

FINAL CONFERENCE/ 17 September 2021  
Talking about trauma - Towards a victim-centred criminal justice system

**Spain: Multidisciplinary cooperation and referrals**

**RE-JUST**



This presentation has been produced with the financial support of the Justice Programme of the European Union.

# CONTEXT

**Support services** for victims of crime are essential to preserve the rights of victims, especially the right of access to the justice system, as established in the Victims' Rights Directive (2012/29/EU ).

## 👉 EU Strategy on Victims' Rights (2020-2025)



- ✓ targeted and integrated support
- ✓ multi-agency approach
- ✓ close cooperation authorities ↔ relevant organisations
- ✓ inclusive strategy that responds to all victims

*Lack of coordination between public and private agents involved*

*Lack of useful and systemised information about support services*

*High dropout rate of the supporting services: victim's feeling powerless*

*Not enough attention to particularly vulnerable victims*

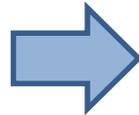


# VICTIMS-ORIENTED REFERRAL PROPOSAL

We present a model for a step-by-step **referral strategy**, being part already of the **ACTION PLAN** within the framework of **RE-JUST project**. It covers from the access to the justice system to the enforcement of the sentence.



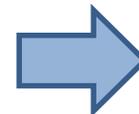
**Coordination and Assistance Centre** as the first step in the assistance process to organise the network of available resources and facilitate a multidisciplinary study of cases



Safe space where the victim can learn the facts and understand his or her situation: **realistic expectations about the criminal procedure**



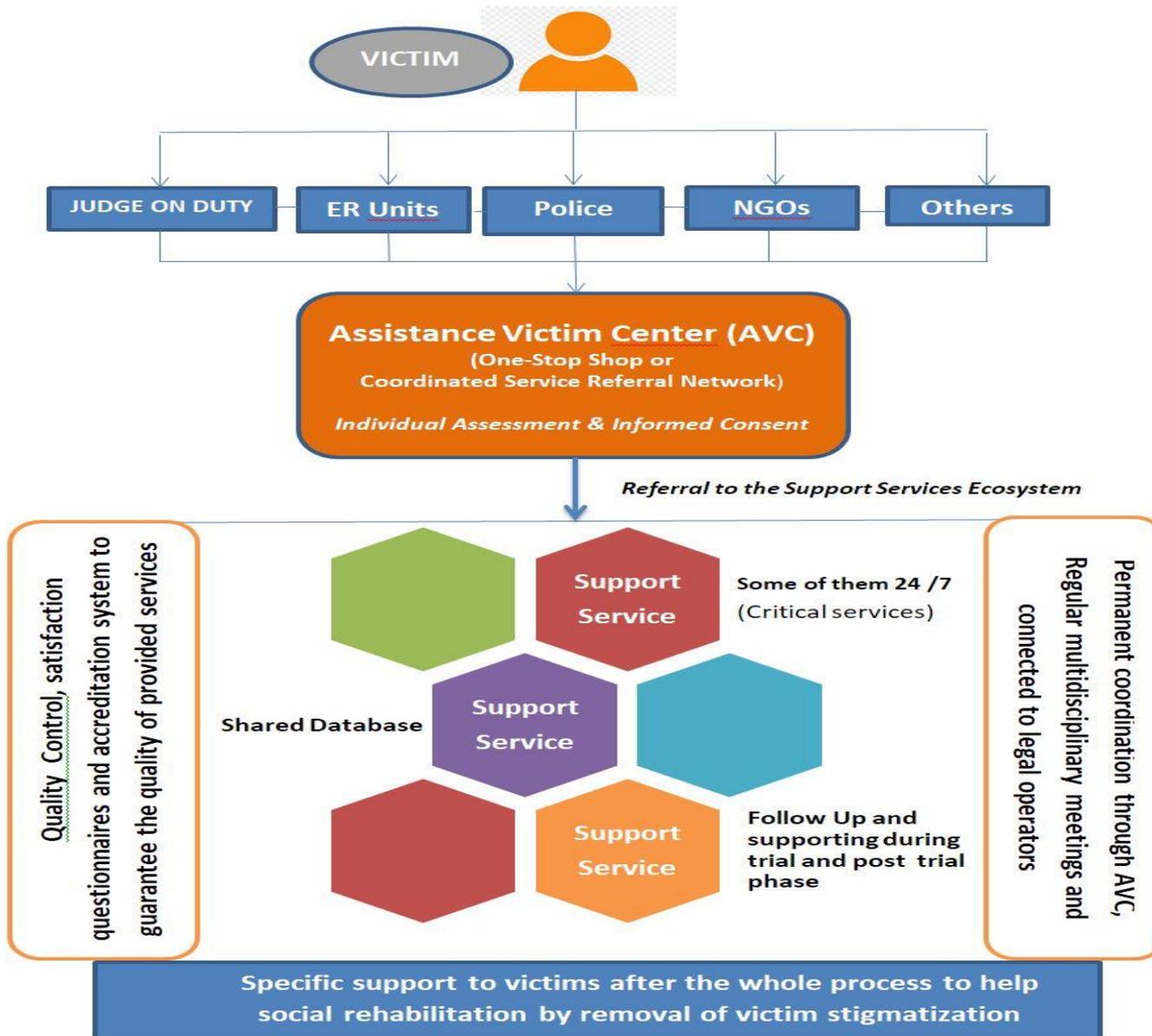
Optimal and **individual evaluation of victims needs** from the very beginning giving coherence to the entire assistance process and providing an informed itinerary for each person



Monitoring **quality and level of competency** of the services providers and potential partners, preserving expertise and best practices



# STEP- BY- STEP REFERRAL MECHANISM



# THE ESSENTIALS

According to the mechanism proposed public authorities and responsible operators of the justice system should ensure the availability of the following key elements:

- **Victim Assistance Centre (VAC) as a central referral point**
  - will provide the police with a first and comprehensive referral point for victims
  - make sure that the individual assessment of the victim is done at the first point of contact, either by the police or by the VAC.
- **A shared database, with the consent and participation of victims**
  - confidential and connected with other official databases
  - ensuring victims can rely on a personal profile in which the itinerary is set up, avoiding the potential loss of the victim's case information



# THE ESSENTIALS

- An accreditation system for support services
  - with criteria defined by public authorities and participation by victim support organisations (private/public resources and victims) in order to ensure the quality of victim services
- A quality system to regularly monitor the performance and fitness of the victim support services
  - ensuring victims can evaluate their own experience and check periodically that support services work according to the defined standards and criteria.
- Specific support services for victims available 24/7
  - prevent a gap of critical hours for the victim, between contacting the police about a crime and receiving assistance from specialise support services.



# THE ESSENTIALS

- Follow-up and continuous support before the trial phase
  - minimise the risk of dropping out of the procedure and therefore out of the support services.
- Specific legal and psychological support post-trial to help fully understand the court judgment outcome
  - minimise frustration caused by the feeling of not having an acknowledgement of the story and the damages
- Specific psychological support upon the release of the offender
  - coordination of the support services with probation services so the victim stays informed
- Specific support to victims after the entire process
  - to help social rehabilitation by removal of victim stigmatisation

# THANK YOU!

## RE-JUST



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