

REPORT

**RIGHT TO QUALITY
SERVICES FOR
VICTIMS OF CRIME**



With financial support from the
Criminal Justice Programme
of the European Union



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Report: Right to Quality Services for Victims of Crime

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INTRODUCTION

1

1.1. BACKGROUND

A (very) brief history of the position of victims of crime in the European Union

The position of victims of crime has shown vast improvement since the 1970's. Thirty years ago it was correct to assert that the victim was the forgotten party of the criminal justice process, while this would be at odds with the actual situation of victims today (e.g. Groenhuijsen & Letschert, 2008). International bodies like the United Nations and the Council of Europe have developed a number of legal instruments, of which the UN Declaration of Basic Principles for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power and the Council of Europe Recommendations 85(11) and 2006(8) are the most noteworthy.

The European Union jumped into the fray with the Council Directive 2004/80/EC relating to compensation to crime victims and the Framework Decision on the standing of victims in criminal proceedings of the 15th of March 2001¹. The directive solely concerns the transmission of cross-border applications for state compensation. The Framework Decision is wider in scope. The main theme of the Framework Decision follows the international consensus also evidently expressed by other legal instruments (e.g. Groenhuijsen and Pemberton, 2009). At its core it includes the following basic rights for victims of crime:

- A right to respect and recognition at all stages of the criminal proceedings (article 2);
- A right to receive information and information about the progress of the case (article 4);
- A right to provide information to officials responsible for decisions relating to the offender (article 3);
- A right to protection, for victims' privacy and their physical safety (article 8);
- A right to compensation, from the offender and the State (article 9);
- A right to receive victim support (article 13);
- The duty for governments to promote mediation in criminal cases for offences which it considers appropriate for this sort of measure (article 10);

The Framework Decision can be considered to be a milestone in the development of victims' rights (see again Groenhuijsen and Pemberton, 2009). It was the first so-called 'hard law' instrument available at the international level, codifying rules at the supranational level concerning the legal position of victims that are binding concerning the domestic legal order of the member states.

However its impact on the domestic legal orders of the countries in question, and even more importantly on the experience of victims of crime across the European Union, did not meet expectations. It might be an overstatement to call the implementation of the Framework Decision a failure, but the impact has not been qualitatively different from previous soft-law instruments. Project Victims in Europe (APAV, 2010) as well as the European Commission's own evaluations revealed that in most countries legal transposal did not meet the Framework Decision's requirements, with enforcement of laws in practice lagging further behind. Matters were not improved by the assessment (e.g. Pemberton & Groenhuijsen, 2012) that the Framework Decision had in effect widened the gap between Member States (MS) that already had a reasonable level of victim support and protection and those that did not, with the latter lacking the NGO champions who could have successfully used the Framework Decision as a means to pressure the MS governments to actually meet their requirements and conduct adequate research that charts the experiences of victims.

¹ 2001/220/JHA.

The EU Victims Directive

Given the relatively minor impact of the Framework Decision, combined with the urgency of the problems faced by victims of crime across Europe and the enhanced competencies the Treaty of Lisbon afforded to the European Commission, the stage was set for a rapid proposal and adoption of an EU victims' directive. This Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime covers roughly the same topics as the Framework decision, but is a considerably more elaborate and strongly worded document; as a Directive, it has more legislative force than a Framework Decision. In addition, the European Commission has become increasingly active in supporting the Member States in navigating the hurdles in the implementation, as is evidenced by the recent publication of an extensive DG justice guidance document with the specific aim of securing implementation of the Directive.

The directive moreover goes some way to stimulating MS to monitor the actual use of victims' rights, and the reach and effectiveness of victims' support and protection. In article 28 and recital 64 of the Directive, specific mention is made of the requirement to deliver statistics and data on the access to the rights afforded by the Directive. Although this is indeed a relevant requirement, we hope that the European Commission will see fit to stimulate MS to adopt the Council of Europe's recommendation to move beyond data and official statistics. The reason for this is that - as is well known in criminology (Van Dijk, 2007) - data only captures part of the reality of victimisation and crime, and needs to be supplemented with research into victims' experiences as well. In the Council of Europe Recommendation Rec (2006)8 article 17 specifically addresses research. In article 17.1 it calls upon states to "promote, support, and, to the extent possible, fund or facilitate fund-raising for victimological research, including comparative research by researchers from within or outside their own territory", while article 17.2 sets out the areas of research that should be included: criminal victimisation and its impact on victims; prevalence and risks of criminal victimisation including factors affecting risk; the effectiveness of legislative and other measures for the support and protection of victims of crime - both in criminal justice and in the community; and the effectiveness of intervention by criminal justice agencies and victim services. The latter two are particularly relevant to estimate the success of the Directive in improving the experience of victims of crime: indeed without reliable, comparative research findings on these issues it will be difficult to assess the extent to which the Directive contributed to improved experiences of victims of crime.

Project VICS: towards assessment of the quality of victim assessment

This report reveals the findings of a pilot research project, funded by the European Commission that was carried out by the Portuguese Association for Victim Support (APAV) and the International Victimology Institute Tilburg, in cooperation with INAVEM in France, the Weisser Ring in Germany and Victim Support Scotland, with the sponsorship of Victim Support Europe. The purpose of the project was to pilot a survey method, consisting of the application of a questionnaire in the four different countries (Portugal, France, Germany and Scotland), that aims to chart the experiences of victims with victim assistance, including the services offered by police forces and prosecution services to victims of crime, as well as the activities of victim support. This project builds upon work that was previously undertaken in the Netherlands (Klerx & Pemberton, 2009, 2011, Regioplan, 2012, 2013). The purpose of the report is not to compare the different countries with each other, but instead

to demonstrate the usefulness of applying this type of questionnaire in different contexts. The central notion of the research project is that experience of quality in victim assistance relates to the extent to which the services match victims' needs. Measuring this match entails querying victims' experiences with services and their relative importance. This approach is also used in health care services, and the model of the CQ-index (Consumer Quality index), which was developed for this sector, served as an example for this (see Sixma et al, 1998).

In the remainder of this introductory chapter we will discuss the Consumer Quality Index method, and its application to the situation of victims interacting with victim services. We will also outline the findings underlying the framework of needs we used to develop the survey tool that was piloted in this project.

1.2. MEASURING QUALITY IN VICTIM ASSISTANCE

Measuring quality: the limits of satisfaction research

The Netherlands has a long tradition of research into victims' experiences with criminal justice, from the pioneering work of Jan van Dijk in the 1970's until today. From the early nineties onwards, the Dutch department of Justice attempted to periodically measure victim satisfaction with the assistance provided by criminal justice agencies and victim support. However this research (the final example was Koolen et al, 2005, see also Winkel et al, 2006) did not provide sufficient insights into policy strategy to make it worthwhile, which is due to the difficulties of the satisfaction construct.

This type of problem with satisfaction research is not confined to victim assistance. The notion that a satisfaction score adequately taps a service-user's experience only holds true under a set of highly restrictive conditions. It fails to incorporate the effects of changes in expectations about a service, neglects to inquire whether the *right* service has been delivered, and delivers an assessment about the service as a whole, rather than different aspects of the service (e.g. Bouckaert and Van de Walle 2003). In addition satisfaction scores tend to depend upon intrinsic characteristics of the service in question. Citizens report consistently higher satisfaction about certain types of services (for instance the fire brigade) than about others (the garbage disposal unit) whether or not the service provider in question delivers comparatively high quality services (Bouckaert en Van de Walle, 2003). The frequency of service use, knowledge about the service, homogeneity of the service, and the sort of contact (personal or otherwise) with the service impact the satisfaction scores, irrespective of the quality of the service (Dinsdale and Marsden, 1999). Similarly, the degree of freedom of choice in the use of the service has revealed to be a predictor of satisfaction, again irrespective of quality (Brown, 2007). Satisfaction, in sum, is not only subjective, but also multi-dimensional. This constricts its use as a construct to measure the quality of a given service and to offer insight into the changes those using a service may want or need.

An additional issue relates to a difference in roles of people accessing a given service, which can be captured in the alliteration '*customer-client-citizen*' (Williams, 1994). Satisfaction research relies on an understanding of the position of those using a service as equivalent to private sector *customers*: this metaphor suggests that an individual has repeated contacts with a service provider, is free to choose whether or not contact is estab-

lished and/or opt for a competitor, and can use his or her own direct experience in evaluating the outcome, which is solely relevant to him or her as a private person. This situation qualitatively differs from *clients*: evaluating the outcome is often the province of an expert (for instance in medicine or law) – mostly the service provider him or herself; repeated experience is the exception rather than the rule, so judgments are made on a one-off, ad hoc basis; and the freedom to choose an alternative is limited or non-existent. Finally within the *citizen* role the service is not only relevant to the person in a private capacity: it also has repercussions, for the community to which the person belongs and his or her own position in this community (e.g. Alford, 2002).

These general issues are also relevant for research into victim assistance (van Mierlo & Pemberton, 2009). This applies to the differences between the organisation involved in victim assistance, differences in (the impact of) the experienced crime and overlapping questions concerning the wanted or needed services (see for a review Pemberton, 2010). For many victims, their experience with victim assistance is a one-off affair, while their knowledge of the criminal justice process is limited. A key motive throughout the process is societal acknowledgement of what happened to the victim (Maercker & Horn, 2013). The experience of the victim with victim assistance also concerns his or her status as valued citizen (see Bilz, 2007), while the way law enforcement and criminal justice agencies react to the victims' plight sends an important message about the legitimacy and status of the community as a whole (Wenzel et al, 2008). Taken together, the victim of crime combines customer, client and citizen roles (Lens et al, forthcoming).

A framework for measuring experienced quality in the public sector

As noted above, the problems of satisfaction research are not limited to victim assistance. Elsewhere the shortcomings of this type of research have received their share of attention as well. Two relevant methods of research have been developed for the police force in the United Kingdom (Bland, 1997) and the health care system in the Netherlands (the so-called CQ- (Consumer Quality) Index, see for an overview <http://www.nivel.nl/cq-index>). What these methods have in common is that they focus on the priorities of the service user.

Bland (1997) discusses a method of 'Gap-analysis' that departs from the notion of quality gaps. According to Bland the main issue in improving the quality of services is to uncover the elements of service delivery that are of (the utmost) importance to a service user, but with which the experiences are poor. If the element is not important to the user, it should not matter much what the experience is. Uncovering the quality gaps, should then be followed by (action-)research specifically directed towards finding ways to ensure that the experience of the service user improves.

The CQ-index was developed by the Dutch Institute for Health Care (NIVEL) in cooperation with the Amsterdam Medical Centre of the University of Amsterdam. Brouwer et al.'s (2002) research into service users' experiences of a number of health care facilities, to which the following questions were central:

- Which aspects do people find important in the services these facilities offer?
- How important are these aspects per health care facility?
- What are the experiences of services users with the different health care facilities?
- Can differences between different groups of service users be discerned?

In the first phase of the development of the CQ-index a literature review and qualitative research lead to the development of a number of key dimensions (for example in de Brouwer et al's research: access to the facilities, the accommodation, the competence of the health care professionals, information, respectful treatment, independence and complaints management), which is used to develop a number of quality indicators. This list of quality indicators is subsequently put to a number of service users to evaluate whether it is complete and whether the users can fully understand what the different indicators entail.

The CQ-index then consists of a survey that includes a list of *experiences* and a list measuring *importance* of experiences. A number of statements are put to the service users, like 'My physiotherapist treats me with respect', and they are asked to what extent this reflects their own experience. They are subsequently asked how important they find this indicator, e.g. 'How important is it to you that your physiotherapist treats you with respect?' This can apply to both processes and outcomes. The phrasing of indicators is intended to tap those elements of a service that can (or are at least are expected to) be controlled by the service provider in question. It may be beyond a doctor's ability to cure a patient, but he or she can make every effort to reach this goal. The service user is then specifically asked about the effort the doctor exerted rather than the extent to which this goal was reached. In the case of victim assistance, the police may not be able to apprehend a suspect, but can demonstrate the effort to do so.

