

# 9

## Protection of victims



*Alongside guaranteeing the rights of suspects and accused persons, improved protection for the rights of victims of crime, in particular women and children, featured highly on political agendas across the European Union (EU). Efforts to improve access to information and access to compensation, which are essential to ensure that the rights of victims of crime are made effective in practice, can be noted among many EU Member States. Both the EU and several Member States also introduced improvements to data collection on victims of crime to support the development of effective policies.*

This chapter covers developments in EU and Member State policies and practices in the area of the rights of victims of crime for the year 2010. In order to gain a comprehensive overview of this area it should be read together with Chapter 8 on Access to justice, which focuses on developments relating to access to justice in criminal and civil law. The chapter will first outline general developments in legal standards at the EU and Council of Europe levels. It will then move on to discuss particular areas where notable developments occurred in 2010, namely: protection of victims, including compensation and access to information; violence against women; and data collection and evidence-based policymaking.

### 9.1. Developments at EU and international levels

The following section deals with developments in legal standards at the level of the EU – including case law of the Court of Justice of the EU (CJEU) – and the Council of Europe that are relevant to the protection of victims of crime. These developments signal a growing trend towards increasing protection for victims in the context of legal proceedings.

At EU level three developments can be noted. First, the European Parliament approved the European Commission's proposal for a Human Trafficking Directive<sup>1</sup> in December 2010 and the Council's approval is expected to follow.<sup>2</sup> This directive

#### Key developments in the area of victims' protection:

- initiatives were taken at EU level to improve legislative protection of victims, such as the Human Trafficking Directive, the proposed European Protection Order, and discussions on a new Victims Directive;
- stronger standards were set for the protection of victims, such as the adoption by the Council of Europe of Guidelines on child-friendly justice, and several Member States' ratification of the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings;
- developments took place at national level to improve the position of victims, including access to compensation and information on their rights in the context of legal proceedings;
- efforts were made to address violence against women by both the Council of the European Union and the European Commission;
- measures were taken to improve data collection on victims at EU as well as national level.

adopts the three 'P' – prevention, protection and prosecution – response to trafficking, and seeks to increase elements of assistance and support to victims, especially with regard to the inclusion of three specific articles related to child victims.

Second, the draft European Protection Order,<sup>3</sup> which is currently under negotiation, focuses on inter-personal violence and aims to provide victims with protection in EU trans-

<sup>1</sup> European Commission (2010a).

<sup>2</sup> European Parliament (2010a); Council of the European Union (2010a).

<sup>3</sup> European Commission (2010b), p. 5.

border cases. The draft passed the first reading in the European Parliament in December 2010.<sup>4</sup>

Third, discussions were underway in 2010 to identify how existing EU legislation could be amended or replaced to better meet the needs of victims.<sup>5</sup> Victims' needs are currently covered by the Framework Decision on the standing of victims in criminal proceedings and the Directive on compensation to crime victims.<sup>6</sup>

*The Framework Decision on the standing of victims in criminal proceedings defines a 'victim' as "a natural person who has suffered harm, including physical or mental injury, emotional suffering or economic loss, directly caused by acts or omissions that are in violation of the criminal law of a Member State".*

*Article 1(a), Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA on the standing of victims in criminal proceedings, OJ 2001 L 82, p. 1.*

In the case of *Eredics*, the CJEU offered clarification of the definition of 'victim' as it appears in the Framework Decision on the standing of victims in criminal proceedings. It stated that for the purposes of this legislation, 'victim' referred only to 'natural persons' (a human being) and could not include 'legal persons' (such as an organisation that is defined as such in law).<sup>7</sup> This decision confirmed the CJEU's finding on this question in *Dell'Orto* of 2007,<sup>8</sup> and serves to further inform developments in the field of victims' rights in the EU.

In relation to Council of Europe standards, in 2010 a number of EU Member States ratified the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings of 2005, specifically **Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands and Sweden**. The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe also adopted Guidelines on child-friendly justice,<sup>9</sup> which serve to protect the rights of the child in the context of legal proceedings. A tabulated overview of relevant international human rights instruments binding the EU Member States is given in Chapter 10 on international obligations.

