



# EU Centre of Expertise for victims of terrorism

In the past years, terrorism has remained a major threat to security in the European Union. The European Commission is committed to ensuring that victims of terrorism can fully rely on their rights independently of where in the EU the terrorist attack takes place. The EU adopted a solid set of rules on victims' rights including particular provisions on rights of victims of terrorism that meet more directly their specific needs. This is why learning to deal with victims of terrorism is crucial even before any attack takes place...

## What is the EU Centre of expertise for victims of terrorism?

The European Commission set up the EU Centre of expertise for victims of terrorism (the EU Centre) in January 2020 to offer expertise, guidance and support to national authorities and victim support organisations. The EU Centre will help to ensure that the EU rules on victims of terrorism are correctly applied. It will promote exchange of best practices and sharing of expertise among the practitioners and specialists across borders. It will not provide for direct help and assistance to particular victims of terrorism, but it will help to ensure that national structures offer professional assistance and support to victims of terrorism in every EU country. The EU Centre is a pilot project that will last for two years.

## Who is involved?

The EU Centre is set up and run by the European Commission with the support of a consortium of victim support associations led by Victim Support Europe<sup>1</sup>. The consortium will carry out the tasks of the EU Centre on behalf of the Commission. It should be also noted that the European Network on Victims' Rights<sup>2</sup> - a platform of national experts from EU Member States dealing with victims' rights - has an important role when it comes to steering and supporting the activities of the EU Centre.

<sup>1</sup> The consortium led by Victim Support Europe acts in a partnership with the Association française des Victimes du Terrorisme, the Fondation Lénval and ARQ National Psychotrauma Centre

<sup>2</sup> The European Network on Victims' Rights is a platform of national experts dealing with victims' rights in the national administration of EU Member States

## What the EU Centre does?

### • Training and handbooks

The EU Centre will offer training programmes for national authorities and victim support organisations of the Member States. The training courses will focus on practical, legal and psychological issues related to victims of terrorism. Handbooks with useful information on the rights, needs and support of victims of terrorism will also be provided during the training sessions. The Centre will ensure that staff specifically trained on the needs and rights of victims of terrorism is available in each Member State. Following the trainings in Brussels, the staff will be also equipped with the necessary skills to share the know-how at the local level.

### • Hub of expertise

The EU Centre will offer a platform for national authorities and victim support organisations in the Member States to exchange knowledge and experience on rights of victims of terrorism. In particular, those who have already helped victims of terrorism can share their knowledge with their colleagues in the EU countries not directly affected by terrorist attacks. The EU Centre will also ensure that more effective responses are available for victims of a terrorist attack in an EU country where they don't usually live, by promoting a better flow of information across borders.

The EU Centre will also set up a database with information on experts in different fields like:

- Psycho-trauma experts specifically trained to deal with post-traumatic syndromes characteristic to victims of terrorism;
- Psychologists, lawyers, victim support organisations and first responders.



## CONTACTS

Information on the rights and needs of victims of terrorism and the activities of the EU Centre will be on the website of the European Commission.

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