



Report of meeting

The 2019 Centre of Excellence Workshop on 116006 helpline and support at a distance was held in Tallinn, Estonia on 3 and 4 October. The event was co-organised by VSE Estonian member, the Social Insurance Board. The Centre of Excellence is a place for VSE members to share their knowledge, experiences, good and bad practices on different issues related to 116006 helplines and distance support.

As during previous years, participants of the Centre of Excellence met 3 times online to discuss priorities and their interests for the Workshop. Following the recommendations from participants, the workshop was less based on formal presented but included more interaction and sharing of experience and expertise between participants. The different sessions focused on three broad topics: the functioning of the helplines in the different countries and the development of a position paper on the 116006 helpline, GDPR and victim support, and alternative methods of distance support.

The workshop gathered 15 participants from 12 different organisations.

Participants:

Name	Organisation	Country
Ricardo Estrela	APAV	Portugal
Markéta Vitoušová	Bily kruh bezpeci	Czech Republic
Michele Puckhaber	Crime Victims Helpline	Ireland
Léa Serre	France Victimes	France
Maatu Arkio	Rikosuhripäivystys	Finland
Hetty Burgman	Slachtofferhulp Nederland	The Netherlands
Mari Tikerpuu	Social Insurance Board	Estonia
Maja Štahan	Victim and Witness Support Croatia	Croatia
Jolena Flett	Victim Support Northern Ireland	Northern Ireland
Sofia Barlind	Victim Support Sweden	Sweden
Bejan Šaćiri	Victimology Society of Serbia	Serbia
Aleksandra Ivankovic	VSE	
Léa Meindre-Chautrand	VSE	
Tim Herrscher	Weisser Ring	Germany

Session 1 – Overview of helplines

Participants presented the functioning of their helplines including the opening hours, the number of people working on the helpline, the type of training, the funding received, etc. The overview table can be found at the end of this report.

Session 2 - Discussion position paper 116006

Participants were divided into two groups to discuss the development of a position paper on 116006 helplines. The idea is to use member expertise and experience with the European helplines to convince all EU Member States to introduce a 116006 helpline and to push the European Union to launch a specific fund for the establishment and functioning of the helpline. For the countries where the helpline is already in place, the paper aims at introducing minimum standards that should be followed by all services to ensure a certain quality of service on the helpline for the victims.

Participants expressed interest in the following elements:

- Updating VSE handbook on 116 numbers
- Minimum standards for helpline: minimum opening hours, five days a week, professional and volunteer, training, supervision, etc. safe storage etc.
- Members will provide estimate of cost of running the helpline
- Awareness raising campaign at EU level

VSE's role is to:

- Get in touch with European child victims helpline network
- Look into countries where there is no 116006 if number has been allocated or not.
- Look into developing a project proposal for countries that do not have the number to receive funds from the EU to set up the service.
- Promotion – webpage 116006 on VSE website

A task force has been created with **Hetty (Slachtofferhulp Nederland)**, **Jolena (Victim Support Northern Ireland)**, **Michele (Crime Victims Helpline)** and **Maja (Victim and Witness Support Croatia)** to support the collection of information, the drafting and promotion of the paper. VSE will coordinate this effort in the coming months.

Session 3 – Alternative methods of support

This session was the opportunity for participants to discuss the use of new technologies to support victims of crime.

Lately VSE has been more and more invited to join up in projects developed by tech-development companies or institutes that use new technologies to directly support victims or that can have implication for victims. This summer, VSE was involved in the development of a project where they wanted to use drones in response of mass incidents to providing support to victims.

VSE would also like to develop an app for cross-border victims to access trial case in country of prosecution.

Jolena Flett (Victim Support Northern Ireland) presented the **360° Interactive Courtrooms**¹ developed and used by Victim Support Northern Ireland for victims and witnesses who will need to go in a court. Examples of courtrooms from each criminal court in Northern Ireland can be viewed. The tours are interactive, and contain information about different areas of the courtroom in blue information 'hotspots'. Volunteers can show victims where the different people will sit in the court room. The map is also available on their website for everyone to access.