In sum, this means that the CQ-index translated to the sphere of victim assistance offers insight into the questions of whether victims of (different forms of) crime receive the services they find important, which in turn offers insight into the question of whether these services thereby meet the needs of these (perhaps varied groups of) victims. Instead of satisfaction the current process measures needs translated into experiences, and the importance of these different experiences.

Previous work (Van Mierlo and Pemberton, 2009, 2011) has laid the groundwork (including the literature review and the qualitative research phase) of the current research endeavor. This report will therefore not extensively query the literature underlying the questionnaire. In the following section we provide an overview of 'the demand', i.e. the main dimensions of victims' needs, as well as a number of the main qualifiers of these needs.

1.3. THE DEMAND: VICTIMS' NEEDS

Pemberton (2009a; see also van Mierlo and Pemberton, 2009) developed a victimological framework that draws on victims' needs expressed within and outside of the criminal justice system. Pemberton (2009a) divides the needs of victims into a set of three procedural needs, namely respectful treatment/recognition, information and participation and five outcome needs, namely acknowledgement, (material) compensation, security and protection from further harm, coping with anxiety and loss, and finally retribution and coping with feelings of anger and injustice. The focus of the EU directive largely overlaps with these needs: the services and rights contained within the directive are derived from victims' needs (Pemberton & Vanfraechem, forthcoming), even though other factors may influence their enforcement.

Process factors

The needs of victims relating to the procedure may be divided into three: respectful and fair treatment, information concerning the process and outcome of their cases, and possibilities for participation (see Strang, 2002). The respectful treatment and the receiving of information are both non-controversial (see also Pemberton & Reynaers, 2011). Information may not be a universal need, with some victims preferring not to be informed about the progress of their case (Reeves and Mulley, 2000), but it is an important one. Sims and Myhill (2001), for instance, showed a lack of information to be the primary source of victim dissatisfaction with the police. For the purpose of this research, however, it is important there is no evidence that the importance and priority of information varies with the type of crime suffered (see Van Mierlo and Pemberton, 2009 for a review).

Two points concerning receiving information merit some additional attention. First of all, receiving information only serves a purpose when the victim is capable of understanding this information. Most instruments therefore include provisions that foresee efforts to support victims in understanding this information, for example by offering it in different languages and by offering legal advice and support in making sense of the regularly complicated legal deliberations. Second, the reception of information concerning the content of the criminal justice process also relates to a need for truth-finding for victims of crime. Understanding the reason why one has been victimised plays an important role in cognitive models of post traumatic stress (Winje, 1998, Ehlers and Clark, 2000), as ruminating about the event and the reasons for it happening may be seen as a counterproductive coping style, preventing victims from focusing attention on their present avenues for coping with victimisation. Similarly, finding out the truth has been an important driver for the development of the truth and reconciliation commissions in South Africa (see Minow, 1998, Gibson, 2002).

Participation is a more complicated matter in a number of ways. First of all, the importance of participation in the process depends on whether there is in fact a criminal justice procedure. Is the crime reported? Is a suspect apprehended and prosecuted? The relevance here is that different crimes have very dissimilar reporting and clear-up rates². For instance, where those bereaved by homicide will nearly always experience the latter stages of the criminal justice procedure (the prosecution and the trial), victims of sexual violence rarely report their victimisation to the police. Where reporting a crime often leads to an apprehended suspect for victims of (other than sexual) violence, the clear-up rate for minor property crime rarely surpasses ten percent.

Second, the importance of participation in a criminal justice procedure will increase with the victim's stake in the outcome of the trial (see Thibaut and Walker, 1975; Hickman and Simpson, 2003). This implies that the importance of participation increases with the severity and/or the chance of reoccurrence of victimisation. However the downside of participation, the psychological stress associated with it, is also likely to be larger, as is suggested by research into the phenomenon of secondary victimisation (Erez & Belknap, 1998; Orth, 2002). And although there is no evidence of participation re-traumatising victims, Orth and Maercker's (2004) results do show that the experience of a criminal trial can slow down the recovery from traumatic complaints.

Finally, the often repeated research finding (Shapland, Wilmore and Duff, 1985) that many victims feel they are lacking sufficient participation in their case as it progresses through the criminal justice system leads to the obvious conclusion that many would prefer a higher level of participation than is currently available (Tyler, 1990), but not that more participation is always in victims' interests or that this can be said to be true for *all*

² These rates respectively denote the proportion of crime reported to the police and the proportion of reported crime for which a suspect is apprehended, see for the variety in these rates for instance Aebi et al, 2006.

victims. The benefits of increased participation from a procedural justice perspective should be offset against the psychological stress that may accompany this increased participation (Orth, 2002, Laxminarayan, 2012).

Outcome factors

Where the relationship between the process and victims' needs is not always straightforward, this relationship is even more complex concerning the outcome of the procedure. Various sources suggest victims' needs concerning the outcome of the criminal justice process, from the reasons of reporting the offence to preferred outcomes of the court procedure.

In the first place, the reasons for reporting crime to the police differ. The decision to report may be caused by a variety of reasons, from insurance requirements to safety of life and limb and the judgement concerning the outcome reflects these differences. Wittebrood (2006) provides an overview of the reasons for reporting. It is not surprising that these are correlated with the type of victimisation. For example 73% of victims of sexual crime stated as the most important reason that 'the offender must be punished'. This was also the case for 50% of the victims of violent crime. This reason was far less prevalent for victims of property crime, with percentages varying between 11% and 25%. Instead 40% to 70% of these victims mentioned reasons like 'I wanted to retrieve what was stolen' or 'I needed to report for insurance reasons', which was only mentioned by a small minority of victims of personal crime. However, it is not possible to map the reasons for reporting crime on to the type of crime suffered. Wittebrood's study shows too much variation for this. Even in the group of severe victims of violence the reason for reporting to the police are nuanced. Orth (2003) for example distinguishes various functions of courts for victims in his investigation of victims' punishment goals, namely the desire for retribution, for security, for acknowledgment of the victim status or a combination of all three.

We can review the outcome factors in a broader sense than the criminal justice process to include further, more wide-ranging needs. First of all, victims need to deal with *feelings of anxiety* and associated mental health problems should be addressed. Many crime victims have to come to terms with feelings of anxiety and loss. Anxiety is one of the primary reactions to victimisation and post-traumatic stress disorder is an anxiety-related disorder (Ehlers and Clark, 2000; Foa and Rothbaum, 1998). Although the emotional impact of crime is mediated by victims' personal characteristics and context factors, the severity of crime is maybe the most important factor (Winkel, 1999). Victims of severe violence, particularly if this violence is life-threatening, of a sexual nature and/ or repeated are more likely to develop severe levels of anxiety and posttraumatic stress and associated disorders (f.e. Kessler et al, 1995; Breslau et al, 2004). A similar observation may be made concerning loss and grief in the case of co-victims of homicide (Peterson-Armour, 2002)³. Here the combination of loss and grief may result in complicated or traumatic grief (e.g. Kaltmann and Bonanno, 2003).

Secondly, acknowledgement may extend beyond the criminal justice system. Maercker and Muller (2004) show that *social acknowledgement* in general is important to victims, with victims' recovery being connected to the 'victim's experience of positive reactions from society that show appreciation for the victim's unique state and acknowledge the victim's current difficult situation.' This may be expressed by the closest social relations, but also by more distant members of society, like state authorities or the media (Maercker & Horn, 2013).

³ Co-victims of homicide are those bereaved by homicide, i.e. the close family and other loved ones of a homicide victim (see f.e. Peterson-Armour, 2002).

In the third place, the *need for security* relates to the trial itself, not only to the incapacitate function of a prison sentence as a consequence of the trial. In a considerable number of cases the victim is also the most important witness in the trial and needs to be protected from possible retaliatory or threatening behaviour from the offender. In addition, the need for security should be extended to include prevention of repeat or secondary victimisation. Davis and Smith (1994) recognised over ten years ago that a basic need for many victims is the prevention of further victimisation. This relates to the victim of chronic violence, who wishes to end this (see for example stalking victims: Mullen et al, 2000) but also the victim of a burglary who wishes to prevent future property offences (see e.g. Herman and Weisburd, 2002; Farrell and Pease, 2006). Similarly, as we already discussed, victims need to *prevent secondary victimisation* in the criminal justice process. In addition to the criminal justice process there are other avenues for secondary victimisation. The first is an unsupportive, victim-blaming reaction of their immediate social surroundings, with Brewin, Andrews and Valentine showing lack of social support to be the strongest post-trauma predictor of PTSD in their meta-analysis. Second is the media, with Maercker and Mehr (2006) showing that the media may have deleterious effects for victims. Conversely, victims have a need to protect their privacy vis-à-vis the media.

Fourth, the need for material compensation may not be restricted to immediate financial damage, although this is an acute concern, especially where victims have suffered physical damage or other severe damages that threaten their primary needs (housing etc.). It may also include the need for compensation of more distal financial losses like longer term medical costs, production loss, intangible costs and the like (e.g. Mulder, 2013). Moreover, material compensation may also serve a more symbolic purpose in addition to meeting victims' direct financial need, such as being seen as a source of acknowledgement of victim status.

Finally, there is the wish to see the offender censured or punished for the offence (Pemberton, 2010). The importance of retribution depends on a number of factors. First of all the severity of the crime experienced is important, with increasing severity associated with an increasing tendency to exact retribution (e.g. Darley & Pittman, 2003; Gromet and Darley, 2006; Alter et al, 2007). This tendency may be mitigated by the victims' sense of shared identity with the offender, as recent research by Wenzel and colleagues shows (see Wenzel et al, 2008; Wenzel & Thielmann, 2006; Okimoto et al, 2009; see also Gromet and Darley, 2009). Victims often are more lenient toward young offenders and less lenient toward outgroup members. Pemberton (2008) however notes that in the case of crimes of extreme severity, like homicide and sexual violence, the crime alone conveys a sense of 'otherness' to the offender. In addition, actions on the part of the offender, for instance full compensation or the offering of an apology may reduce the urge for retribution (Strang, 2002). However, as noted above, in more severe crimes the concept of full compensation is both problematic and in cases even impossible. The sincerity of apologies may be harder to accept in these cases (e.g. Duff, 2003; Winkel, 2007). Finally retribution may not always be possible, as often the offender is unknown to the victim and no offender is apprehended for the crime.

Some key qualifiers in victims needs and their experience of quality

The previous paragraphs make clear that although the dimensions of victims' needs may be similar for a variety of victims of crime, the intensity of the needs and their relative ordering can vary. A first key distinction is the *impact* of the crime, in its financial, physical but maybe primarily in its psychological effects, especially given that

impact in other ways is related to the psychological effects (e.g. Hobfoll et al, 1989). The psychological impact is a determinant of the mental health needs of the victim, including (professional) psychological support (e.g. NICE, 2005), but also influences choices through the criminal justice process (e.g. Laxminarayan, 2012, Pemberton, 2012, Lens, 2014), as well as the (relative) importance of different factors within this procedure (Laxminarayan and Pemberton, 2014, Lens, Pemberton & Bogaerts, 2013). The psychological impact increases the importance of the sentence, of safety, acknowledgement and recognition (e.g. Pemberton, 2012) of procedural factors. As well as this, psychological impact maintains the balance between improved procedural experience and secondary victimisation (Laxminarayan, 2012), in addition to impacting the relative importance of process and outcome factors (Laxminarayan & Pemberton, 2014). Including measures that tap the psychological impact of the crime, for instance in terms of traumatic stress and/or evaluate constructs that function as strong predictors of the psychological impact, including the type of crime, and psychological pre-cursors, such as self-efficacy (Bosmans, forthcoming), should therefore preferably be included within the survey (Van Mierlo & Pemberton, 2009).

