

Victim-centered approach to improving support services

Coordinator: Croatian Law Centre (HR). Other beneficiaries: Association for Nonviolent Communication (SI), Centre for Legal Resources (RO), Government Office For Human Rights And Rights Of National Minorities (HR), Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Croatia (HR), Patent Association (HU), and Peace Institute (SI).

VICATIS - Victim-centered Approach to Improving Support Services is a transnational project funded by the Justice Programme of the EU under the Call JUST-JACC-VICT-AG-2016, dedicated to improved implementation of the Directive 2012/29/EU establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime (Victims' Directive).

The project is coordinated by the Croatian Law Centre, and implemented in partnership between the following organizations and institutions: Croatian Law Centre, Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Croatia, and Office for Human Rights and the Rights of National Minorities of the Republic of Croatia (HR); Patent Association (HU); Centre for Legal Research (RO); Association for Nonviolent Communication, and Peace Institute (SI).

Several EU-level reports (e.g. by EIGE¹, FRA², and CECL and IALS³) on Directive 2012/29/EU indicate the importance of appropriate and timely information, individualised to meet each victim's needs. In all above, as well as in the recently completed TEVNAS project in Croatia, the right to information is identified as key not just of and in itself, but also for victims' informed participation in the criminal proceedings and their full access to available services.

Majority of studies use legal and institutional analyses of victims' rights, and give little indication of victims' perspective. Some of the project partners from Croatia, Romania and Slovenia had been involved with the FRA research project 'Children and Justice'⁴, which showed that professional and victim perspectives on the aspects of criminal procedure may be at a variance, and that the lack of information, from the child victims' perspective, represents the single most problematic aspect of the experience. These insights informed the project's focus on the victim-centred approach, on assessment of the impact of EU regulation from this perspective, and on the provision of information to victims as key component of victims support.

The project aims to reach the following general objectives:

1. To improve understanding of the impact of current regulation, procedures, and institutional framework on the victims of crime through victim-centred research. This knowledge will be used for advocacy and tool development.

¹ http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/mh0115698enn_0.pdf

² <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/victims-crime-eu-extent-and-nature-support-victims>

³ <http://www.victimprotection.eu/images/4.38-Comparative-Report.pdf>

⁴ <http://fra.europa.eu/en/project/2012/children-and-justice>



2. To contribute to advanced regulatory, procedural and institutional framework relevant to effective and coherent application of the Directive. Evidence-based improvements of victim-related public policies at national and EU levels will be advocated.

3. To develop tools supporting the realisation of the victim's right to information and referral to support services. Tools for diverse key target groups will be produced and disseminated.

The results of the project are expected to produce direct benefits to the victims of crime in each of the participating countries, to contribute to improved public policy, institutional and implementation frameworks dedicated to victims of crime at the national levels, and to inform the EU-level policy, regulatory, and decision-making efforts aimed at the protection of victims of crime.

The duration of the project is 18 months, from 1 October 2017 to 31 March 2019.