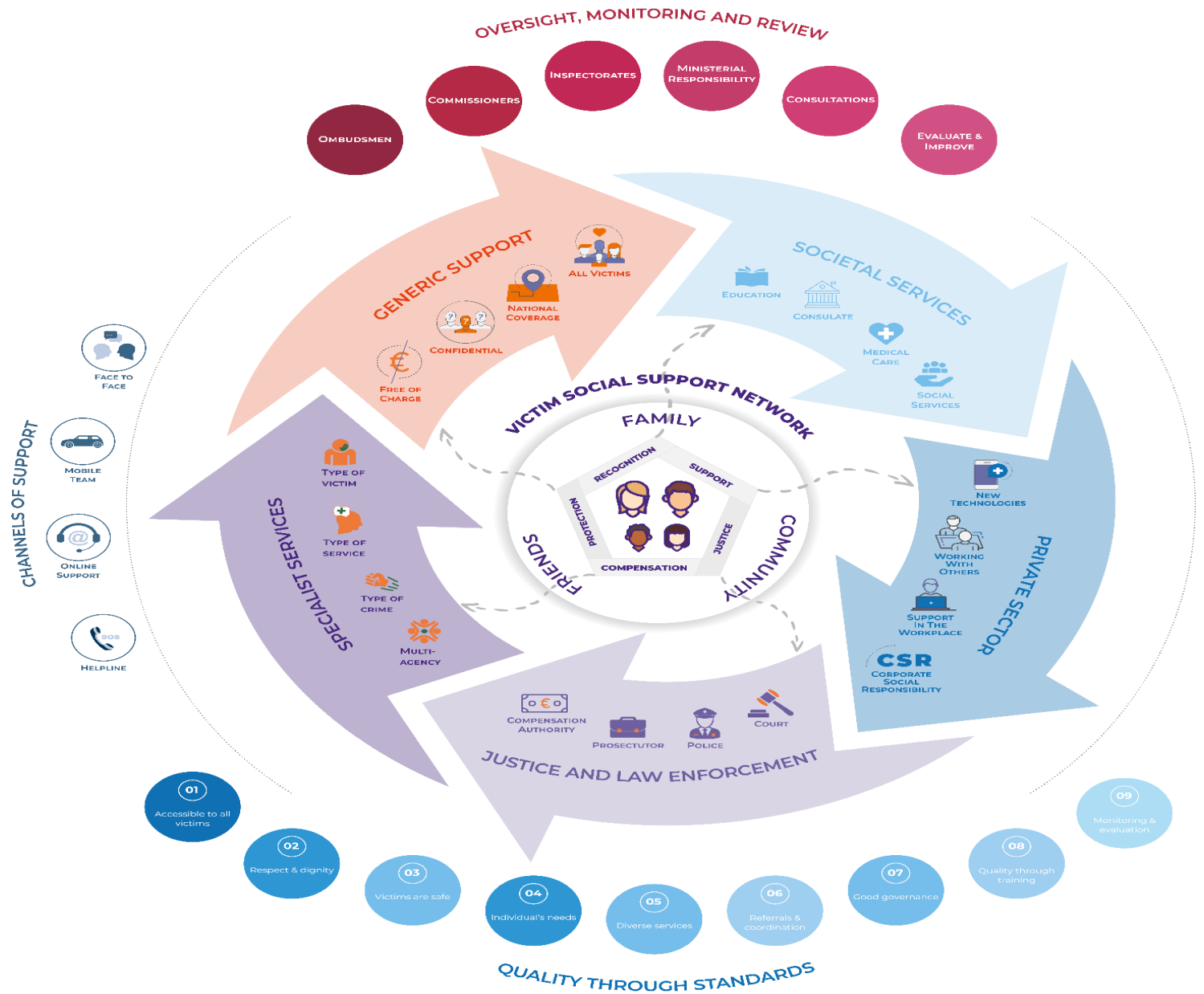
09
Monitoring & evaluation

QUALITY THROUGH STANDARDS



01
02
03
04
05
06
07
08
09
Accessible to all victims
Respect & dignity
Victims are safe
Individual's needs
Diverse services
Referrals & coordination
Good governance
Quality through training
Monitoring & evaluation

National framework for comprehensive victim support



How do we get there?

Create a victim positive environment

- Leadership and buy in
- Motivation for change -
 - Cost of crime/ cost of not helping
 - Articulate benefits: individual, societal, economic, law and justice **NB – €4 benefit for every € spent**
 - Cross country learning: better than the rest/ not the worst?
- Mainstreaming
- Long term strategic vision – **EU and State**

How do we get there?

The tools for change

- Victims rights are human rights – actions based in law
- Make rights a reality – tools to ensure real change
- Research and data
- Financing: victim funds from new income sources
- Efficiency and effectiveness – State and civil society together
- Partnerships:
 - State, CSOs, Academia, Community, private sector
 - Mechanisms for joint working: protocols, new technology, laws and ordinance, joint training, regular contacts – trust and relationships, joint funding
- Education for justice:
 - School, university, lifelong learning
 - Culture shift – training with supporting mechanisms
- High quality – through standards

EU Future Action – Developing a Strategic Approach

- All victims All sectors – mainstreaming, specific crimes, specific groups, thematic issues, global leadership



- Make rights a reality

Ensure all EU victims legislation is correctly implemented - support and enforce

- Improve EU laws

Evaluate existing legislation and improve it.

Adopt new laws to fill gaps and to deepen protection in specific areas, or topics – compensation, Gender based violence, support to law enforcement (e-evidence, new tech), emerging and insufficiently covered crimes (online, stalking, hate, environmental)

- Improve the practice

Improved EU funding – cross sectoral, 100%, partnerships, innovation and infrastructure

Get data

Support co-ordination – EU Co-ordinator, networks, joint State and civil society work

A safe and just society through a knowledgeable, caring and resilient population

KNOWLEDGEABLE	Caring	Resilient
Education for justice – childhood, university, on job training and lifelong learning	Respectful, not blameful, removal of myths	Pre-trauma resiliency development
How protect yourself and stay safe	How to identify victims	Post trauma resiliency and recovery
What to do if you are a victim – practical, legal, support	Understanding what the victim is going through	
Impacts of crime and how it affects victims and their behaviour	How to help those who are victims	
Professionals with appropriate training	Psychological first aid, long term social network support	

The future of victims rights and services

A safe and just society through
a knowledgeable, caring and resilient population

THANK YOU!

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