## 9.2. Issues in focus

A 2009 report on victims in Europe, issued by the Portuguese Association for Victim Support (*Associação Portuguesa de Apoio à Vítima*, APAV) and funded by the European Commission, suggests that many EU Member States could benefit from reforming their current systems in terms of providing better protection for victims, including their standing in criminal proceedings.<sup>10</sup> While many challenges remain in ensuring that victims' rights are upheld in practice, it is also the case that a number of innovative approaches to rights protection have emerged. The following section will consider general developments at the national level, and will then focus on compensation of victims and the provision of information to victims about their rights.

### 9.2.1. General measures

At a general level, it is possible to highlight the development of legislative measures and practices among the EU Member States that enhance protection for victims. In **Romania**, a new criminal procedural code was adopted in June 2010, which will come into force in 2012.<sup>11</sup> The law details the rights of the victim during the criminal justice process – including the right to information, the right to legal aid, and the right to protection and compensation – as well as the use of mediation services.<sup>12</sup> In **Lithuania**, a new draft law on the protection of victims of violence in the private sphere, which would introduce special protection for victims of violence and their families, is being considered by the parliament.<sup>13</sup>

At a more practical level, many EU Member States have reconstructed or refurbished physical structures like courts in order to accommodate the needs of victims. In January 2010, **Ireland** officially opened a new Criminal Courts Complex, which includes a suite for victims and victim support organisations, and a room specifically designed for children. It also has a separate and private entrance/exit for victims and witnesses.<sup>14</sup>

#### Promising practice

#### Avoiding gaps by close cooperation: the 'Alliance against Violence'

To enhance cooperation and avoid gaps in service provision to victims, various agencies work together in some EU Member States. In **Austria** in September 2010, the inter-ministerial 'Alliance against Violence' was launched, comprising the Federal Ministries of the Interior, Justice, Economy, Family and Youth, and Women and Civil Service. The Ministry of Interior established a coordination body within the criminal intelligence service, while the Federal Security Academy will support the Alliance with its research. Its main tasks will be to coordinate all measures against violence, to develop strategies for improving the prevention of violence, and to build a link between the police and all other actors dealing with violence. Additionally, the development of specific models to address various types of violence is planned.

For more information, see: [www.bmi.gv.at](http://www.bmi.gv.at)

4 European Parliament (2010b); Council of the European Union (2010b).

5 European Council (2010) and European Commission (2010c).

6 Council Directive 2004/80/EC, OJ 2004 L 261, p. 15.

7 CJEU, C-205/09, *Eredics and Sapi*, 21 October 2010.

8 CJEU, C-467/05 *Dell'Orto*, 28 June 2007.

9 Council of Europe, Committee of Ministers (2010).

10 Portugal, Portuguese Association for Victim Support (2009).

11 Romania, Legea 135/2010, 15 July 2010.

12 *Ibid.*, Articles 81, 93, and 486.

13 Lithuania, Lietuvos Respublikos apsaugos nuo smurto privačioje erdvėje įstatymo projektas, No. XIP-2325, 23 July 2010.

14 Irish Times (2010).

In **Poland**, within the framework of the 'Nationwide Victim Assistance Network', a help centre has been established in every Polish region (*voivodeship*) called *Sieć pomocy ofiarom przestępstw*. The European Commission funds these centres as part of the programme '2007 Prevention of and Fight against Crime'. There are currently 16 such centres in total, which aim to provide legal assistance, and psychological and social care to crime victims, and rely mainly on volunteers.<sup>15</sup>

### 9.2.2. Compensation

Alongside punishment of the offender, compensation can play an important role in restoring the victim's situation when their rights as a victim have been violated. Several EU Member States introduced or reformed legislation in the area of criminal compensation during the reporting period.

In **the Netherlands**, amendments with effect from January 2011 were introduced to strengthen the position of the victim in the criminal procedure by, for instance, making it easier for the victim to claim compensation.<sup>16</sup> Consideration is also being given to a proposal, submitted in April 2010, to amend legislation on criminal injuries compensation. The bill, currently pending in the House of Representatives, would expand the categories of persons who can submit a claim to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund and the cases in which a benefit can be claimed, as well as simplifying and modernising existing legislation.<sup>17</sup> Further changes to expand the categories of persons that can submit claims have been proposed by the government.<sup>18</sup> However, on 23 March 2010, the Senate rejected a bill on Emotional Loss which would have made it possible to allow compensation for emotional damage for relatives of deceased victims and relatives of victims who sustained serious injuries.

