



Working conference
" Supporting Victims of Crime in Latvia – Possibilities and Challenges "
Riga, Latvia on February 21-22, 2013

The main objective of this conference is to place protection and support of victims of crime on the policy agenda by advancing constructive multidisciplinary discussions and substantial scenarios of collaboration among responsible authorities and involved professionals in Latvia and beyond. More specifically the conference aims to generate knowledge about victims' needs and adequate minimum standards for meeting them as stipulated in European Union legislation.

Lack of understanding, motivation and means among law enforcement agencies, state officials and society in large has resulted in marginalization of victims needs. Both victims and society are often viewed as marginalized actors in the landscape of crime. At best, some sporadic support initiatives can be identified. Secondary victimization often recurs when a person harmed by a criminal act comes into contact with criminal justice system.

The aim of the conference is to prevent a merely formal implementation of Council Directive 2012/29/EU, and instead facilitate development of a comprehensive systemic approach towards ensuring adequate and effective rights, support and protection of victims of crime in Latvia. That also includes reassessing implementation of the existing state compensation mechanism for victims of violent crime. With this conference and the project we anticipate to build a momentum that would trigger a shift in our response to crime where needs of the violated would come into forefront to form more holistic and healing response to crime.

By bringing international expertise to Latvia to share best practices of victims support mechanisms and research results on various aspects of victimization, we aim to create a forum for discussion, whereby after having evaluated pros and cons of existing developments in other countries, the participants would come to a conclusion about the most optimal scenario for Latvia.

One of the keygoals of the conference is to set a framework for the best applicable strategies of protection and support for victims of crime in Latvia and to foster stronger commitment from relevant state actors. We have built strong partnerships with Legal Aid Administration, State Probation Service, State police, Ministry of Justice and many NGOs. The conference has several target groups – policy makers and political decision makers, involved professionals and NGO activists. We also expect participants from our neighboring countries. This conference is organized as part of project "Substantial Support for Victims: Towards a Holistic Response to Crime Latvia and Beyond".

Registration to conference till February 20, 2013 here: <http://ej.uz/uqnw>
Further information about project: <http://www.providus.lv/public/26862.html>

*Conference is organized within framework of project
"Substantial Support for Victims: Towards a Holistic
Response to Crime Latvia and Beyond"*



Project is financed by European Union



Conference Agenda „Supporting Victims of Crime in Latvia – Possibilities and Challenges”

February 21-22, 2013

Avalon Hotel, 13.Janvara str. 19, Riga, Latvia

February 21, 2013

13:00 – 14:00 Delegate Registration; Coffee served

14:00-15:30 Conference Welcome and Keynote address

Vita Tērauda, Director for Centre for Public Policy PROVIDUS

Ilze Viņķele, Minister of Welfare of the Republic of Latvia

Juris Jansons, Ombudsman

Aleksandrs Dementjevs, Director of State Probation Service

Jānis Bordāns, Minister of Justice of the Republic of Latvia (video)

Keynote address by Denisa Fikarova, European Commission, DG Justice

„Embracing the Victims Needs, why it matters. EU vision for substantial standards in regard to victims of crime”

15:30- 16:00 Coffee Break

PANEL ONE

16:00 – 18:00 Prioritizing Victims Needs – Way Towards Restoring Justice and Adopting a More Balanced Response to Crime

David McKenna, President, Victim Support Europe

“Prioritising Victims Needs and a Balanced Response”

Albin Dearing, Programme Manager Research - Criminal Law and Criminal Justice

Freedom and Justice Department European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights

“Allowing Victims of Crime to Access Justice”

Daniela Bolivar Fernandez, PhD in criminology (KULeuven), coordinator research project

“victims and restorative justice”, European Forum for Restorative Justice”

“Prioritizing victims' needs: the victims' and practitioners' perspective”

Followed by open discussion and Q&A

Moderated by Ilze Dzenovska, Centre for Public Policy PROVIDUS





February 22, 2013

9:00 - 10:00 Registration open; Coffee and light appetizers served

PANEL TWO

10:00 – 12:40 Supporting Victims – Snapshot of Latvia and European Best Practices and Lessons Learned

Andrejs Judins, Member of the Parliament of Republic of Latvia and researcher, PROVIDUS and **Ilze Dzenovska**, researcher, PROVIDUS

“Way Towards Substantial and Coordinated Protection and Support System for Victims of Crime in Latvia”

Ilona Michailovič, Research Fellow of the Criminological Research Department, Law Institute of Lithuania

“Existing Support Mechanisms for Victims of Crime in Lithuania”

Kaisa Üprus-Tali, Victim Support Service’s headspecialist, Estonian National Social Insurance Board

“National Victim Support Service in Estonia”

Jaanus Kangur, Baltic Institute for Crime Prevention and Social Rehabilitation and Victims Support Estonia.

“Bridging Victims Support and Restorative Justice Approach - a More Wholistic Response to Crime in Estonia”

João Lázaro, President, Portuguese Association for Victim Support

“Make it Happen for Victims of Crime in Portugal”

Frida Wheldon, Head of Policy, Victim Support Europe

“How helping Victims of Crime is helping Scotland – new perspective for Latvia”

Moderated by: Ilze Dzenovska, PROVIDUS

12:40 – 13:00 Coffee Break with sandwiches and finger food

PANEL THREE

13:00 – 14:30 Noticing and Understanding Victims Needs in Latvia

Laila Balode, Centre Dardedze and **Inese Ruka**, Crisis Centre Skalbes

“Helping Victims of Crime in Latvia: Notes from the Field”

Irina Litvinova, Legal Aid Administration Latvia, Director

“Implementing State Compensation Mechanism for Victims of Violent Crime in Latvia– What it Reveals about the General Situation of Victims in Latvia”

Andis Rinkevičs, State Police of Latvia, Project director “Preventing Repeat Victimization in the State Police”

“What Police Can Do Better to Ensure Victims Needs. Who Benefits.”

Aleksandrs Dementjevs, Director of State Probation Service

“Victims Needs a New Perspective for State Probation Service in Latvia”

Moderated by Ilona Kronberga, PROVIDUS





14:30 – 15:45 Lunch (There will be informal discussions facilitated during lunch)

PANEL FOUR

15:45 – 17:15 **Future Prospects for a National Policy for Protection and Support of Victims of Crime in Latvia**

Briefing by three facilitators from lunch discussions

Diskusijas dalībnieki:

Participants:

Denisa Fikarova, European Commission

David McKenna, President Victim Support Europe

Albin Dearing, FRA

Andrejs Judins, Member of Parliament of the Republic of Latvia

Dimitrijs Trofimovs, Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Latvia, Head of Sectoral policy department

Ilze Kurme, Ministry of Welfare of the Republic of Latvia, Department of Finance and Development

Indra Gratkovska, Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Latvia, Head of Criminal Law department

Moderated by: Andrejs Judins and Ilze Dzenovska

17:15 – 19:00 **Reception and Closing remarks**

David McKenna, President, Victim Support Europe

Ilona Kronberga, PROVIDUS