This approach is important for victims to get a feel of the courtroom before going to trial. It allows individuals to ask questions and get comfortable with the process. Witnesses come prepared to give a better testimony and it gives better results. The interactive map is not a replacement of a physical pre-trial visit to the court, but can be useful for people who cannot take time off from work or who are too anxious to visit the courtroom. An agreement with each court was needed, the negotiations lasted approximately 6 months. Some courts were reluctant for security reasons and some judges were on the other hand very supportive of the project. The Public Prosecution Service helped VSNI to negotiate with the Courts to accept to take pictures in the court room. A professional photographer took 360° pictures of each courtrooms. The interactive map is also compatible with a virtual reality headset. The cost of the map was around 7 to 10 000£.

APAV is in the development of a chat-bot to support victims online. APAV is also using a service of sign language via skype to interact with people with hearing and speaking difficulties.

The Social Insurance Board presented their Virtual Reality (VR) goggles used in secure care for children and youth. Inspired by Amnesty International campaign for using VR about refugees camps in Syria. The Social Insurance Board decided to create its own short film designed for child prosecutor, social workers, judges, for people who are working with children to show them how the secure care for children and youth are. The film is also showed to children who will go into these institutions.

Session 4 – GDPR and victim support

The european regulation on data protection is an essential step to strengthen individuals' fundamental rights in the digital age and facilitate business by clarifying rules for companies and public bodies in the digital single market. However, the text can be too restrictive for the victim support field where victim support organisations need to collect personal information from victims to provide them assistance and information. The interpretation of the GDPR by international law firm is very strict and very difficult to apply in practice. VSE is looking into having a softer interpretation of the text by the European Commission taking into account the requirements and practical constraints of the victim support field.

According to the EU legislation, a company/organisation can only process personal data in the following circumstances:

- with the **consent** of the individuals concerned;

¹ <https://www.victimsupportni.com/360-interactive-courtrooms/>

- where there is a **contractual obligation** (a contract between the company/organisation and a client);
- to meet a **legal obligation** under EU or national legislation;
- where processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the **public interest** under EU or national legislation;
- to protect the **vital interests** of an individual;
- for the organisation's **legitimate interests**, but only after having checked that the fundamental rights and freedoms of the person whose data are processed aren't seriously impacted. If the person's rights override the organisation's interests, then processing cannot be carried out based on legitimate interest. The assessment as to whether the company/organisation has a legitimate interest for processing override those of the persons concerned depends on the individual circumstances of the case.

However another difficulty appear, article 9 of the GDPR list a number of personal data considered as sensitive. The data subject (the victim) has to give explicit consent to process and record the following information:

- personal data revealing racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs;
- trade-union membership;
- genetic data, biometric data processed solely to identify a human being;
- health-related data;
- data concerning a person's sex life or sexual orientation.

Some of these information such as health, sexual orientation or ethnic origin are asked to victims to better understand their situation, assess their needs and provide them with the relevant assistance.

Sofia Barlind presented **Victim Support Sweden approach to GDPR**. Victim Support Sweden (VSS) is composed of 73 national organisations which have their own legal entities and are responsible for their own processing of data. However, VSS has decided to have common guidelines for GDPR, quality standards etc. that everyone has agreed to adhere to. VSS has decided to make one policy for victims' data, or clients, anyone who contacts us, and then another policy for all the other data that we process. VSS conducted research and asked other service providers how they dealt with this particular issue. The answer was the use of the legitimate interest and a legitimate interest assessment template: a tool to assess how strong or weak your legitimate interest is. In the case of victim support the interest of the clients of getting support and the interest of VSS to providing support align. There is a legitimate interest in keeping their name, phone number and records of their case to further support them. Victims can ask for the deletion of their details at any moment. The data are kept as long as our interest in providing support and the client's interest in getting support align.

