



#victimsupporteu

you won't believe it,  
but  exists



With Financial support from  
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# AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2021

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– 01.

# FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear VSE members, partners and friends,



Hopefully this newsletter finds everyone well and enjoying a busy autumn season. After almost 2 years, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect lives worldwide. Faced with the evolving challenges, I have been inspired by the resilience of the victim support community and the work that is still being achieved. I therefore take this opportunity to thank you all for your dedication to Victim Support Europe's mission, core values and activities.

I am delighted to announce that we are currently busy planning the [VSE Autumn Conference 2021 'Safe Justice for Victims'](#) to be held in person on the 3 December 2021 at Martin's Château du Lac, Belgium.

In late 2020, VSE embarked on a new initiative to draft a paper that aims to provide a first take on the question "How to ensure safe justice from a victim's perspective?". In doing so, the paper discusses the current practical problems and barriers encountered by victims in achieving justice through tracking a real-life victim's journey from crime to the outcome of criminal proceedings. Additionally, the paper challenges conceptual concerns and preconceived notions that lie at the heart of the current justice system and may influence the victim's ability to achieve safe justice.

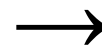
This paper will shape our conversation on how to make the criminal justice system work in a way that is less harmful to victims and their families.

We will begin by discussing the safe reporting for victims seeking justice. Then, we will move to the structural development of victim-centred criminal justice systems, such as legislation, multiagency cooperation, effective communication and information sharing mechanisms within criminal justice systems, and the importance of the training of European judiciary on safe justice. The final live debate will explore the question of what can be done to make the criminal justice system function better on behalf of victims.

I hope you all can join us on the 3rd December in Belgium. No electronic or digital social media platform can replace what happens when people gather together physically. There is no substitute for the subconscious communal connection you experience as you laugh, cry, and gasp together. I look forward to seeing you there.

Geraldine Hanna, President, Victim Support Europe

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- 02.

# VSE LAST MINUTE NEWS

**VSE Autumn Conference 2021 – Registration is still open!**



**Victim Support  
Europe**



**SAFE JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS:  
Transforming Justice Systems/Future Trends**

**VSE Autumn Conference 2021**

**3 DECEMBER  
MARTIN'S CHÂTEAU DU LAC, GENVAL**



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**Join Victim Support Europe's Annual [Autumn Conference 'Safe Justice for Victims: Transforming Justice Systems/Future Trends'](#) which will take place at [Martin's Château du Lac](#) in Genval, Belgium, on **3 December 2021!****

The Conference is an international event bringing together the key players working with victims of crime. In 2021, the event will be held physically again, on a short distance from the centre of Brussels, in stunning surroundings, on the banks of a peaceful lake in the heart of Walloon Brabant.

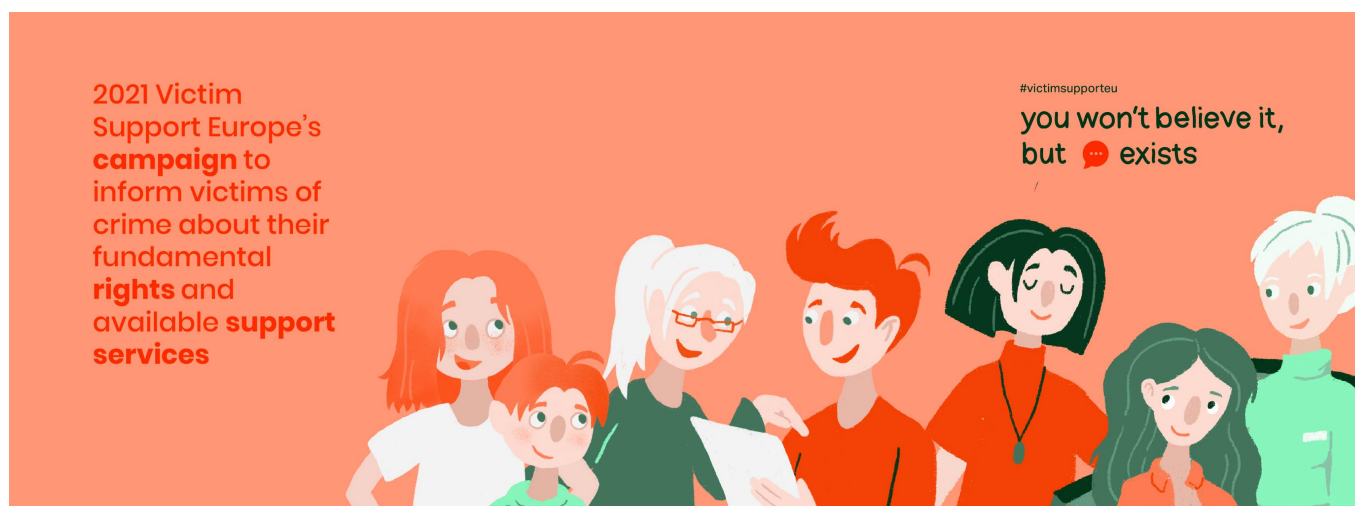
The theme of this year's edition is 'Safe Justice for Victims' which will be the opportunity to discuss the current state of practice of criminal justice system, thereby raising awareness on safe reporting as the first step in seeking justice and addressing the question on what makes the criminal justice system safe for victims? This will be followed by an intellectual discussion on better path forward for criminal justice.