Secondly, the assistance provided may vary in intensity and in structure depending on the impact and the type of crime suffered (Laxminarayan, 2012). Different jurisdictions offer special provisions for vulnerable victims, for example, which is also an important element of the Directive. Given that service delivery might vary according to the type of crime suffered and its impact, any measurement of victims' experiences should include indicators tapping these constructs. Not only the type of crime is important, but also the relationship with the offender: the needs of victims of partner and other forms of domestic violence often differ from those who suffered their victimisation at the hands of a stranger or an unknown person (e.g. Kuijpers, 2011).

Thirdly, the involvement of criminal justice agencies varies: the main determinant here is the apprehension, prosecution and sentencing of the offender (Pemberton, 2009). Indeed the involvement of the victim assistance at the level of the prosecution service and other magistrates depends upon apprehension and prosecution, while the relevance of victim assistance at the level of penitentiary and probation services depends upon a guilty verdict, including alternative and diversionary measures. Not only is this relevant for the way samples of victims are constructed – given the relatively low clear up rates, random samples of reporting victims will not include many who experienced the later stages of the process – but also for the interpretation of questionnaire findings. The recall of experience earlier on in the process can be influenced by (poor) experiences later in the process, also because of the correlation between the assessment of different elements of victim assistance. In any case this necessitates an understanding of the elements of the process with which a victim has had direct experience.

Fourthly, and in somewhat similar vein, people's general views of (the legitimacy) of criminal justice agencies (and even the government more generally) influence their interpretation of their experience as victims of crime (Van Mierlo & Pemberton, 2009). Certain characteristics of respondents (previous (negative) experiences, minority status, inhabitants of impoverished neighbourhoods, victims of sexual and domestic violence) are associated with a poorer perception of criminal justice agencies in general, which in turn influences their assessment of the quality of services offered to victims in particular.

Finally, although certain regularities might be visible in victims' experience, victims in the same position, with the same background might want very different things when they report a crime and/or access victim support: *the victim* does not exist (Pemberton, 2010). It is therefore always relevant to gain insight into the (main) reasons victims had for accessing services, and reporting the crime.

Summary

This short overview of victims' needs in relationship to victim assistance provides the framework for the survey, that will be further discussed in chapter 2. The CQ-index of experiences and importance of experiences is based upon the following needs: respectful treatment, information and participation; and compensation, protection/safety, reduction of anxiety/stress and retribution (incl. apprehension, prosecution and punishment of the offender).

In addition the discussion of the qualifiers reveals that a number of other measures need to be included in the questionnaire. The crime suffered, background characteristics of the victim, the reasons for reporting the crime and accessing services, the involvement of different criminal justice agencies, the psychological, financial and physical impact of the crime, including associated measures and a respondent's general views on the legitimacy and effectiveness of criminal justice and law enforcement. Chapter 2 will also discuss how these measures have been included in the pilot-surveys that have been conducted.

1.4. OUTLINE OF THE REPORT

The following chapters will report on the findings of the pilot-survey in France (chapter 3), Germany (chapter 4), Scotland (chapter 5) and Portugal (chapter 6). Preceding this in chapter 2 we will discuss the development of the questionnaire and the other main methodological choices that have informed the research. Chapter 7, in conclusion, discusses the main overall findings, and includes suggestions for improvement of the survey methodology with an eye to future and more widespread implementation of this method.

METHODOLOGY

2

2.1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

One of the main deliverables of this project is the Victim Assistance Quality Monitor (VAQM)-questionnaire. In this chapter we discuss the main features of the questionnaire (sections 2.2. and 2.3), and some general notions concerning the analysis of the material (section 2.4).

The heart of VAQM are the indicators used to gain insight into the victims' experience of quality with victim assistance. As discussed in chapter 1 these indicators fall into two broad categories concerning process and outcome-factors. The former concerns respectful treatment, information and participation, the latter compensation, increasing security, coping with anxiety and retributive justice. Section 2.2 discusses the indicators developed to tap these issues, the way the questions were posed as well as some of the relevant differences between countries and organisations with respect to these indicators.

Beyond the quality indicators, the piloted version of VAQM also included three other clusters of questions, which will be discussed in section 2.3. The first concerns questions concerning the crime and its aftermath: What happened to the victim? What were the consequences of the victimisation in terms of physical and financial damage? What was the main reason for reporting the crime and what was the result of the report: was the offender apprehended, did the victim receive compensation? The second, which was optional in the current pilot, concerns a number of constructs that concern the impact in a psychological sense –here measured through the trauma screening questionnaire- (TSQ, Brewin et al, 2002), the respondent's assessment of his or her ability to cope with the crime (his or her self-efficacy, Benight et al, 2004) and the respondent's general trust in criminal justice agencies (Tyler and Huo, 2002, see also Lens, Pemberton & Bogaerts, 2013). The former two are both related to the impact of and ability to cope with the crime, which may in turn influence victim' needs towards and indeed use of victim assistance, while the latter may influence the respondent's views on their experience in this particular instance. Finally a number of demographic variables were included: the respondent's age, gender, education, occupation and marital status.

Finally there are a number of general issues concerning the analysis and application of the questionnaire. Section 2.4 discusses these, often somewhat technical, matters.

2.2. INDICATORS

The development of the questionnaire was based on the CQ-index of consumer perception of quality in health care. Respondents were asked to score a list of quality indicators based on their own experiences. Their experiences were measured through statements on a five-point Likert scale running from 1 (completely disagree) to 5 (completely agree). Table 2.1 provides an example of the way these questions were put to respondents (the full questionnaire is available in the appendix).

Table 2.1. **Example of experience questions**

Can you indicate whether Victim Support workers...	Completely disagree	Disagree	Do not agree, or disagree	Agree	Completely Agree
C.1.1. Treated you politely					
C.1.2. Took the time to hear all the facts you wanted them to know					
C.1.3. Showed understanding for your situation					
C.1.4. Showed empathy/ compassion					
C.1.5. Paid sufficient attention to your wishes and needs					
C.1.6. Made you feel like you were taken seriously					
C.1.7. Protected your identity and personal details					
C.1.8. Provided information about other organisations offering support and assistance					

Following the experience questions the respondents were then asked to indicate the importance of the same indicators, using a four-point scale (1= not really important, 4 = of the utmost importance). Previous experience (Van Mierlo & Pemberton, 2011) has suggested that respondents sometimes have difficulty in distinguishing the questions concerning experiences. The accompanying questionnaire instruction therefore repeatedly re-emphasised the difference between the experience and importance questions. In addition the choice for the four-point scale (compared to the five-point) scale for the experience questions was also informed by the need to sufficiently distinguish experience and importance questions. Finally the experience in the Netherlands has shown that it is best to restrict the number of organisations included in the questionnaire, preferably to no more than two. Most of the indicators apply to different organisations, which means that it can be confusing and/ or repetitive for the respondent to have to fill the experience/ importance questions for more than two organisations.

Table 2.2. **Example of importance questions**

How important is it to you that Victim Support workers...	Not important at all	Somewhat important	Important	Very important
C.3.1. Treat you politely?				
C.3.2. Take the time to hear all the facts you wanted them to know?				
C.3.3. Show understanding for your situation?				
C.3.4. Show empathy/ compassion?				
C.3.5. Pay sufficient attention to your wishes and needs?				
C.3.6. Make you feel like you are taken seriously?				
C.3.7. Protect your identity and personal details?				
C.3.8. Provide information about other organisations offering support and assistance?				

The indicators are geared to the needs framework. There are slight differences in the questions per country, as the remit of the organisation in different countries may vary. These differences are shown in the country chapters, while the questionnaire in Appendix A shows which questions were either exclusively posed in one country or not applicable to

another. In addition the different countries vary in the organisations that were included in the questionnaire. The German questionnaire was applied only to the experience with victim support, while the French and Scottish questionnaires included the police. The Portuguese questionnaire also reviewed the prosecution service. In the latter case two different samples (a Victim Support-Police and a Victim Support-prosecution service sample) were recruited for the study.

In the remainder of this section we provide an overview of the indicators used in the questionnaire. We will discuss each of the categories (respectful treatment, information and participation; compensation, coping with anxiety, safety/security and retributive justice) in turn.

Respectful treatment

Being treated with respect is an important determinant of people’s interaction with all public service providers (Alford, 2014). This is all the more true for victims of crime, especially considering the fact that a staple element of their experience is that their victimisation experience entails being treated with disrespect (Pemberton, 2014). Most of the indicators under respectful treatment are important to many public services: being treated politely and seriously; experiencing understanding for one’s situation; receiving sufficient attention to one’s wishes and needs, and sufficient time to fully explain them. In addition a key victims’ issue is the experience of empathy (see again Pemberton, 2014), while many victims’ require practical assistance (Van Mierlo & Pemberton, 2009). In the relationship with the police moreover previous research has shown that being forced to wait an extended period to be able to report the crime is experienced as a considerable burden, and that a similar observation is true concerning when a victim reporting a crime is forced to repeat the circumstances of his or her victimisation too often. Table 2.3 provides an overview of the indicators used to examine respectful treatment.

Table 2.3. **Indicators respectful treatment**

	Victim Support	Police/Prosecution service
Attention to wishes and needs	x	x
Polite treatment	x	x
Sufficient time	x	x
Experience understanding	x	
Treated seriously	x	x
Privacy	x	x
Empathy	x	x
Practical assistance	x	
Efficient reporting time		x
Minimize burden reporting		x

Information

A main issue for victims is receiving information (see also Groenhuijsen and Letschert, 2008). Most victims do not have any working knowledge of the criminal justice system, of their rights, and of avenues to obtain compensation

and where to receive further support. Receiving these forms of information is a key task of Victim Support organisations. The police, see also the EU victims' directive, has an important function in keeping the victim up-to-date on the progress of the case, and informing the victim of any further steps in the process. Table 2.4 provides an overview.

Table 2.4. **Indicators information**

	Victim Support	Police/Prosecution service
Understandable language	x	x
Information about victim's rights	x	x
Information about the criminal justice process	x	
Information about compensation	x	
Information about (other) available support	x	x (Only applicable to police)
Referral	x	
Information about next steps in the investigation		x
Information about the progress of the case		x

Participation

Participation here relates to the victims' participation in the criminal justice process (Van Mierlo & Pemberton, 2009). Victim Support can play a role in assisting victims in the use of their participatory rights, by supporting them in court, or offering them legal assistance and referring them to legal aid. Concerning the police or the prosecution service participation can instead concern the way these organisations include victims in decision making processes. Do they make victims aware of the possibilities? And do they request sufficient information to adequately include the victim's perspective in making their decisions? Table 2.5 contains the indicators used.

Table 2.5. **Indicators participation**

	Victim Support	Police/Prosecution service
Support during process	x	
Provision legal assistance	x	
Referral to legal aid	x	
Sufficient information to decide next steps		x
Information on participation rights		x
Attention to victims needs in next steps		x

Compensation

Various victim support organisations in Europe have a role in assisting victims to receive compensation. Compensation is paid by the offender as well as by the State. In Germany there is a special system of state compensation: the Crime Victims Compensation Act (OEG) and the social compensation law (Bundesver-

sorgungsgesetz), victims get compensation in similar vein to soldiers.

WEISSER RING Germany makes it (among other measures) possible for victims to quickly and directly contact specialists and offers assistance cheques – by paying the victim’s fee for an initial visit to an attorney of the victim’s choice, by assuming the cost of an initial trauma counseling session in the case of emotional burdens arising from the criminal act and by assuming the cost of a legal medical investigation. Elsewhere victim support organisations may offer emergency financial assistance and assist victims in estimating their damages and losses, with an eye to preparing compensation claims, see table 2.6.