Participants were asked to share the practice in their organisations in relation to the detention and processing of victims' personal data. The following table reflects the different practices:

Participant	Practice related to GDPR
APAV	In the script used during calls there is a disclaimer that staff have to state every time - we ask victims whether they agree that we collect information. In the office , the victim has to sign to allow disclosure of information to other authorities.
Bily kruh bezpeci (Czech Republic)	Staff on the helpline do not see the phone number of the caller. Nothing is recorded. Some brief notes about the discussion are kept on software designed for the helpline. The computer is always offline to avoid any leaks. Personal information are kept for 3 years. After that, the info are anonymised for statistic purpose and for reporting to the ministry. Emails: we reply about their rights and we refer to local branch for face to face. Info are kept 1 year if not sensitive data – also for statistic. Face to face: notes are kept on paper, each person is informed about GDPR and the type of data collected, why and for how long. They sign a consent form but they can give someone else name. We keep info 3 years and then anonymise. For referral: police send us victims only for vulnerable victims. People have to sign consent for the police to send the information (name, phone, city and type of crime.)
Crime Victims Helpline (Ireland)	Process data using legitimate interest . Data are on paper and shred after 3 months from a service user's last contact with the service. We try not to put any sensitive information on paper. Internal information about volunteers are kept in password protected documents. All paper files containing personal data are kept in locked cabinets, in locked offices, in a secure building. Via chat: once the chat is closed all content is deleted, even the victim cannot access it anymore.
France Victimes	For each call a new file is created on the computer. Victims are asked if they agree that we send their file to the local association, there is a box to tick on the computer. The files online are kept for 3 years. If paper it's 1 year. Emails: we don't say how long we keep their info but we keep them for 1 year. One local association was controlled by the CNIL and receive warning and recommendation to buy new furniture with locks, what they should do to comply etc.
Slachtofferhulp (Netherlands)	Slachtofferhulp is named as an organisation of public interest and has been appointed as the organisation that provide information to victims of crime in the law so they can keep and store the information. They are also entitled to share the information with the police. When people call us we ask if we can store their data. When they call again we ask if we can reopen the case.
Social Insurance Board (Estonia)	Calls with victims are recorded, they are informed on the website but we don't tell them during the call. Victims can ask to have their info deleted. We ask consent to pass their information to other victim support organisation or social worker. Recordings are kept for 4 months, then deleted. Police can ask for the recording. No legal basis for the recording, do it on a practice basis.

<p>Victim and Witness Support Croatia</p>	<p>On the helpline no information is recorded except type of crime and location from where the victim calls for statistical purposes.</p> <p>For referral we give the victim the number or address of the VSO and they decide to contact them or not.</p> <p>In office, victims need to sign consent form that they agree we collect their data. We have obligation to report back to the ministry. We keep the info for 5-6 years.</p>
<p>Victim Support Finland</p>	<p>Use legitimate interest to collect information. There is no transfer of information to local offices because use a nationwide system.</p> <p>When relation ends with the client, we delete data. Thinking of asking for consent to send questionnaire for feedback.</p> <p>If chat: we don't collect data, we just collect info about the call and the estimated age of the caller.</p>
<p>Victim Support Northern Ireland</p>	<p>Staff receive the information from the police (name, address, phone, type of crime). When we call the victims, we let them know that the information was passed to us from the police. At the end of the case, the info become anonymous – we use them for statistical and analytical purposes.</p> <p>We keep info on paper as long as the case is open.</p> <p>Face to face meetings: clients sign the needs assessment form where confidentiality and GDPR statement is included.</p> <p>We are also mention in the legislation as the organisation that support victims of crime and we have an agreement with the police.</p>
<p>Victim Support Sweden</p>	<p>Use legitimate interest.</p> <p>Keep the information for 3 months and we do follow up few weeks after the contact. We mention on the website why we keep the information for that time.</p>
<p>Weisser Ring Germany</p>	<p>Helpline: we don't collect personal information, only what happens and when</p> <p>Online service: have to agree to the privacy policy. The data are collected for ever, we do not delete them.</p> <p>Face to face in field office: victim has to sign to give consent that the data are collected and stored. Data are kept for ever.</p> <p>We also keep information about financial transaction because tax office needs to be able to control the information for 10 years.</p>