The conference is free to attend, but places are limited so make sure to register. Please find the registration link [here](#).

**[→ LEARN MORE ABOUT THE CONFERENCE](#)**

**Victim Support Europe and its members continue their information campaign "You won't believe it, but it**

## exists" to inform victims about available support services



With 14 partners across 13 countries, the campaign intends to provide the public with information on victim support services and to encourage victims to reach out these services.

Animation films and information visuals are rolled out in social media from 22 of February till the end of 2021 under the hashtag #itexists.

In these films – one produced for each partner country, in the national language, victims invite the public on a powerful and emotional journey through their stories. The characters share what happened to them, their doubts and fears, how they discovered that support existed, when and how they had the courage to seek for help and how they were assisted.

**Check out the animation films to inspire your own efforts.**

[STORY 1 - BELGIUM](#)

[STORY 2 - CROATIA](#)

[STORY 3 - ITALY](#)

[STORY 4 - DENMARK](#)

[STORY 5 - FINLAND](#)

[STORY 6 - SWEDEN](#)

[→ LEARN MORE](#)

## VSE Annual Report 2020 is published!



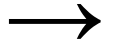
Over 2 million victims of crime supported by VSE Members in 2020, 31 countries, 61 organisations across the world.

In a year of unparalleled challenges, VSE stood strong, continuing to deliver results that benefited both victims and victim support professionals. Looking at 2020, we can proudly say that we have successfully achieved considerable progress in improving victims' rights, support, and services. However, this could only be achieved by the hard work of our

Executive Board Members, our Brussels office team, and with the support we constantly receive from our members.

Discover the highlights and successes of 2020!

[→ READ THE REPORT](#)



– 03.

## VSE PROJECT NEWS



### Facility Dogs Europe (FYDO) Project | Press release Ghent Police: “Our new colleague, facility dog Fluf”

A few months ago, a very special new colleague started working with the Ghent police. His name is Fluf – a male two-year old Labrador retriever. Fluf is a facility dog – a professionally trained dog that provides emotional support to victims and witnesses. He has a soothing effect on them in stressful situations, and provides encouragement, enabling them to tell their story. In addition to this, a facility dog can also help victims and witnesses to cope with trauma.

Photo courtesy: Politie Gent

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## PROTECT Project



PROTECT project partners met in Hannover to work on the new training programme for operators working with restorative justice and victim support services.

This is a 3-year Erasmus+ project dedicated to exchanging good practices on restorative justice and promoting victims’ rights protection. The objective is pursued through the creation of a “peer-learning community”, where partners can actively exchange knowledge, develop common training methodologies, foster professional competences and discuss problematic issues.

[→ READ MORE](#)

## INHERE Project

[The Triage Tool](#) for identification, care and referral of victims of sexual violence at European asylum reception and accommodation initiatives was developed under the INHERE project (Inclusive holistic care for refugee and



migrant victims of sexual violence in Belgium, the United Kingdom and Ireland).

[Good Practice Tool for police hearings](#) with migrant, applicant for international protection, refugee (MAR), trafficked, and LGBT+ victims of sexual violence is online!

