



As part of their “Enhancing Stakeholder Awareness and Resources for Hate Crime Victim Support” (EStAR) project, ODIHR and VBRG invite you to their online event:

Improving National Hate Crime Victim Support Systems in Eastern Europe and Western Balkans Countries Regional Workshop (*online*)

19 October 2021, 9:30-12:30 CET



<https://osce-org.zoom.us/j/96131751043>

Passcode: 05914342

Concept Note & Agenda

The EStAR project is implemented by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the Association of Counseling Centers for Victims of Right-wing, Racist and Antisemitic Violence in Germany (VBRG). Through a victim-centered approach, the project provides tools for improving protection and services for hate crime victims and builds capacity of criminal justice and victim support experts and practitioners.

An effective and responsive hate crime victim support system is built upon several essential elements. These include the law that establishes the rights of victims of crime, including recognizing hate crime victims as victims with special needs and requiring additional protection, the existence of a state-run system that provides general support to all victims and specialist support to victims of hate crimes, as well as the ability of the police to record hate crimes as a separate category of crime and the ability to prosecute such crimes accordingly. Not all OSCE participating States have all these elements in place.

Most OSCE participating States run general systems to support victims of crimes, but are lacking specialized hate crime victim support services. This gap is very often filled by civil society organizations (CSOs) that provide targeted support to victims of hate crimes and lead advocacy and strategic litigation efforts to improve the overall situation of hate crime victims in their respective countries. While the role of CSOs is crucial, they often operate with minimal resources, by working closely with the communities they serve, applying the skills and knowledge they gain through listening to the needs of victims and tailoring their services to meet those needs.

To promote international exchange on existing good practices in CSO response to hate crime victims' needs, ODIHR and VBRG are hosting a workshop featuring promising and successful initiatives from select project countries. CSO representatives will share their practical experience, serving as role models for other CSOs looking to expand, enhance and strengthen their support to hate crime victims. The sessions will focus on international efforts to improve hate crime victim support with a focus on grass-roots initiatives and their efforts to engage with state authorities on hate crime prevention and improving victim support. All presentations will be followed by short Q&A sessions.

The workshop is primarily aimed at experts and professionals involved with the EStAR project who work to protect and support hate crime victims in several regions of the OSCE region. These include civil society representatives, human rights activists, representatives from the criminal justice sector, including prosecutors and judges, as well as researchers in the field of criminal and restorative justice alongside specialist hate crime victim support providers. The workshop will also be open to the general public.

The workshop will be held in English, with simultaneous interpretation into Russian.

The project “Enhancing Stakeholder Awareness and Resources for Hate Crime Victim Support (EStAR)” is co-financed by European Union’s Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014-2020) and the Federal Government of Germany.



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Implemented by



Agenda

9:30 – 9:45 Opening Remarks

Welcome:

Ms. Jane Lawson, ODIHR/ESTAR

Mr. Eben Louw, VBRG Board Member

Event Moderator:

Mr. Tomasz Filipiak, ESTAR Associate Project Officer, ODIHR

9:45 – 10:30 International cooperation to improve hate crime victim support systems in Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans

The session will look at the current situation and international efforts to improve hate crime victim support systems in Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans.

Speakers:

- **Ms. Olena Bondarenko**, Advocacy Officer, Social Action Centre, Ukraine, ESTAR Network Expert – Setting the Scene: The State of Support Structures and Specialist Services for Hate Crime Victims in the region
- **Ms. Angela Longo**, Programme Manager, Directorate General of Democracy, Council of Europe – Strengthening access to justice through non-judicial redress mechanisms for victims of discrimination, hate crime and hate speech in Eastern Partnership countries and in the Western Balkans

Moderator:

Mr. Tomasz Filipiak, ESTAR Associate Project Officer, ODIHR

10:30 – 11:15 Engaging the State authorities to improve hate crime victim support

This session will highlight successful initiatives aimed at improving cooperation between governmental structures and civil society in preventing hate crimes and providing better hate crime victim support. Speakers will explore the importance and benefits of coalition building when working with state institutions, as well as their work in direct victim support provision. Special attention will be given to successful lobbying and advocacy efforts in favour of hate crime victims in Ukraine and Serbia, offering a critical outlook on the process and presenting ways of overcoming obstacles.

Speakers:

- **Mr. Yulian Kondur**, Roma activist, Project Coordinator, International Charitable Organization "Roma Women Fund "Chiricli", Coalition of Roma NGOs in Ukraine – Working with State authorities to prevent attacks and provide better support to victims of anti-Roma hate crimes
- **Ms. Kristina Todorović**, Attorney-at-Law at Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights (YUCOM) – Advocacy, lobbying and strategic litigation to improve hate crime victim support in Serbia

Moderator:

Mr. Miloš Kovačević, Community Coordinator, Da se Zna!, ESTAR Network Expert

11:15 – 11:30 Break

11:30 – 12:15 Providing targeted support to hate crime victims from marginalized communities

This session will present good practices in providing targeted hate crime victim support to victims representing some of the most marginalized communities, focusing in particular on persons with disabilities and LGBTI community members. The session will address the most persistent obstacles in providing support, present the specificities linked to particular strands of hate crime, as well as showcase the practical solutions that were applied by the support organizations.

Speakers:

- **Ms. Anna Arganashvili**, Executive Director, Partnership for Human Rights NGO – Legal aid to victims of hate crimes with disabilities in Georgia
- **Ms. Hasmik Petrosyan**, Lawyer, Pink Armenia, ESTAR Network Expert – Support to victims of anti-LGBTI hate crimes in Armenia

Moderator:

Mr. Griffin Ferry, Adviser on Civil Society Relations, ODIHR

12:15 – 12:30 Closing Remarks

Overview of workshop discussions and wrap up.

- **Ms. Jane Lawson**, ODIHR/ESTAR