Overview helplines participants Centre of Excellence Workshop

Country	Telephone number	Working hours	Workers	Languages	Location	Who calls	Number of calls	Training	Guidelines	Funding
Croatia	116006	Mon-Fri 8am-8pm	42 volunteers 2 supervisors Referral to specialised NGOs	Croatian English	Office in Zagreb	Victims of all crime, family members, witnesses (5%) Women victims of DV (60%)	2018: 1500 2019:1000*	55 hours Comms, legal, criminal Data base Spec. training	No But use case management system	Ministry of Justice 2018: 10 000€ 2019: 25 000€ European projects
Czech Republic	116006	24/7	20 consultants 2 management 6 supervisors	Czech English	Office in secret location	Victims of DV mostly	2018: 6080	Telephone crisis intervention. Internal training Follow-up train.	Not during call Written material given during training	Ministry of Social Affairs Ministry of Interior
Estonia	116006	24/7	5 paid professionals 3 victim support workers	Estonian Russian English Finish	Work from home	Mistreatment Physical, sexual, econ. violence Loss loved ones Domestic violence	2018: 400/500 per month 2019: 4000*	4 days Legal, special., motivational, listening skills Supervision	Yes Questionnaire to fill	Governmental
Finland	116006	Mon-Tues 1pm-9pm Thu-Fri 5pm-9pm Aim for 9am-8pm	150 volunteers Professional for backup	Finish Swedish (partial time) English	Office based work	Victims of DV Emotional violence Sexual abuse Criminal process Fraud and identity theft	2018: 2000 Lawyers line:400 Chat service: 3300	50 hours Interaction, hearing, emergency, technical	No Some answers prepared for chat service for certain situations that are difficult to handle	Ministry of Justice
France	116006 08 still receives calls	Mon-Sun 9am-7pm	8 professional paid staff	French English (foreign languages)	Headquarters	Victims of all crimes Domestic violence Harassment	2018: 19000 2019: 17000*	6 weeks total Legal, social, answer calls	Yes about technical procedure No about what to say	Ministry of Justice

Germany	116006 Previous numbers	Mon-Sun 7am-10pm	2 paid staff 80 volunteers	German English	Home based	Victims of all crimes Victim of DV Sexual abuse	2018: 15000 Mail service: 2000	2 weeks Rights, comms. Team meetings	No script Manual w/ info on VS Structured call	NGOs Testamentary instructions (50%) Fees
Ireland	116006 Previous number	M-F 10am-5pm Sat. and holidays 2pm-4pm	2 paid staff 25 volunteers	English Polish (if possible) Telephone translation available immediately when needed.	Office work Mobile phone	Victims of all crimes (Primarily Assault, Harassment, Theft and Burglary) DV and Rape/Sexual Assault handled by separate dedicated phone lines	2018 Calls: 3581 Emails: 600 Texts: 151	16 hours classroom: Effects of crime, Listening, criminal justice system, resources, and roll play 4-6 hours: observation	No	Department of Justice
Netherlands	09000101	Mon-Fri 8am-8pm Sat 10am-5pm	35 paid professional staff	Dutch English	Office in Utrecht	Victims of crime Traffic accidents Witnesses (No DV victim)	2018: 75000	1 month, theory and practice Coaching, refreshment sessions	No	Ministry of Social Security
Northern Ireland	No national helpline	Mon-Fri 9am-5pm	60 paid staff 200 volunteers			Separate helplines DV and crimes	3000 referrals/month (60% run by another org.)	3 days Comms., PFA, suicide prevention	Yes Script, but not used	Department of Justice
Portugal	116006	Mon-Fri 9am-9pm	17 Paid staff Volunteers Interns	Portuguese English Sign language	Headquarters Home based	Victims of DV mostly	10000/year	30 hours listen to calls 1 week simulation of situations	Yes Very extensive script	State Justice Department Donations EU projects
Serbia	No national helpline	Mon-Fri 9am-4pm	6 Professional staff Volunteers	Serbian English	Headquarters	Victims of DV Mobbing Basic legal info Psychological support	2018: 300	40 hours Legal, psychological support	No Material from training	No funding

	Two general numbers									
Sweden	0200 Soon 116006	Mon-Fri 9am-7pm	5 part-time professional paid staff Volunteers	Swedish English Other languages (w/ volunteers)	Headquarters	Victims of all crimes Special service for DV	2018: 9627	Manual for VS, listen to calls, helpline support	Yes Case management system	Governmental

(*) 2019 calls only include the calls made until September 2019