The purpose of this tool is to guide law enforcement on trauma-informed practices and techniques. The approach proposed is based on a human rights and victim-centred approaches, requiring that victims are treated with competence and compassion, and provided with appropriate information and referrals. The objective is to achieve a successful interview to support an effective investigation while minimising any secondary victimization.

Find the English version [here](#)

The French, Italian and Dutch versions are available [here](#)

[→ LEARN MORE](#)

## AREV Project | Advancing Rights of Estonian Victims (AREV) project webpage is launched!

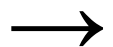


The main goal of the AREV project is to enhance the rights of Estonian victims by improving the protection and support processes of victims of crime in the country. To achieve this goal, VSE works closely with the Estonian Ministry of Justice, the Police and Guard Board, the Social Insurance Board, the healthcare sector, and other key stakeholders to develop, deliver and test tools for information provision, individual needs assessment and referral of victims.

The new webpage will share information about the project partners, objectives, activities and results.

You can view the new webpage [here](#) and follow AREV on [Facebook](#).

[→ LEARN MORE](#)



- 04.

# NEWS FROM VSE MEMBERS

AUSTRIA: As part of the project EUCVT, WEISSER RING was asked to participate and provide training for experts on the rights and needs of victims of terrorism. EUCVT is a two-year pilot project installed by the EU Commission. Its aim is to provide expertise for national authorities on rights and needs of victims of terrorism, as

well as support mechanisms in the various member states. The online-training took part over two days in September.

[→ READ MORE](#)

**CROATIA:** During the three-month period of July, August and September, White Circle Croatia recorded 128 beneficiaries, of which 47 beneficiaries requested psychosocial support and 81 free legal counselling services. This data show a renewed growth in demand for free legal counselling services compared to the previous period this year.

[→ READ MORE](#)

**GERMANY:** Five years of WEISSER RING online counseling service

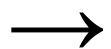
[→ READ MORE](#)

**NETHERLANDS:** Victim Support Netherlands - In September 2021, the court took three weeks to hear statements from 91 relatives of the victims of plane crash MH17. In November another small group of relatives of the deceased victims will address the court.

[→ READ MORE](#)

**NEW ZEALAND:** As Victim Support New Zealand celebrates their 35th anniversary, it's vital we acknowledge former police officer Kevin Joblin. It was Kevin's vision and energy that led to the first Victim Support committee being established in Gisborne in 1986. "It was my aim to take the victim from being the forgotten person in New Zealand society, to someone who was being recognised." For more of Kevin's story watch the video [here](#).

[→ READ MORE](#)



- 05.

## PARTNER NEWS



### **Dog4Life: M. and Amo' - How facility dogs can make a difference!**

Amo', a 3-year-old German shepherd, was trained as a facility dog by Viviana Cialoni, an experienced instructor for Dog4Life.

Part of Amo's training was dedicated to simulations so that he would be able to react properly in any kind of situation and interact with any kind of vulnerable victim. (As Dog4Life protocol indicates, proper choice of puppy and good and balanced training).



[→ LEARN MORE](#)



HEUNI Finland: **SARAH** podcast-series: “Your mess will become your message – Speak up!”

In the SARAH-podcast series migrant women discuss gender-based violence, and the importance of professional support in dealing with the experiences. In each of the podcasts (one in Arabic, Farsi, Somali and English) different marvellous women share their thoughts. The

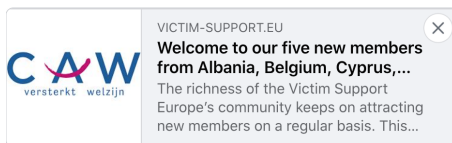
podcasts are available on Soundcloud and Spotify.

[→ LEARN MORE](#)



- 06.

# VSE NEW MEMBERS



**Welcome to our five new members from Albania, Belgium, Cyprus, France and Malta!**

The richness of the Victim Support Europe's community keeps on attracting new members on a regular basis. This month we welcome

five new organisations which have decided to enter our family.

What do they offer in terms of expertise to the network?

[→ LEARN MORE](#)

- Editor: Marina Kazakova

About Victim Support Europe

Victim Support Europe is the leading European umbrella organisation advocating on behalf of all victims of crime, no matter what the crime, no matter who the victim is. VSE represents 63 national member organisations, providing support and information services to more than 2 million people affected by crime every year in 31 countries.

- Contact Victim Support Europe:





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