In **Poland**, the position of victims of crime has been strengthened through the amendment of the penal code, which includes the power for courts to oblige an offender to pay compensation beyond immediate material damages. In **Germany**, discussions have taken place on the issue of reforming legislation on the compensation of victims in order to make the process easier and more transparent.<sup>19</sup>

Some Member States oblige offenders to contribute to a crime victim fund. **Finland** is developing such a fund, which is based on an established Swedish model from the mid-1990s.<sup>20</sup> In **Sweden**, all offenders convicted of an offence punishable by a prison sentence are liable to pay a lump sum of approximately EUR 50 to the Fund for Victims of Crime, which generates approximately EUR 3.5 million a

year. The fund, through the Swedish Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority (*Brottsoffermyndigheten*), has been a major sponsor of many different projects concerning crime victims – mainly by supporting civil society organisations and research – and it has continued to increase over the years.<sup>21</sup>

In **Sweden**, the authorities have also investigated the possibility of making services more accessible to crime victims by providing the opportunity to apply for compensation online. In December 2010, it was, however, only possible to access applications online, not to submit them.

In **Germany**, an organisation was established in February 2009 to deal with the abuse of minors in children's homes during the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>22</sup> Its interim report, published in January 2010, elaborates on the possibilities of compensation for the victims. However, it comes to the conclusion that most compensation claims are statute-barred according to the relevant legal provisions. It is therefore evaluating the possibility of amending the Victims Compensation Act and the feasibility of a compensation fund for the victims.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, since its creation in April 2010, the Roundtable on Sexual Abuse of Children has initiated a research network for the detection and prevention of sexual child abuse.<sup>24</sup> It is also examining the possibility of extending the statute of limitations for civil compensation claims in this area.<sup>25</sup>

### 9.2.3. Information for victims

If victims are not aware of their rights, they may have difficulty in exercising them. A number of measures can be noted in EU Member States, some of which are innovative. In **Germany**, legislation has been introduced to provide better information to victims on their rights, as early as possible and in a language they understand.<sup>26</sup>

In 2010, an English version of the **Swedish** introduction to courts for victims of crime was launched (see Figure 9.1).<sup>27</sup> In **Poland**, within the framework of the National Programme for Crime Victims, authorities have set up an eponymous website (*Krajowy Program na Rzecz Ofiar Przestępstw*) with complete texts of legal acts, contact details of help centres and summaries of victims' rights.

Some EU Member States have developed victims' charters, which explain victims' rights in an accessible format.

15 For more information, see: [www.pokrzywdzeni.gov.pl](http://www.pokrzywdzeni.gov.pl).

16 Netherlands, Decision of 13 July 2010.

17 Netherlands, Parliamentary paper No. 32 363, No. 8 (Government amendment).

18 *Ibid.*

19 Germany, Federal Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs (*Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales*), Letter of 14 September 2010.

20 Finland, Ministry of Justice (*Oikeusministeriö, Justitieministeriet*) (2010).

21 See [www.brottsoffermyndigheten.se/default.asp?id=1292](http://www.brottsoffermyndigheten.se/default.asp?id=1292), *Brottsoffermyndighetens årsredovisning 2010*, p. 9.

22 For more information on children's rights, see Chapter 4, 'The rights of the child and protection of children'.

23 *Runder Tisch Heimerziehung* (2010).

24 See 'Sitzung' section of *Runder Tisch* website: [www.rundertisch-kindesmissbrauch.de/sitzungen.htm](http://www.rundertisch-kindesmissbrauch.de/sitzungen.htm). Germany, Ministry for Education and Research (*Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung*) (2010).

25 Germany, Ministry of Justice (*Bundesministerium für Justiz*) (2010).

26 Germany, Gesetz zur Stärkung der Rechte von Verletzten und Zeugen im Strafverfahren (2. Opferrechtsreformgesetz), BGBl. 2009 I, p. 2280, 29 July 2009.

27 The Swedish Authority also has a quick guide on compensation, available at: [www.brottsoffermyndigheten.se/default.asp?id=2237](http://www.brottsoffermyndigheten.se/default.asp?id=2237).