Table 2.6. Indicators compensation

	Victim Support	Police/Prosecution service
Estimated damages	x	x
Information on necessary steps to compensation	x	x
Provided financial assistance	x	
Provided social compensation	x	

Coping with anxiety

A main issue confronting many victims in the aftermath of their victimisation is their feelings of fear and anxiety. The necessity of organisations offering support in coping with these feelings has been one of the main drivers of the development of victim support organisations across Europe (Goodey, 2005 Pemberton, 2009). Recognition of the harm done is an important component of this support, as well as the security of having someone to rely on for as long as necessary. In the immediate aftermath the police also are an important source of reassurance, but for the most part these indicators concern the work of Victim Support, see table 2.7.

Table 2.7. Indicators coping with anxiety

	Victim Support	Police/Prosecution service
Made you feel your harm and suffering had been sufficiently recognised	x	
Supported you for as long as you felt was necessary	x	
Gave you emotional support	x	
Gave you psychological support	x	
Reduced your feelings of fear	x	x
Gave you social support	x	

Safety and security

In the aftermath of victimisation victims need reassurance of their safety. The feeling that one is in danger is a precursor of the development of posttraumatic stress (Ehlers and Clark, 2000). In addition many victims both want and need advice to increase their security. The repeated evidence for the phenomenon of repeat victimisation (Farrell, 2001) shows that victims are at increased risk to be (re-)victimized. The same literature also reveals that many victims are receptive to receiving prevention advice in the aftermath of their victimisation: the need to increase the feeling of safety coincides with victim focused crime prevention. See table 2.8.

Table 2.8. **Safety/ security**

	Victim Support	Police/Prosecution service
Made you feel safer	x	x
Security advice	x	x (Only applicable to police)
Prevent repeat	x	x

Retributive justice

Finally an important reason for contacting the police is the desire to see the offender apprehended, censured, prosecuted and punished for his crime (Van Mierlo & Pemberton, 2009). These indicators apply solely to the police and other criminal justice agencies, not to victim support. It is important to note that the questionnaire did not query the outcome of the criminal justice agencies' efforts. In keeping with the view that service providers cannot control the outcome of their efforts, but can be realistically judged on their effort to secure said outcome, the respondents were asked to evaluate whether 'the police did enough to arrest/ identify the offender'. See table 2.9

Table 2.9. **Retributive justice**

	Victim Support	Police	Prosecution service
Did enough to arrest the offender		x	
Did enough to identify the offender		x	
Did enough to prosecute the offender			x
Did enough to convict the offender			x

2.3. ADDITIONAL SECTIONS QUESTIONS

Beyond the indicators of experience and importance a number of other questions were put to the respondents. These concern the victimisation experience itself, key issues concerning (the reasons) for the report and the consequences of the crime both in terms of the damages suffered and the criminal procedure. In addition a number of relevant constructs relating to the psychological impact of the crime, the respondent's self-assessment and general assessment of criminal justice agencies were included. Finally a number of demographic characteristics were collected.

The crime, the report and its consequences

In line with previous research in the Netherlands (see van Mierlo & Pemberton, 2009) and in jurisdictions across Europe (Van Dijk et al, 2008; Bolivar et al, 2013) the respondents' were first asked a number of questions concerning their victimisation experience. This concerns the crime for which they had contacted Victim Support, the time passed since the offence, the relationship with the offender and their previous experiences with this or other types of criminal victimisation.

Subsequently they were asked whether and when they reported the crime to the police, and their main reasons for either doing so or not doing so. These questions were explicitly modeled on those posed in the International Crime Victim Survey (Van Dijk et al, 2008). The respondents who did not report the crime to the police were not posed the questions about their experience with the police.

Finally the participants were asked about their damages and the apprehension of the offender (Van Mierlo & Pemberton, 2009). Did they suffer damages and did they receive compensation for suffered damages? Was there an offender apprehended for the crime? If the answers to these questions were negative, the respondent was asked whether or not they considered this to be a (significant) problem.

Impact, self-assessment and assessment of criminal justice agencies

The psychological impact of the crime (in terms of posttraumatic stress), the assessment of the extent to which the person feels capable to cope with his experience (self-efficacy) and his or her general views on the criminal justice agencies (trust in the law) were included in the questionnaire. Administration of this part of the questionnaire was optional, and data were not gathered for each of the participating countries.

· *Posttraumatic Stress.* To measure the impact of crime on the respondents psychological well-being the Trauma Screening Questionnaire (TSQ; Brewin, Rose, & Andrews, 2002) was included. This validated, self-report screening tool has been adapted from the PTSD Symptom Scale-Self Report (Foa, Riggs, Dancu, & Rothbaum, 1993). The TSQ consists of ten items that require straightforward 'yes' or 'no' responses. Five items concern re-experiencing of traumatic events, such as 'Upsetting thoughts or memories about the event that have come into your mind against your will'. The remaining five items concern symptoms of arousal, such as 'Heightened awareness of potential dangers to yourself and others'. A sum score of the TSQ is computed by adding the scores of the responses (yes = 1, no = 0), creating a continuous variable. The cut-off point of the TSQ is five,

with six or more 'yes' responses indicating possible posttraumatic stress disorder (Brewin et al., 2002).

· *Self-efficacy*. An adapted version of the 7-item Self-Efficacy Measure (SEM: Bosmans et al. 2014, Van der Velden et al. 2013) was included to assess to which extent the respondent considered him or herself capable of coping with his or her experience. The SEM includes items that tap respondents own views of their self-efficacy. Sample items include 'Dealing with the impact that the offence has had on my life', 'Carrying on with my everyday life' and 'Dealing with frightening images or dreams about the offence.' The respondents are asked to judge their ability to reach these goals on a five point scale (1= I am not at all able, 5= I am totally able). The range of self efficacy scores varies from 7 (low self-efficacy) to 35 (high self-efficacy).

· *Trust in the Law* (Tyler & Huo, 2002). General trust in criminal justice agencies is measured with a scale adapted from Tyler and Huo, 2002. The scale consists of six items: three items query the views on the police, while the other three do the same for the judiciary. The items are measured on five point Likert scales. Item-scores are summed and reveal a total score, representing the respondents' overall trust in the criminal justice agencies.

Demographics

The respondents were asked about their age and gender. In addition questions were posed concerning their educational background ('highest level of education completed'), as well as their civil status (married, single, etc.) and their occupational status (working, retired, unemployed).

2.4. ANALYTIC PLAN

This report provides an overview of the main findings of the survey in the four countries. The focus is on the quality indicators, and the possible existence of quality gaps. In addition the country reports also include a description of the samples, in terms of their crime-related experiences, demographics and, where available, the constructs measuring psychological impact, self-efficacy and trust in the criminal justice agencies. As a general rule the report does not attempt to discern underlying patterns in the data, for instance by analysing the correlations between the experience/ importance indicators with other factors included in the questionnaire. The remainder of this section discusses the main choices in the analysis of the quality indicators.

Analysing victims' perceptions of services offered

The analyses to gain insight into victims' perspectives of the services offered by Victim Support, the police, and the prosecutor's office were conducted in three steps. First, to assess what victims think are important aspects of the victim services they received, we computed the percentage of respondents who indicated they either thought a specific aspect was 'important' or 'very important'. These two response categories represent the two most salient options out of the four-point Likert scale that was used to assess importance. Moreover, in constructing the instru-

ment, great care was taken to select those needs that victims feel are relevant to their dealings with victim support, the police, and the criminal justice system. As a result, most needs are recognised as important by a majority of the respondents. For this reason, we do not generally provide information about the proportion of respondents who indicated a specific need was not applicable or the amount of respondents who did not answer the question.

In a second step in the analyses, we rank-ordered the different victim services according to the percentage of respondents who considered it an important aspect of victim services. In the final step, for the sub-group of respondents who considered a specific service important, we computed the percentages of respondents who disagreed and who agreed that the specific service was provided. In doing so, we on the one hand added the respondents who chose 'disagree' and 'completely disagree'—to calculate the percentage of respondents who feel the specific service was not provided—and on the other hand we added the number of respondents who chose 'agree' and 'completely agree'—in order to calculate the percentage of respondents who felt the specific service was provided. When reading the tables for these analyses, each left column indicates the percentage of respondents who considered a service as important and the final two right columns show what proportion of the respondents who considered a service as important stated that the service was or was not provided.

In addition to these analyses, we checked whether significant differences existed between respondents who felt an aspect of victim services was important and those who felt it was very important. Also, we compared men and women with regard to the importance of all aspects of victim services as well as the extent to which men and women agree that the services were provided. For these analyses, we used the Likert scale to calculate item means to allow the use of t-tests rather than using Chi-square tests based on percentages. As a result of the large range of services included in the questionnaire, a large number of statistical tests were needed to analyse differences between sub-groups. In order to counteract the resulting problem of multiplicity—i.e. the fact that conducting multiple comparisons raises the likelihood of finding significant differences that do not reflect true differences in the population under study (type I error)—we used Holm's procedure (Holland & DiPonzio Copenhaver, 1988) to adjust the rejection criteria for our null hypothesis (raising the p-value depending on the number of comparisons).

In presenting the results, the indicators of victim services are categorised according to the aspects they cover: Respectful treatment, Information, Participation, Compensation, Coping with anxiety, Safety, and Retribution (for police and prosecutor services only).

Solving data-related issues

At the start of the questionnaire, respondents were asked whether they had contact with Victim Support in the preceding 12 months. Respondents who indicated they did not have contact with Victim Support in those 12 months were nevertheless asked to complete the entire questionnaire. In other words, they were queried about their experiences with victim services and were asked to indicate to what extent the different aspects of their dealings with the organisations that provide those services were important to them. In most cases, these respondents had been a victim of an offence somewhat longer ago and we assume they reported about their experiences with victim services dating from that period. In order to make optimal use of the information provided by the respondents, we chose not to make a selection of the respondents who contacted Victim Sup-

port in the preceding 12 months, but rather, to report the results for all respondents together.

Although we used the entire datasets for each country, we did encounter some specific issues with regard to the interpretation of the data as well as with regard to missing data. First of all, some respondents appear to have chosen two responses on items asking whether Victim Support or the police did or did not do something or items asking about the importance of something to victims. Those answers were recoded to missing values because there was no way of knowing which answer most closely indicated the respondent's opinion. Second, percentages have been calculated using all responses, meaning that the respondents who indicated something was not applicable have been included in the calculation. We chose to do so because many of the respondents who indicated something was not applicable when assessing a specific aspect's importance, did indicate to what extent they agreed to that same aspect, and vice versa (saying it did not apply when indicating the agreement to a statement but nevertheless addressing its importance).

3.1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW CHAPTER

France is geographically the largest country in the European Union, and with a population of 67 million people, the second most populous. The relatively low rate of experienced victimisation, according to the 2004/2005 sweep of the International Crime Victim Survey, with about 12% of the population being victimised annually (see Van Dijk et al, 2008), translates into about 8 million inhabitants falling victim to crime in a every year. Reporting rates of crime are about the EU-average in France, with the rate for five types of common crimes⁴, being 51% in the 2004/2005 sweep of the ICVS. According to the ICVS the take up rate of victim support in France is 2%, which would amount to 400.000 victims annually.

France has for the main part an inquisitorial criminal justice system (Brienen and Hoegen, 2000). To date the victim is not defined as such in the French criminal law, but when recognised as the person injured by a crime, a victim will have clearly defined rights: the right to receive information, the right of access to justice, the right to be assisted, the right to an equitable process, the right to compensation, the right to obtain assistance or support. It is in the role of *parti civile* in the criminal trial that the rights of victims in France go beyond the norm elsewhere in Europe. Bringing action for damages is a positive act by which the victim obtains an active role in the legal process, becoming an actual actor in the legal process, on a par with an investigating magistrate. Any victim of a crime or an offence has this right under French law. Rights include permanent access to the judicial file, regular and often obligatory information provision by the investigating magistrate on the progress of the investigation; right to representation by legal council; the right to request investigative actions; the right to request evidence and call witnesses; the right to appeal the verdict and the right to offer evidence throughout the process.

