

VSE NGO Roundtable Preparation for the Victim's Rights Platform of 23 February 2021

11 February 2021
Online (Microsoft Teams)

Participants of the VSE NGO Roundtable of 11 February 2021

- Victim Support Europe
- ILGA Europe
- End FGM EU
- European Women's Lobby
- Missing Children Europe
- TGEU
- Inclusion Europe
- Mental Health Europe
- PICUM
- ICRSE
- European Disability Forum
- AGE Platform Europe
- WAVE
- Confederation of European Probation (CEP)
- European Forum for Restorative Justice
- Child Helpline International
- La Strada International

Summary of the round table discussion

Victim Support Europe

- The agenda is splitting down issues according to types of crime, nothing cross-cutting.
- Ex: we are pushing for the European Protection Order, which is connected to various crimes.
- On GBV initiative: focus on access to services. & Eurocrimes: including stalking
- Advocating for 116 006 helplines to exist in all EU MS + funding
- Proper consultation of NGOs in the VR Directive's evaluation

- Notion of Safe Justice: we want our justice systems to not harm victims. - attention to digitalisation

ILGA Europe

- Effective and full implementation of the Directive
- Training

End FGM EU

- Victims' rights and equality - surprised to see nothing on anti racism strategy on the agenda.
- Lack of cross cutting issues
- Harmonization of support services in all MS: GBV and FGM survivors (will release a study on that this year)
- Revision of the Directive: pushing for broader scope of the Directive more in line with Istanbul Convention: 1° to ensure that all victims are considered. Because FGM survivors usually fall out because of extraterritoriality combined with not filing a complaint. 2° Threat of crime to be included.

European Women's Lobby

- Effective implementation of strategy
- Istanbul convention – Court's Decision coming this year
- Legislation on violence against women
- Digital aspect: online violence, different forms.
- Inclusivity of civil society: opening the platform to other organisations? If we look at prevention and protection measures.
- Council Presidency's priorities: particularly in the context of the 10th anniversary of the IC coming into force

Missing Children Europe

- Mainstreaming children's rights
- More effective fight against child sexual abuse
- Helplines: collaborate effort with different types of hotlines so that they know each other and have better coordination.
- Digital training strategy: how will children be heard?
- Lack of cross-cutting focus and lack of opportunity for interaction
- Making the link between missing and child sexual exploitation/abuse - and role of missing children hotlines in supporting children who are victims and/or survivors of sexual exploitation and abuse, online and offline.

TGEU

- Trans issues to be addressed – what legal language used E.g. Language in rulings covering trans issues, trans identity, hate crime – euro crimes.

Inclusion Europe

- Make sure all different perspectives to be taken into account – intersectionality.
- This year focusing more on children, on the role of families and access to care, employment. → connected to resilience of victims.

Mental Health Europe

- Interaction and linkages between strategy and the issue of legal capacity: victims deprived of legal capacity because of their condition.
→ impact on access to support, access to legal aid etc.
→ How does it unfold under the Strategy?
- Criminal justice: Many EU countries' legislation allowing for involuntary placement and treatment.
- Judicial training: work with judicial system on stigmatization etc.

PICUM

- More cross-cutting themes would be better
- Safe justice: big priority but limited extent in the agenda. Important to have a transversal discussion on what that means.
- Initiative on GBV and domestic violence: how will it intersect with VR strategy ?
- Istanbul convention: holistic and comprehensive approach
- Recognize certain types of violence as crimes.
- Prevention, access to services, inclusive of all women.
- Child sexual abuse: 2 speakers on agenda, 1 on CSA and 1 security.
- Security is always problematic in the context of migration.

ICRSE

- Launching a paper on sex industry exploitation
- GBV initiative: should have an approach addressing marginalisation, viewing the issue from an intersectional point of view, also in anti-violence programmes.
- Consult affected people, the marginalised.
- Online safety for sex workers: migrants are spotted by perpetrators because they know they won't be able to report the crime.
- Anti-trafficking strategy: sex workers need to be consulted because policies affecting them.

European Disability Forum

- Accessibility: for deaf people
- Gender equality
- Digitalisation justice
- Digital training strategy
- Making sure people with disability recognition of victimisation

AGE Platform Europe

- Green paper on aging: does not mention at all Victims Rights Strategy. We'll be pointing out this gap.
- The people working on victims' rights in the Commission should influence the ones working on aging
- Calling for EU Age Equality Strategy: we want systematic consideration of aging in EU policies

WAVE

- VAWG in general, with this year focus on sexual violence against women and children (in all forms, also on-line), exacerbated by lock-down
- Prioritize funding for specialist services which had to invest extra energy and money due to Covid
- Istanbul Conv: how is that gonna be related to VR Strategy's implementation?
- Agree with cross-cutting perspective

Confederation of European Probation (CEP)

- Spread awareness on probation services from victim perspective
- Focus: Domestic violence, sex abuse, child abuse, cybercrime – especially with lockdown and even beyond

European Forum for Restorative Justice

- GBV: working group
- Project with hate crime – particularly LGBTQI
- Victims of terrorism
- Focus on how restorative justice needs to respond to specificity of victims of crime

Child Helpline International

- Child helplines - important role as a low-threshold entry point to child protection system which includes support for victims.

- Child helplines cannot usually provide long-term support or in-person intervention, but can guide, empower and support the child to more long-term support as child helplines have excellent insight into multiple referral routes for children.
- Collaboration between other support services, helplines and more long-term support is crucial.
- Child helplines' role in supporting children who are victims and/or survivors of sexual exploitation and abuse, online and offline.
- Child helplines' role in supporting particularly vulnerable groups of children and young people, in particular children in migration, children with disabilities and LGBTQ+ children and youth.

La Strada International

- Istanbul Convention
- Harassment / ILO
- Violence against women: taking part in the consultation