Figure 9.1: Court Introduction (*Rättegångsskolan*)

### Welcome to Court Introduction

If you have been victim of crime you are likely facing a rare situation that can make you anxious and uncertain. If the crime was reported, the police opened a chain of events where you as the victim and several agencies and organizations may be involved. Maybe the offense will be dealt with in court. It can be difficult to know where you are going to turn to for support and to answer your questions. [Read more >>](#)



Source: Sweden, Swedish Crime Victim and Support Authority, available at: [www.courtintroduction.se](http://www.courtintroduction.se)

Ireland's Victims Charter and a Guide to the Criminal Justice System were publicly launched by the Minister of Justice and Law Reform in July 2010. The charter has received the Plain English Mark from the National Adult Literacy Agency for its accessibility to the non-technical reader.<sup>28</sup>

Other efforts to popularise knowledge about the rights of victims are more innovative. A radio message was aired every day in December 2009 in Bulgaria on 'Darik' national radio to inform victims about their rights.<sup>29</sup> Hungary used the largest music festival in the country to make the public aware of the rights of victims. In Poland, the Ministry of Justice launched a campaign called 'Come out of the shadow. Let yourself be helped' (*Wyjdź z cienia! Pozwól sobie pomóc!*) which addresses victims of crime and encourages them to make use of the assistance on offer. The

initiative includes about 2,000 billboards throughout the country as well as YouTube clips.

In Romania in 2009, a hotline was set up to assist victims of crime in obtaining information on their rights and compensation possibilities.<sup>30</sup> In Finland, Victim Support Finland initiated a helpline service to support crime victims with a foreign background. This new service is part of a five-year Victim Support Development Project (2007–2011) which aims to develop new tools to improve victim support services and make them accessible to all, regardless of their background.<sup>31</sup>

28 Ireland, Victims of Crime Office, Victims Charter, available at [www.victimsofcrime.ie](http://www.victimsofcrime.ie).

29 See Bulgaria, National Council for assistance and compensation to victims of crime, available at: [www.compensation.bg/Default.aspx](http://www.compensation.bg/Default.aspx).

30 Romania, Ministry of Justice (*Ministerul Justiției*), information available at: [www.just.ro](http://www.just.ro).

31 Finland, *Rikosuhripäivystys/Brottsofferjouren* (RIKU) (Victim Support), available at: [www.riku.fi/fi/victim+support/services](http://www.riku.fi/fi/victim+support/services).

### 9.2.4. Violence against women

Violence against women remains a widespread problem<sup>32</sup> and continues to occupy a prominent position on the political agenda, a fact underlined by the 2010 Spanish presidency of the Council's focus on the issue.<sup>33</sup> Children are also often vulnerable to violence and abuse, and girls are particularly vulnerable to sexual abuse, which is addressed in Chapter 4 on rights of the child and protection of children.

In 2010, the European Commission published the findings of a major project assessing the *Feasibility of harmonisation of national legislation on gender violence and violence against children (FSL study)*. The goal of the study was to examine whether it was both feasible and necessary to harmonise national legislation on violence against women, violence against children and sexual identity violence at the EU level. The study identified a number of challenges with respect to looking at the origins and causes of violence against women and the other groups studied, data collection in these areas, and possibilities for legislative harmonisation.

*“Reparations for women cannot be just about returning them to the situation in which they were found before the individual instance of violence, but instead should strive to have a transformative potential.”*

*UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Rashida Manjoo, 19 April 2010, paragraph 85*

The draft European Protection Order, discussed above in the context of developments at EU level, would ensure that a person continues to benefit from protection measures even if they move or travel abroad. This is of particular benefit to women who are victims of inter-personal violence. At the policy level, the Council adopted two sets of conclusions. In March 2010, the Council adopted ‘Conclusions on the eradication of violence against women’, which urges Member States to enhance their efforts to end violence against women and requests the European Commission to develop an overall strategy.<sup>34</sup> In April 2010, the Council also adopted ‘Conclusions on improving prevention to tackle violence against women and care to its victims within the scope of law enforcement’, with targeted measures for police on victims of gender-based violence.

In December 2010, the Ad Hoc Committee on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence approved the first Draft Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.<sup>35</sup> The Convention would create legally binding standards explicitly requiring States to prevent violence against women and domestic violence, protect

its victims and punish the perpetrators. It fills a significant gap in human rights protection for women and encourages Member States to extend its protection to all victims of domestic violence.