The past 40 years has seen a steady improvement of the position of victims of crime. Initially legislative activity concentrated on monetary compensation, but has more recently focused on other rights as well. A notable feature of the French system is the attention to the plight of victims of terrorism, due to the historical and ongoing French experience (acts of terrorism in Paris in 1986, for example), also with politically motivated violence in Corsica and the Basque country (see also Letschert et al, 2010). Some landmark moments in the legislative development are considered in this section.

The Law 77-5 of 3 January 1977 concerns compensation of crime victims. It institutes a judicial procedure before the Commissions d'Indemnisation des Victimes d'Infractions (CIVI) [Commission for compensation of crime victims] and establishes a subsidiary system of compensation when the perpetrator is unknown or unsolvable. This was expanded to recognise the right to compensation for victims of sexual violence in 1983, while the so-called Badinter law implemented a facilitated system for victims of traffic accidents in 1985.

In 1986 a special system for victims of terrorism was created. A central piece of legislation is the Fonds de Garantie des Victimes d'Actes de Terrorisme et d'Autres Infractions (FGTI) [Relief fund for victims of acts of terrorism and other crimes]. It establishes, for victims of attack, a system of complete compensation for physical harm, property and non-property damage. In 1990 the remit of CIVI was enlarged, and it was granted competence to offer compensation regardless of the outcome of the criminal procedure, rather than its previous subsidiary status.

Subsequent legislative activity focused on other matters than compensation. The Law 98-468 of 17 June 1998,

⁴ Theft from a car, theft of a bicycle, burglary, attempted burglary and theft of personal property.

concerns the prevention and repression of sexual crimes as well as the protection of minors, while the Law 2000-516 of 15 June 2000 reinforces the rights of victims, as mentioned above. This text reaffirms the rights of victims of crime and establishes legal status of victim assistance associations. It was supplemented by Law 2002-1138 of 9 September 2002 which sets out the obligation of police and judiciary to provide information to victims. This text also removes any conditions applying to victims of attack, on their life or person to benefit from legal assistance.

1986 was also a landmark year for the development of victim assistance. Existing local schemes offering victims assistance were regrouped within the Institut National d'Aide aux Victimes et de Médiation (INAVEM), which up to now has been the body providing support and assistance to victims of crime, and continues to be so. Today there are nearly 145 member organisations working in victim assistance in France: together, they amount to approximately 1,500 professional workers (most in salaried positions, though there are also volunteers) and 750 specialised or local outreach centres. 300,000 victims are assisted each year, which is consistent with the finding from the ICVS. A noteworthy distinction in comparison to their international peers from the outset is that INAVEM specifically includes mediation in its work. Where other victim assistance organisations across Europe may have a complex and even competitive relationship with mediation (e.g. Weitekamp, 2002, Pemberton, 2009), this is not the case in France. INAVEM also runs the National Number for Assistance to Victims of Crime, currently the 08Victimes-helpline.

Beyond INAVEM, there is also the Comité National de l'Aide aux Victimes (CNAV) [National committee of victim assistance], an interdepartmental committee chaired by the Minister of Justice.

In this chapter we will discuss the findings of the research in the French context. The French respondents were asked about their experiences with Victim Support and the police force. Respondents were recruited through INAVEM. At the start 50 of these associations were requested to participate in the data collection. The request to the associations was accompanied by information emphasising the importance of the survey and the intended target number of survey participants. After two months, INAVEM finally decided to send this questionnaire to all of the associations.

Potential participants were offered three methods to fill out the questionnaires. Victims could either fill out the questionnaire with assistance from the INAVEM staff member, take home the survey questionnaire and fill it out at home and/or by telephone, with the help of the national helpline 08Victimes. The first solution was used the most; INAVEM obtained a total of 116 questionnaires.

The outline of the chapter is as follows. In section 3.2 we will discuss the background and experiences of respondents, while section 3.3 offers victims' views on the services provided by Victim Support. In section 3.4. the experiences of the police force are examined⁵. Section 3.5 provides further analysis of some of the findings and overall conclusions of the French results.

⁵ In France the contact of victims with the prosecution service is minimal, so the experience with the prosecution service was not queried.

3.2. BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCES RESPONDENTS

Description of the respondents and the crimes they suffered

The French dataset includes 116 respondents. The majority of these respondents were women (79.3%) and most of the respondents were 35 years or older (see table 3.1). Slightly more than half of the respondents lived with a partner or in a larger family (56.0%) and the remainder of the group was single. Most respondents were either employed (40.5%), looking for work (25.0%) or retired (24.1%). The number of homemakers and students was very small (see table 3.1). The sample seems to be highly educated with 37.1% of respondents having a university degree and 39.7% having finished college (see table 3.1). One respondent indicated he or she was neither able to read or write. Although it seems rather difficult for someone who is unable to read or write, we did include this response in the table. Perhaps he or she received assistance in completing the questionnaire.

Table 3.1. **Demographic characteristics of the French respondents (N = 116)**

	N	%
Gender		
Male	22	19.0%
Female	92	79.3%
Unknown	2	1.7%
Age		
18-24	4	3.4%
25-34	24	20.7%
35-49	41	35.3%
50-65	33	28.4%
66 and older	12	10.3%
Unknown	2	1.7%
Civil status		
Single	51	44.0%
Living together as a couple	39	33.6%
Living with a larger family	26	22.4%
Occupational position		
Employed	47	40.5%
Looking for work (unemployed)	29	25.0%
Keeping home (homemaker)	4	3.4%
Retired / disabled	28	24.1%
Going to school / college (student)	4	3.4%
Other	4	3.4%
Highest level of education		
Unable to read or write	1	0.9%
Able to read and write	1	0.9%
Primary school	5	4.3%
High school, not finished	2	1.7%
High school	18	15.5%
College	46	39.7%
University	43	37.1%

The majority of the respondents contacted Victim Support in the twelve months preceding the data collection (84.5%). Fifteen respondents did not answer the question whether they had been in contact with Victim Support in the previous twelve months, and three respondents indicated they had not contacted Victim Support in that period. Table 2 presents the type of offence for which the respondents contacted Victim Support. As explained in the methods chapter, respondents were included in this analysis regardless of whether or not they had been in contact with Victim Support in the preceding 12 months. Respondents could indicate multiple offences and on average, respondents suffered 1.6 offences (SD = 1.3). Table 3.2 shows that assault and domestic violence were most frequently reported. Theft, verbal abuse, and sexual violence were among the second-most-often reported offences. Just over 10% of the respondents reported they were victims of a different type of offence. Among other types of incidents, their reports included identity theft (one case), hold-ups (two cases), arson (one case), and traffic accidents (three cases). A quarter of the respondents (24.1%) had been a victim of the same type of crime before, and 28.4% had previously suffered other types of crime.

Table 3.2. **The offence for which respondents contacted Victim Support (N = 116)**

Offence	N	%
Theft	21	18.1%
Housebreaking	5	4.3%
Robbery	8	6.9%
Vandalism	11	9.5%
Threat / Verbal abuse	18	15.5%
Assault	44	37.9%
Stalking	13	11.2%
Sexual violence / abuse	18	15.5%
Domestic violence / abuse	31	26.7%
Hostage taking	1	0.9%
Homicide	4	3.4%
Discrimination / Hate crime	1	0.9%
Terrorism	0	0.0%
Other	13	11.2%

With regard to the offence for which respondents contacted Victim Support, slightly more than half of the respondents (55.2%) knew the offender before the offence occurred. In the majority of these cases (54.7%), the offender was a partner or a former partner. Friends, acquaintances, and neighbours made up for 17.2% of the known offenders, and parents constituted 9.4% of the known offenders. The remainder of these offenders had a different relationship with the victim (e.g., a student, a client, or a teacher) (9.4%), were colleagues (3.1%), employers (1.6%), or the relationship was reported as 'unknown' (4.7%).

Reasons for reporting the crime

A large majority of the respondents reported the offence to the police themselves (87.9%) and two of these respondents indicated that the offence was also reported to the police by someone else. Nine respondents

(7.8%) indicated they did not report the offence to the police themselves but someone else did, and four respondents (3.4%) said that the police discovered the offence themselves. The respondents who said either they or someone else reported the offence to the police were asked to give the reason or reasons for reporting the crime. Table 3.3 shows what reasons were endorsed and what percentage of these respondents gave each of these reasons. By far the most endorsed reason is that respondents felt the offender(s) deserved to be punished. In addition, half of the respondents feared the offence would be repeated and also half of the respondents felt they had to report the offence because of the serious nature of the offence. Moreover, many respondents wanted the police to intervene and many sought acknowledgement of what had happened to them. In general, we could conclude that a desire for police action (arrest, protection, acknowledgement) was the most important reason for respondents to report the crime. More practical reasons, such as insurance agency’s requirements or the need for a referral to other forms of support, were less often given. When asked about the most important reason to report, respondents again most often said it was their feeling that the offender(s) deserved to be punished (25.4%). The wish for protection (12.7%), being afraid after the crime (11.3%), being afraid of the crime being repeated (9.9%) and the desire to get acknowledgement for what had happened (9.9%) were mentioned next. Not all respondents provided a ‘most important’ reason, though: 34% of the 111 respondents who either reported the offence to the police themselves or in whose cases someone else reported the offence did not answer the question regarding the most important reason to report.

Table 3. 3. **The reasons for reporting the crime (N = 111)**

Reason	N	%
I was very afraid after the crime	40	36.0%
I wanted the police to refer me to agencies offering forms of support	15	13.5%
I wanted the police to protect me and my family	42	37.8%
I was afraid the offence would be repeated	56	50.5%
I thought the offence was so serious the police had to be informed	56	50.5%
I wanted the police to intervene	55	49.5%
I felt the offender(s) deserved to be punished	73	65.8%
I wanted to be compensated for my damage	32	28.8%
I wanted to recover what had been lost	28	25.2%
It was required for my insurance	22	19.8%
I wanted what happened to me to be acknowledged	54	48.6%
Other reason	7	6.3%

Consequences of the crime

All respondents indicated that the offence had consequences for them. For a large majority of the respondents (87.9%), the offence resulted in emotional distress (see table 3.4). Moreover, half of the respondents reported they suffered physical injuries as a result of the crime (53.4%). As could be expected based on the types of crimes that respondents experienced (as described in table 3.2), lower proportions of respondents indicated that their property was lost or damaged. When asked whether they had received compensation for the crime, not even 10% of the respondents reported they had been fully compensated for the damage caused by the offence. Most respondents

had not received compensation (see table 3.4). Respondents who were not (entirely) compensated for their damages were asked to what extent they felt this was a problem. A large group of respondents indicated this was a large problem for them (46.2%) and a substantial part of the respondents said it was a small problem (28.8%). Taken together, this group forms the majority of the people who had not been (entirely) compensated.

Three out of five respondents (60.9%) said that someone had been arrested for committing the offence against them. A third of the respondents (32.8%) reported that no one had been arrested and 6.0% did not know whether someone was arrested. The respondents who said that no one had been arrested were asked to what extent they thought this was a problem. Almost three quarters of these victims indicated they considered this to be a large problem (73.7%) and 13.2% said it was a small problem. The French respondents were also asked whether someone had been prosecuted but a large majority of the sample did not respond to this question (94.8%).