At national level, developments can be noted among three EU Member States. In **Greece**, in 2009 a National Multi-Annual Programme on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women (2009-2013) was launched by the Ministry of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights. The Programme incorporates both preventive and supporting actions for victims of gender-based violence. This includes the operation of a 24-hour SOS telephone line, an awareness-raising campaign and the establishment of 13 new Consultation Centres. This is the first time that a complete action programme has been elaborated in **Greece** for combating gender-based violence. In **Portugal**, according to the official government website ([www.cig.gov.pt](http://www.cig.gov.pt)), there has been an increase in reported cases of gender-based violence. In **Cyprus**, a national non-governmental organisation (NGO) has received funding in order to carry out activities related to domestic violence, including awareness raising, mapping, website building, and the offer of training to the judiciary, public prosecutors and other criminal justice actors.<sup>36</sup>

During 2010, two EU Member States, the **Netherlands** and the **Czech Republic**, were monitored by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CEDAW) under the periodic State reporting procedure. Among other observations, CEDAW welcomed measures in both the **Netherlands** and the **Czech Republic** to combat domestic violence. At the same time, the **Netherlands** was urged to ensure free legal aid for all victims of domestic violence. In relation to the **Czech Republic**, CEDAW raised several concerns relating to low rates of reporting, prosecution and conviction for domestic violence and rape, as well as the definition of rape and the availability of legal aid.<sup>37</sup>

## 9.3. Data collection and evidence-based policymaking

The development of effective and targeted legislation and policies addressing both the needs and substantive rights of victims depends on the collection of solid data. Given that many victims never report their experiences to the police, reliance on criminal justice data and information from court cases can only paint a limited picture of the realities on the ground with respect to the experiences of victims of crime. For more information on data collection and racist crimes, see Chapter 6 on racism and ethnic discrimination.

<sup>32</sup> Council of the European Union (2010c), paragraph 3.

<sup>33</sup> Council of the European Union (2010d) For more information, see Chapter 5 ‘Equality and non-discrimination’, which deals with discrimination on the grounds of gender, and Chapter 6 ‘Racism and ethnic discrimination’, which has a section dedicated to racist crime.

<sup>34</sup> Council of the European Union (2010e).

<sup>35</sup> Council of Europe, Ad Hoc Committee on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (2011).

<sup>36</sup> European Commission (2010d).

<sup>37</sup> United Nations, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (2010a), paragraphs. 5, 26-27. CEDAW (2010b), paragraphs. 7, 22, 23.

FRA ACTIVITY

### EU-wide survey on violence against women

On the occasion of International Women's Day 2010, the FRA Director was invited to give a speech in the hemicycle of the European Parliament in which he addressed violence against women as a human rights abuse and referred to the Agency's EU-wide survey on violence against women. In line with a European Parliament resolution of 25 November 2009<sup>38</sup> – which called on the FRA to collect reliable and comparable statistics on all grounds of discrimination, including “comparative data on violence against women in the EU” – the FRA began preparations for the first EU-wide survey on violence against women in 2010.

For more information, see: [fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/research/projects/proj\\_eu\\_survey\\_vaw\\_en.htm](http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/research/projects/proj_eu_survey_vaw_en.htm).

Regular criminal victimisation surveys have been in existence in some EU Member States, such as the **UK** and **Finland**, for several decades. Recognising the continued absence of comprehensive and comparable EU-wide data on crime victimisation, and building on the previous work of the International Crime Victims Survey (ICVS) that included some EU Member States, Eurostat launched a pilot initiative in 2009 to test a proposal for an ‘EU Security Survey’. This survey is also confusingly referred to as the ‘European Safety Survey’ and the ‘EU victimisation survey module’ in the Eurostat Statistical Requirements Compendium 2010, and as the ‘EU victimisation survey’ in the Eurostat Statistical Programme 2010.<sup>39</sup> The results from Member States that tested the survey were reviewed in the course of 2010, and the findings will be used in the development of a full survey. It is proposed that between 5,000 and 8,000 people will be randomly surveyed in each Member State, the results of which will serve to provide rich information about victimisation experiences.

In some EU Member States, there is encouraging evidence that data collection on victims of crime continues to be supported as the basis for policy formulation. In **Finland**, which has a long tradition of research in this and related criminal justice fields, the National Research Institute of Legal Policy (*Rättspolitiska forskningsinstitutet*) has initiated a large-scale research project concerning the status of victims of crime. The project focuses on access to compensation and victim support services, and the results of the research will form the basis for future initiatives to ensure the effectiveness of the compensation process. The project report is planned for early 2011.<sup>40</sup> In **France**, the Ministry of Justice (*Ministère de la Justice et des Libertés*) published

the results of a satisfaction survey based on 134,000 crime victims whose cases were judged in 2007.

In **Ireland**, the Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime commissioned research on the needs of victims of crime, which was launched in October 2010.<sup>41</sup> 300 victims of crime were interviewed for the study, which also gauged public and professional awareness of the availability of support services for victims of crime. The **Swedish** Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority (*Brottsoffermyndigheten*) was commissioned by the government to carry out a study on the effectiveness of procedures for payment of criminal injuries compensation to persons in other States who were victims of human trafficking for sexual purposes. The study, presented in 2010, was carried out from a comparative perspective involving nine other EU Member States and Norway.<sup>42</sup>

In the **UK** – specifically in England and Wales – the British Crime Survey has been in existence since the early 1980s, with survey results for 2009 and 2010, based on interviews with 45,000 respondents, published in July 2010. Interviews for the latest Scottish Crime and Safety Survey (UK) began in June 2010, when it was also announced that a review of the 2001 Scottish Strategy for Victims Action Plan was underway. According to a response to a parliamentary question in the Scottish Parliament, the review will include consultation on options for improving victim support.<sup>43</sup>

### Promising practice

#### Raising awareness of compensation funds among victims

In the **Netherlands**, a study revealed that victims rarely draw on compensation funds. Research from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund (*Schadefonds Geweldsmisdrijven*), published in February 2010, shows that 28,000 victims a year would like to and could make a claim based on the statutory regulations for financial compensation. However, only one fifth of about 37,000 victims a year actually do so in practice. The main reason for this seems to be that 72% of victims are not aware of the existence of the fund.

For more information, see: [Netherlands, Huiselijkgeweld.nl](http://Netherlands,Huiselijkgeweld.nl) (2010), ‘Weinig beroep op schadefonds geweld’, 16 February 2010

38 European Parliament (2010c).

39 For more information, see Eurostat Statistical Requirements Compendium 2010, p. 63; Statistical Programme 2010, p. 24.

40 Finland, *Oikeuspoliittinen tutkimuslaitos/Rättspolitiska forskningsinstitutet*, see: [www.optula.om.fi/en/Etusivu](http://www.optula.om.fi/en/Etusivu).

41 Central Statistics Office (CSO) (2010). See also Kilcommins, S. *et al* (2010).

42 Sweden, Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority (2010).

43 Scotland, Scottish Parliament, Written Answers to Parliamentary Questions, 30 June 2010.

## Outlook

Ongoing work in the EU to promote the rights of victims appears promising. Initiatives on the rights of suspects and the accused, in particular the 'Roadmap' discussed in Chapter 8 on Access to justice, would benefit from consideration of parallel developments in the area of victims' rights. This would allow for clearer and more comprehensive legislation addressing the rights of suspects and the accused, and those of victims and witnesses.

Legislative reforms aside, the effective transposition of directives will remain crucial in the coming years. Research evidence from reports funded by the European Commission demonstrates that victim-centred laws are often poorly translated into practice and as a result there is no tangible impact on the ground. To this end, the forthcoming 'European Safety Survey', together with the FRA's Violence against Women survey – which includes violence in childhood, and reporting patterns among victims – will shed light on victims' enjoyment of their rights in practice. In this regard, these surveys may be considered as significant developments in the field of data collection on victims of crime that will underpin evidence-based developments in the future.

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## UN & CoE

## EU

January	January
February	February
March	8 March – Council of the European Union adopts conclusions on the eradication of violence against women 18 March – 12 Member States initiate a proposal for a directive on the European Protection Order 23 March – European Commission proposes a directive on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings, and protecting victims
19 April – UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women addresses the issue of compensation in her first Report to the UN Human Rights Council, underlining State obligations under international law to provide the right to remedy and access to effective remedies for the harm that victims of such violence have suffered	March
April	26 April – Council of the European Union adopts conclusions on improving prevention to tackle violence against women and care to its victims within the scope of law enforcement
May	April
June	May
July	June
August	July
September	August
October	September
17 November – CoE Committee of Ministers adopts guidelines on child friendly justice	21 October – CJEU offers a clarification of the term 'victim' in the <i>Eredics and Vassné Sápi</i> case
November	October
17 December – CoE Ad Hoc Committee on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence adopts a draft Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence	November
December	December