Table 3.4. **Consequences and compensation of the crime (N = 116)**

	N	%
Consequences		
Loss of property	39	33.6%
Damage to property	29	25.0%
Physical injury	62	53.4%
Emotional distress	102	87.9%
Did you receive compensation?		
Yes, entirely	11	9.6%
Yes, in part	12	10.3%
No, not yet	65	56.0%
No, not at all	27	23.3%
Unknown	1	0.9%
If you were not (entirely) compensated, was this a problem?*		
No problem at all	16	15.4%
A small problem	30	28.8%
A large problem	48	46.2%
Unknown	10	9.6%

* The number of respondents who were asked this question is 104

3.3. VICTIMS' PERSPECTIVES ON SERVICES PROVIDED BY VICTIM SUPPORT

Table 3.5. shows the importance that victims attach to being treated respectfully by Victim Support workers. The table also provides information on the proportion of victims who felt they were indeed treated in a respectful way as well as the proportion of victims who did not feel treated respectfully by Victim Support workers. As explained in the methods chapter, these proportions were calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered these aspects to be important.

Table 3.5. clearly shows that the overwhelming majority of respondents highly values being treated in a respectful

way: Seven of the eight indicators were rated important by more than 90% of the respondents. In addition, almost all respondents who considered these seven indicators to be important also agreed that Victim Support workers acted accordingly. The eighth indicator—specific practical assistance—was deemed important by 87.9% of the respondents but a markedly smaller subgroup agreed this service was offered by Victim Support workers (75.5%). This percentage is not matched, however, by a substantial minority of respondents who indicated they did not receive the services they needed. In fact, a group of 5.9% indicated they did not receive practical assistance. Most probably this reflects that not all respondents needed this type of assistance.

Table 3.5. **Services provided by Victim Support – Respectful treatment***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether Victim Support workers...	Agreed	Disagreed
99.1%	115	Paid sufficient attention to your wishes and needs	98.3%	0.9%
98.3%	114	Treated you politely	98.2%	1.8%
98.3%	114	Took the time to hear all the facts you wanted them to know	99.1%	0.9%
97.4%	113	Showed understanding for your situation	100%	0.0%
97.4%	113	Made you feel like you were taken seriously	100%	0.0%
91.4%	106	Protected your identity and personal details	93.4%	0.9%
90.5%	105	Showed empathy / compassion	97.1%	1.0%
87.9%	102	Provided specific practical assistance, like filling out forms	75.5%	5.9%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

Of the six indicators of the quality of victim assistance with regard to providing information, three are rated important by more than 90% of the respondents (see table 3.6). It is of importance to almost all respondents that Victim Support workers use language that is easy to understand. Furthermore, the overwhelming majority of victims indicate that it is important to them to receive information about their right as a victim and about the criminal justice process. In general, respondents who rated these indicators as important also said Victim Support workers provided these services.

The remaining three information-related indicators of quality support were considered to be important by a markedly smaller group of respondents. Clearly, fewer victims think it is important to receive information about the possibilities to receive compensation or about other organisations that offer support and assistance. Simultaneously, a noticeably higher proportion of victims who indicated these services were of importance to them reported that they did not receive these services. One in twenty respondents who say it was important to them to receive information about how to get compensation said they did not receive this information and 7.6% said they did not receive information about other organisations that offer support and assistance. Finally, one in ten victims who say it is important that Victim Support refers them to other support organisations indicated they were not referred to these organisations.

Table 3.6. **Services provided by Victim Support – Information***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether Victim Support workers...	Agreed	Disagreed
97.4%	113	Used language that was easy to understand	97.3%	0.0%
96.6%	112	Gave you information about your right as a victim	95.5%	1.8%
94.0%	109	Gave you information about the criminal justice process	88.1%	2.8%
81.0%	94	Gave you information about the steps necessary to receive compensation	81.9%	5.3%
79.3%	92	Provided information about other organisations offering support and assistance	80.4%	7.6%
74.1%	86	Referred you to other organisations offering support and assistance	62.8%	11.6%

*The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

Three aspects of victim assistance with regard to participation were assessed (table 3.7). To 93.1% of the respondents, it was important that Victim Support workers accompany them to criminal proceedings. Of this group of respondents, 5.6% indicated that Victim Support workers did not do so. Concerning legal aid, a relatively small majority of respondents said it was important to them that they receive legal assistance or were referred to legal aid (63.8% and 62.9% respectively). Among these subgroups, however, substantial minorities indicated they did not receive these services: 9.5% of victims who feel it is important for Victim Support to offer legal assistance reported they did not receive this type of assistance, and 15.1% of victims who think it is important to be referred to legal aid said Victim Support did not refer them. Although less than 75% of the respondents thinks these are important aspects of services offered by Victim Support, victim service might be improved by asking people about their needs and, if possible, to provide these services accordingly.

Table 3.7. **Services provided by Victim Support – Participation***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether Victim Support workers...	Agreed	Disagreed
93.1%	108	Accompanied you to criminal proceedings	82.4%	5.6%
63.8%	74	Provided legal assistance	60.8%	9.5%
62.9%	73	Referred you to legal aid	58.9%	15.1%

*The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

Being asked about lost and damaged property (table 3.8) is important to just over four in five respondents. In general, the respondents who felt this was important also agreed that Victim Support workers provided this service.

Table 3.8. **Services provided by Victim Support – Compensation***

Importance	N	Can you indicate whether Victim Support workers...	Agreed	Disagreed
81.9%	95	Asked about lost and damaged property	89.5%	2.1%

*The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

The three most important services (endorsed by more than 90% of the respondents) that are related to coping with anxiety, reflect feeling recognised, receiving the support one needs, and receiving emotional support (see table 3.9). As was the case for previously discussed services that are important to the overwhelming majority of victims, these services were also received by more than 90% of those who thought these services were important. A small group of people who said it was important to be supported for as long as they wanted, indicated that they felt they were in need of support for a longer period than support was offered (4.5%).

Although receiving social support seems to be of less importance to respondents, those who did value this aspect of victim support mainly agreed they received this type of assistance. On the other hand, a rather large proportion of respondents reported that their contact with Victim Support had not resulted in a reduction of fear (9.2%). Finally, although just over three in five respondents said it was important to them to receive social support, 8.1% of these respondents indicated they did not receive that type of support.

Table 3.9. **Services provided by Victim Support – Coping with anxiety***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether Victim Support workers...	Agreed	Disagreed
97.4%	113	Made you feel your harm and suffering had been sufficiently recognised	93.8%	2.7%
94.8%	110	Supported you for as long as you felt was necessary	95.5%	4.5%
92.2%	107	Gave you emotional support	97.2%	0.0%
81.0%	94	Gave you psychological support	92.6%	0.0%
75.0%	87	Reduced your feelings of fear	74.7%	9.2%
63.8%	74	Gave you social support	70.3%	8.1%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

With regard to the services that are considered to impact feelings of safety (table 3.10), the aspect of victim support that was considered most important referred to making respondents feel safer. Most of the respondents who valued this aspect of victim services also indicated that Victim Support workers succeeded in making them feel safer. Fewer respondents agreed that Victim Support workers offered advice on their security (73.3%) but, on the other hand, only 5.8% indicated they did not get this advice while they would have wanted to have it. More than one in ten respondents who felt it was important that Victim Support workers reduced the risk of revictimisation, however, said that they did not experience such a reduction of risk.

Table 3.10. **Services provided by Victim Support – Safety***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether Victim Support workers...	Agreed	Disagreed
86.2%	100	Made you feel safer	88.0%	3.0%
74.1%	86	Offered advice on your security	73.3%	5.8%
69.8%	81	Reduced the risk of the offence happening again	59.3%	11.1%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

3.4. VICTIMS' PERSPECTIVES ON SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE POLICE

The analyses with regard to victims' perceptions of their contact with the police were conducted on the group of respondents who indicated they had reported the offence to the police and who had had contact with the police in the twelve months preceding the data collection. Of all respondents, 75.9% (n = 88) indicated they had contact with the police in the preceding 12 months with regard to the offence that had happened to them. Just short of 15% of the respondents said they did not have contact with the police (n = 17) and for 9.5% of respondents no information was available.

Table 3.11 shows the importance victims attach to the aspects of police services that reflect respectful treatment. As was the case with regard to services offered by Victim Support, the overwhelming majority of respondents indicated it is important to them to be treated in a respectful way: for six of eight respectful treatment indicators over 90% of the respondents said these were of importance to them. The level of agreement with regard to whether or not they were actually treated in a respectful way by the police, however, is much lower in comparison with respondents' perceptions of the services offered by Victim Support. In fact, table 11 shows that fairly large groups of respondents did not feel they were treated respectfully by the police officers they had contact with. The only indicator that was present according to more than 75% of the respondents was polite treatment. In all other cases, a substantial large group of respondents said they did not receive the treatment they would have wanted. 17.4% of the respondents did not feel they were taken seriously and 18.6% of the respondents said the police officers did not take the time to hear all the facts they wanted them to know. Almost a quarter of the respondents did not feel the police officers showed understanding for their situations and just over a quarter of the respondents indicated that the police did not do enough to protect their identity and personal details. Almost half of the respondents who felt it was important not to be kept waiting for too long before they could report the offence indicated that they indeed had to wait for too long (44.4%; the item was formulated as indicated in table 11 and, as a result, the percentage of agreement reflects the proportion of respondents who felt this aspect was lacking in the police services).

Turning to the remaining two indicators of respectful treatment, we see that among those who expressed the need to receive empathy or compassion from the police, 17.1% said this was lacking in their contact with the police. Slightly more than a third of the respondents who felt it was important that they did not have to repeat their account of the events too often, did in fact feel this had been the case (37.7%; the item was formulated as indicated in table 11 and, as a result, the percentage of agreement reflects the proportion of respondents who felt this aspect was lacking in the police services).

Table 3.11. **Services provided by the police – Respectful treatment***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether the police officers...	Agreed	Disagreed
97.7%	86	Made you feel like you were taken seriously	67.4%	17.4%
97.7%	86	Took the time to hear all the facts you wanted them to know	70.9%	18.6%
96.6%	85	Showed understanding for your situation	60.0%	23.5%
96.6%	85	Treated you politely	84.7%	7.1%
92.0%	81	Made you wait too long before you could report the offence ^a	44.4%	42.0%
90.9%	80	Protected your identity and personal details	51.3%	26.3%
87.5%	77	Made you repeat your account of the events too often ^b	37.7%	46.8%
79.5%	70	Showed empathy / compassion	60.0%	17.1%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

^a Respondents were asked to what extent they considered it important that the police did not make them wait too long. With regard to the services that were provided, however, respondents were asked to what extent they agreed that the police did make them wait too long. For this item, the percentage of disagreement reflects a higher quality of services.

^b Respondents were asked to what extent they considered it important that the police did not make them repeat their account too often. With regard to the services that were provided, however, respondents were asked to what extent they agreed that the police did make them repeat their account too often. For this item, the percentage of disagreement reflects a higher quality of services.

Receiving sufficient and accurate information from the police is of importance to almost all respondents (table 3.12). Again, however, respondents often indicate they did not receive the information they wanted. Many respondents felt they were insufficiently informed about the police's next steps and about further developments in their cases (39.0% and 42.7% respectively) and half of the respondents said they were not informed about their rights as a victim (52.4%). In addition, a third of the respondents said they did not receive the desired information about Victim Support and two fifths of the respondents indicated that the police did not provide them with information about further support and assistance.

Table 3.12. **Services provided by the police – Information***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether the police officers...	Agreed	Disagreed
95.5%	84	Used language that was easy to understand	81.0%	9.5%
95.5%	84	Provided information about your rights as a victim	33.3%	52.4%
93.2%	82	Gave you information about their next steps	47.6%	39.0%
93.2%	82	Kept you informed about further developments in your case	39.0%	42.7%
89.9%	79	Gave you information about Victim Support	60.0%	34.2%
86.4%	76	Gave you information about further support and assistance	40.8%	40.8%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

Indicators with regard to participation form an important part of the services that victims expect from the police (table 13). Again, however, the possibilities to improve police services seem to be readily available. The service that, according to the respondents, has most often been provided refers to the police asking for sufficient information to follow up on the victim's report (66.7% agreed). Still, almost one in five respondents said the police did not ask for sufficient information. Just over a quarter of the respondents felt that the police did not pay sufficient attention to their wishes and needs and one third of the respondents said they were not made aware by the police of their right to participate in criminal proceedings against the offender.

Table 3.13. **Services provided by the police – Participation***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether the police officers...	Agreed	Disagreed
95.5%	84	Asked for sufficient information from you to follow up on your report	66.7%	19.0%
95.5%	84	Made you aware of your right to participate in criminal proceedings against the offender	53.6%	33.3%
94.3%	83	Paid sufficient attention to your wishes and needs	55.4%	27.7%

*The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

Although most victims find it important that the police ask about their losses and damages, a quarter of these respondents reported that the police did not ask them (table 3.14). Also, although 'only' 71.6% of the respondents think it is important that the police give them information about the steps necessary to receive compensation, a majority of 65.1% of the respondents who did consider this an important aspect of victim services to be provided by the police, said they did not receive this information.

Table 3.14. **Services provided by the police – Compensation***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether the police officers...	Agreed	Disagreed
94.3%	83	Asked about your losses and damages	62.7%	25.3%
71.6%	63	Gave you information about the steps necessary to receive compensation	17.5%	65.1%

*The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

With regard to assistance in coping with anxiety and increasing feelings of safety, many respondents felt that the police did not do enough (tables 3.15 and 3.16). Approximately one third of the respondents indicated that the police did not make them feel safer and did not reduce their feelings of fear (31.6% and 33.8% respectively). Two in five respondents reported that the police did not offer advice on their security and did not reduce the risk of the offence happening again (39.0% and 42.5% respectively).

Table 3.15. **Services provided by the police – Coping with anxiety***

Importance	N	Can you indicate whether the police officers...	Agreed	Disagreed
87.5%	77	Reduced your feelings of fear	46.8%	33.8%

*The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

Table 3.16. **Services provided by the police – Safety***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether the police officers...	Agreed	Disagreed
90.9%	80	Reduced the risk of the offence happening again	32.5%	42.5%
89.8%	79	Made you feel safer	54.4%	31.6%
87.5%	77	Offered advice on your security	46.8%	39.0%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

The final set of indicators of the quality of police services refer to retribution: identifying and arresting the offender. Large groups of respondents think these are important aspects of police services (table 3.17). Although just over one in ten respondents feel the police did not do enough to identify the offender, two in ten respondents said that the police did not do enough to actually arrest the offender.

Table 3.17. **Services provided by the police – Retribution***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether the police officers...	Agreed	Disagreed
89.8%	79	Did enough to arrest the offender	51.9%	21.5%
88.6%	78	Did enough to identify the offender	64.1%	11.5%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

3.5. FURTHER ANALYSIS AND OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

As explained in the methods chapter, we analysed whether significant differences existed with regard to victims' perceptions about the provision of services between respondents who felt an aspect of victim services was important and those who felt it was very important. After correcting for the amount of comparisons, these two groups of victims differed significantly with regard to four services provided by Victim Support and one service provided by the police:

- Respondents who felt it was *very important* that Victim Support gave them emotional support agreed to a larger extent that Victim Support workers provided this support than respondents who indicated this was an *important* aspect of Victim Support's services ($t(20.69)=-4.65$; $p<.01$).
- Respondents who felt it was *very important* that Victim Support made them feel their harm and suffering had been sufficiently acknowledged agreed to a larger extent that Victim Support workers accomplished this than respondents who indicated this was an *important* aspect of Victim Support's services ($t(107)=-3.66$; $p<.01$).
- Respondents who felt it was *very important* that Victim Support supported them for as long as they felt

was necessary agreed to a larger extent that Victim Support workers did this than respondents who indicated this was an *important* aspect of Victim Support's services ($t(108)=-3.36$; $p<.01$).

- Respondents who felt it was *very important* that Victim Support provided information about other organisations offering support agreed to a larger extent that Victim Support workers provided this information than respondents who indicated this was an *important* aspect of Victim Support's services ($t(53.71)=-3.44$; $p<.01$).
- Respondents who felt it was *very important* that the police showed compassion agreed to a larger extent that police officers did so than respondents who indicated this was an *important* aspect of police services ($t(58.80)=-3.43$; $p<.01$).

In all cases, the respondents who very much valued the specific service agreed to a larger extent that the specific service was provided than respondents who felt the service was important but not very important. Unfortunately, there is no way of knowing what comes first: Do victims value the services they received as more important than the services they did not receive (or that they received to a lesser extent) or do victims in some way or other interact in such a way with Victim Support and the police to ensure they receive those services they consider to be very important?

Overall conclusions

The results of the study in France paint a very clear picture of the way victims view quality and where potential quality gaps lie. The key findings are the following:

- *Near unanimity on the importance of certain indicators of Victim Support.* A number of indicators, including respectful treatment, receiving clear and unambiguous information, support concerning the criminal justice process and coping with anxiety were found to be important by nearly all respondents, with about 95% finding these indicators important.
- *Importance of all indicators - Victim Support.* The indicators included in the questionnaire were judged to be important by most respondents. Even the indicators (referral to legal aid for instance) that were judged to be important by a relatively small group of respondents, compared to other indicators, were still deemed to be important by a large majority of respondents. Over 6 in 10 of respondents found these indicators to be important.
- *Coincidence of importance and experience - Victim Support.* The findings reveal that on all indicators the experience with Victim Support services was positive. In addition the results suggest a strong coincidence of importance of indicators and experience. The indicators that were seen to be important by (nearly) all victims, were also offered to (nearly) all victims. No evidence of quality gaps (high importance, low experience) was found.
- *Similar indicators important for Victim Support and the police.* The same indicators that were found to be important in the services delivered by Victim Support, were also deemed to be important in the services delivered by the police, including respectful treatment, information provision and reception.
- *High importance all indicators - Police.* All indicators of police performance were deemed to be important by respondents, with nearly all indicators achieving 90% importance rates. The sole exception was the indicator 'Gave you information about the steps necessary to receive compensation', which was still seen by 71,6% to be important.
- *Clear evidence of quality gaps.* Unlike the results for Victim Support, the survey reveals clear evidence of quality gaps in police service delivery. On most counts experience with police service delivery was poorer than with service delivery by Victims Support, but this was particularly true concerning information provision, swift processing of the case and increasing (perceptions of) safety.

4.1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW CHAPTER

Germany has the largest population in the European Union, with over 80 million inhabitants and is the fourth largest in terms of area. The relatively low rate of experienced victimisation, according to the 2004/2005 sweep of the International Crime Victim Survey - with about 13% of the population being victimised annually - translates into about 10 million inhabitants falling victim to crime in a every year. Reporting rates of crime are higher than the EU-average in Germany, with the rate for five types of common crimes⁶ being 61% in the 2004/2005 sweep of the ICVS. According to the ICVS the take up rate of victim support in Germany is 2%, which would amount to 200.000 victims annually.

There are two main fields of legislation concerning the current system of victim's rights in Germany. The first field is the regulation of the state compensation. The Victim Compensation Act of 1976 is not part of criminal justice, but an element of social law, and has up to now had a bearing on the situation of crime victims. State Compensation for victims of violence is defined by the Victims Compensation Act (OEG), the benefits of which are defined in the social compensation law Bundesversorgungsgesetz. This law was developed after World War II, victims get compensation like soldiers. Compensation is limited to violent crimes, and the individual victim him- or herself has to provide evidence that a violent crime has occurred. Victims receive, for example medical treatment and in case of serious injuries they get a pension. Damages include psychological injuries.

German criminal procedure, the second field, follows the inquisitorial model. The main legislation governing the criminal trial is the STPO (German Code of Criminal Procedure). Within criminal justice five landmark reforms have influenced the position of victims of crime in Germany. In 1986 the Opferschutzgesetz (Victim Protection Act) was passed, which. It amended and extended victims' rights. Amongst others, information rights, including information on the outcome of proceedings, the right to inspect the judicial file and the right to legal representation at trial. In 1998 the Zeugenschutzgesetz and in 2004, following an evaluation of the Framework Decision (2001/220/JHA) of the position of victims in Germany, the First Opferrechtsreformgesetz (First Victim Rights Reform Act) was passed. This legislation explicitly recognised the burden of the criminal proceedings for victims of crime and emphasised the role of the state to see to protecting their interests. Again information was improved, and the law also saw the introduction of new measures to see to the claiming and enforcement of restitution from the offender. In 2009 this act was followed the *Zweites Opferrechtsreformgesetz* (Second Victim Rights Reform Act). It strengthened the rights of the victims as an injured party in proceedings and paid special attention to the situation of child victims. In 2013 the Opferrechtsreformgesetz strengthened the position of the victims, especially victims of sexual abuse. Now, victims have the opportunity to make a submission concerning the effects of the crime. In addition, the examination by audio-visual medium was extended.

The procedural position of victims in Germany at trial is considerably stronger than in many other countries, at least on paper. The position of the private accessory prosecutor (Nebenkläger) offers the victim the opportunity to take part in the proceedings, with own procedural rights. Who may join as a private accessory prosecutor is defined by law. Similar to other inquisitorial systems the victim can also adhere his or her civil claim (the so-called adhesion procedure) to the process. The judge in the criminal trial will then also consider the victim's civil claim. Through these processes victims can obtain an active position at trial, including the possibility to examine witnesses, request evidence, pose questions and offer statements. Even if the victim has not the position of a private accessory prosecutor there are many other rights.

⁶ Theft from a car, theft of a bicycle, burglary, attempted burglary and theft of personal property.

The main organisation for victim support in Germany is WEISSER RING (WR)⁷, founded in Mainz in 1976 by television presenter and publicist Eduard Zimmermann. WR today has approx. 50,000 members, 80 staff members and more than 3,000 volunteers. 420 of them act as initial contact persons for victims of crime and as coordinators for the local groups of volunteers. In this way, WR is able to offer an area-wide network of help for victims, their families and relatives. If the victim is needy, WR offers material help. In 2013 material aid was given more than 16.000 times, many times larger is the number of immaterial support victims received, which is the most important help.

WR is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation with the legal structure of a registered association. It does not receive financial support from the government. Financial income is made up of, for example, membership fees, donations, fines and inheritances. The goals of WR are to help and support victims of crime, prevent crime, and to provide support for projects, which provide compensation for damages and victim-offender mediation. WR volunteers provide emotional interpersonal support and counselling for victims of crime, offer information on victim' rights, assist victims in and around the trial, provide financial assistance and support in receiving compensation and refer victims to other organisations. Since September 2010 WR operates a nation-wide helpline for victims free of charge: 116 006.

The German questionnaire exclusively focused on victims' contact with WR and did not include questions regarding victims' contact with the police or the judiciary. In February 2014, the final draft questionnaire was supplemented with questions concerning specific German legal tools for compensation (German state compensation law). After a test of the questionnaire, 1,000 questionnaires were sent out by post in March 2014. Children and young victims and victims of sexual abuse during their childhood and youth, supported to get compensation by special funds, were excluded. Furthermore, cases of domestic violence were excluded, in as far as a selection was possible, to prevent offenders from gaining access to the questionnaire. Included were persons who contacted WR after February 2013. WEISSER RING offers immaterial help and when the victim is needy also material help. Our selection of victims for the questionnaire reflects the proportion of gender as well as the proportion of material/immaterial support.

In a letter attached to the questionnaire, it was pointed out that every person contacted could contact a personally named support worker via telephone. This specially designated staff member also conducted the preliminary test interviews. As a more distanced form of contact, an e-mail address was provided. Persons who found it difficult to answer or those who might experience problems by doing so could also contact the WR helpline or the volunteer they had been in contact with. In addition, the letter stated that the interviewee's data protection and anonymity was ensured. WEISSER RING requested that the questions be answered by March 31, 2014. Each questionnaire that was returned by the end of May was taken into account. 118 questionnaires were returned with a note that the addressee was unknown at the relevant address or had relocated. 882 questionnaires reached the addressees. 288 were returned. As a result 282 (6 arrived later than June 1) questionnaires can be evaluated, yielding a response rate of 36,5%.

The chapter is structured as follows. Section 4.2 provides the overview of the background and the characteristics of the respondents, section 4.3 on their experience with Weisser Ring, which is further analysed in section 4.4. Section 4.5 provides an overview of the main conclusions.

⁷ There are also other victim support organizations in Germany, both non-governmental and governmental. The Weisser Ring however is the largest, and the only organization with follow national coverage.

4.2. BACKGROUND AND CHARACTERISTICS RESPONDENTS

Description of the respondents and the crimes they suffered

The German dataset includes 282 respondents. Of these 282 respondents, seven did not answer the questions regarding the provision and importance of Victim Support's services and were excluded from the dataset. The final dataset therefore includes 275 respondents. The majority of these respondents were women (76.4%) and most of the respondents were 35 years or older (see table 1). Almost two in five respondents were single and an additional 21.1% were divorced or separated. Less than one third of the respondents (30.9%) lived with a partner or in a larger family and the remainder of the group was a widow(er) or did not provide information on their marital status. Most respondents were either employed (38.2%) or retired (26.5%). The proportions of respondents looking for a job, enrolled in school or college, or homemakers were relatively small but together make up for 22.9% (see table 1). The educational level of the sample seems to be fairly evenly distributed across all levels of the German educational system (see table 4.1).

Table 4.1. **Demographic characteristics of the German respondents (N = 275)**

	N	%
Gender		
Male	61	22.2%
Female	210	76.4%
Unknown	4	1.5%
Age		
18-24	32	11.6%
25-34	47	17.1%
35-49	85	30.9%
50-65	65	23.6%
66 and older	43	15.6%
Unknown	3	1.1%
Civil status		
Single	106	38.5%
Living together as a couple	63	22.9%
Living with a larger family	22	8.0%
Divorced	39	14.2%
Separated	19	6.9%
Widow(er)	15	5.5%
Unknown	11	4.0%
Occupational position		
Employed	105	38.2%
Looking for work (unemployed)	27	9.8%
Keeping home (homemaker)	14	5.1%
Retired / disabled	73	26.5%
Going to school / college (student)	22	8.0%
Other	24	8.7%
Unknown	10	3.6%
Highest level of education		
Primary school	9	3.3%
Secondary school – Basic level (Hauptschulabschluss)	79	28.7%
Secondary school – Advanced level (Realschulabschluss)	73	26.5%
High school (Hochschulreife / Fachhochschulreife)	62	22.5%
College or university (Fachhochschul- / Hochschulabschluss)	47	17.1%
Unknown	5	1.8%

The majority of the respondents contacted Victim Support in the 12 months preceding the data collection (81.8%). A group of 33 respondents did not answer the question whether they had been in contact with Victim Support in the previous twelve months, and 17 respondents indicated they had not contacted Victim Support in that period. Table 2 presents the type of offence for which the respondents contacted Victim Support. As explained in the methods chapter, respondents were included in this analysis regardless of whether or not they had been in contact with Victim Support in the preceding 12 months. Respondents could indicate multiple offences and on average, respondents suffered 2.0 offences (SD = 1.3). Table 4.2 shows that assault and duress / threat were most frequently reported. Sexual violence was reported by 22.2% of the respondents. Theft, robbery, stalking, insult, and domestic violence were each reported by approximately 15% of the respondents. 14.2% of the respondents reported they were victims of a different type of offence. Among other types of incidents, their reports included fraud, arson, and attempted manslaughter. Just over one in five respondents (21.8%) had been a victim of the same type of crime before, and 30.9% had previously suffered other types of crime.

Table 4.2. **The offence for which respondents contacted Victim Support (N = 275)**

Offence	N	%
Theft	42	15.3
Housebreaking	17	6.2
Robbery	41	14.9
Vandalism	24	8.7
Duress / Threat	77	28.0
Assault	107	38.9
Stalking	42	15.3
Sexual violence / abuse	61	22.2
Domestic violence / abuse	36	13.1
Hostage taking	3	1.1
Homicide	13	4.7
Insult	42	15.3
Other	39	14.2

With regard to the offence for which respondents contacted Victim Support, slightly more than half of the respondents (56.0%) knew the offender before the offence occurred. In the majority of these cases the offender was a (former) partner (31.2%) or a friend, acquaintance, or neighbour (27.9%). Relatives made up for 12.3% of the known offenders. The remainder of the offenders had a different relationship with the victim (e.g., a student, a client, or a teacher) (18.2%), were colleagues (3.2%), employers (1.3%), or the relationship was reported as 'unknown' (3.9%). In three cases, information with regard to the relationship with the offender is missing altogether.

A large majority of the respondents reported the offence to the police themselves (70.9%) and eight of these respondents indicated that the offence was also reported to the police by someone else. Almost one in ten respondents (9.5%) indicated they did not report the offence to the police themselves but someone else did, and 8.0% of the respondents said that the police discovered the offence themselves. Just over one in ten respond-

ents indicated that the police was not informed at all about the offence (11.3%).

The respondents who said either they or someone else reported the offence to the police (N = 221) were asked to give the reason or reasons for reporting the crime. Table 4.3 shows what reasons were endorsed and what percentage of these respondents gave each of these reasons. Large groups of respondents felt that they had to report the offence because of the serious nature of the offence and that the offender(s) deserved to be punished (63.3% and 61.5% respectively). Moreover, more than half of the respondents were very afraid after the crime and only slightly fewer respondents wanted the police to intervene. In addition, more than two in five respondents feared the offence would be repeated and just over a third of the respondents sought acknowledgment of what had happened to them. Smaller, but still substantial groups of respondents wanted the police to protect them, wanted to be compensated for their damage, and wanted to be referred to agencies that offer support.

When asked about the most important reason to report, a substantial group of respondents (19.0%) selected more than one reason. For the analysis of the most important reasons to report, the reason that was mentioned first—when more than one reason was selected—was categorised as the most important one. Responses were rather mixed and none of the reasons truly stood out among the others. 13.6% of the respondents said their main reason to report was because they felt that the offender(s) deserved to be punished and 10.9% of the respondents reported their feelings of fear as the most important reason to report the offence. The wish for protection (7.7%), the serious nature of the offence (6.3%), and being afraid that the crime might be repeated (5.9%) were mentioned next. Not all respondents provided a ‘most important’ reason, though: 32.1% of the 221 respondents who either reported the offence to the police themselves or in whose cases someone else reported the offence did not answer the question regarding the most important reason to report.

Table 4.3. **The reasons for reporting the crime (N = 221)**

Reason	N	%
I was very afraid after the crime	125	56.6%
I wanted the police to refer me to agencies offering forms of support	52	23.5%
I wanted the police to protect me and my family	66	29.9%
I was afraid the offence would be repeated	97	43.9%
I thought the offence was so serious the police had to be informed	140	63.3%
I wanted the police to intervene	110	49.8%
I felt the offender(s) deserved to be punished	136	61.5%
I wanted to be compensated for my damage	60	27.1%
I wanted to recover what had been lost	44	19.9%
It was required for my insurance	8	3.6%
I wanted what happened to me to be acknowledged	77	34.8%
Other reason	30	13.6%

Table 4.4 provides the reasons victims did not report the offence to the police. Although almost 40% of the respondents indicated they had different reasons not to report the offence than the reasons listed in the ques-

tionnaire—e.g., being a child when the offence happened—half of the respondents did not report the offence because they were afraid of the offender. Smaller groups of respondents were advised not to report the offence or did not feel that reporting the offence to the police would benefit them, either because they thought the police would not do anything or because they felt it would not help their situation.

Table 4.4. **The reasons not to report the crime (N = 31)**

Reason	N	%
The offence was not serious enough	1	3.2%
That would not have helped my situation	6	19.4%
I thought other people would report the offence	1	3.2%
I was advised not to	5	16.1%
I thought the police would not do anything about the offence	4	12.9%
I was afraid of the offender	16	51.6%
Other reason	12	38.7%

All but three respondents indicated that the offence had consequences for them. For a large majority of the respondents (80.7%), the offence resulted in emotional distress (see table 5). Moreover, almost half of the respondents reported they suffered physical injuries as a result of the crime (48.4%). As could be expected based on the types of crimes that respondents experienced (as described in table 2), lower proportions of respondents indicated that their property was lost or damaged. When asked whether they had received compensation for the crime, not even 5% of the respondents reported they had been fully compensated for the damage caused by the offence. Most respondents had not received compensation (see table 4.5). Respondents who were not (entirely) compensated for their damages were asked to what extent they felt this was a problem. A large group of respondents indicated this was a large problem for them (45.1%) and a substantial part of the respondents said it was a small problem (28.9%). Taken together, this group forms the majority of the people who had not been (entirely) compensated.

The majority of the respondents (68.0%) said that no one had been arrested for committing the offence against them. Just one in five (20.0%) reported that someone had been arrested and 8.7% did not know whether someone was arrested (information was missing for the remaining 3.3% of the respondents). The respondents who said that no one had been arrested were asked to what extent they thought this was a problem. A group of 18.2% said it was no problem at all, whereas just over two fifths of these victims indicated they considered this to be a large problem (42.8%). An additional 29.4% said it was a small problem and opinions are missing for 9.6% of the respondents who indicated that no one had been arrested.

Table 4.5. **Consequences and compensation of the crime**
(N = 275 for consequences; N = 272 for compensation)

	N	%
Consequences		
Loss of property	72	26.2%
Damage to property	58	21.1%
Physical injury	133	48.4%
Emotional distress	222	80.7%
Did you receive compensation?		
Yes, entirely	12	4.4%
Yes, in part	49	18.0%
No, not yet	79	29.0%
No, not at all	118	43.4%
Unknown	14	5.1%
If you were not (entirely) compensated, was this a problem?^a		
No problem at all	35	14.2%
A small problem	71	28.9%
A large problem	111	45.1%
Unknown	29	11.8%

^a The number of respondents who were asked this question is 246

4.3. VICTIMS' PERSPECTIVES ON SERVICES PROVIDED BY VICTIM SUPPORT

Table 4.6 shows the importance that victims attach to being treated respectfully by Victim Support workers. The table also provides information on the proportion of victims who felt they were indeed treated in a respectful way as well as the proportion of victims who did not feel treated respectfully by Victim Support workers. Table 4.6 shows that, in general, respondents highly value being treated in a respectful way: four of the eight indicators were rated important by more than 90% of the respondents and three indicators were rated important by more than 80% (but less than 90%) of the respondents. In addition, almost all respondents who considered these seven indicators to be important also agreed that Victim Support workers acted accordingly. The eighth indicator—specific practical assistance—was deemed important by far fewer respondents (67.6%). In addition, just over one in ten respondents indicated they did not receive the practical assistance they needed.

Table 4.6. **Services provided by Victim Support – Respectful treatment***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether Victim Support workers...	Agreed	Disagreed
94.9%	261	Made you feel like you were taken seriously	92.3%	3.1%
94.2%	259	Showed understanding for your situation	94.6%	2.7%
92.4%	254	Took the time to hear all the facts you wanted them to know	94.1%	1.6%
91.3%	251	Treated you politely	95.2%	0.4%
88.4%	243	Showed empathy / compassion	91.4%	2.5%
87.3%	240	Protected your identity and personal details	90.0%	1.3%
86.5%	238	Paid sufficient attention to your wishes and needs	85.3%	4.6%
67.6%	186	Provided specific practical assistance, like filling out forms	77.4%	11.8%

*The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

As shown in table 4.7, German victims of offences do not necessarily expect Victim Support to provide them with information. Of the six indicators of the quality of victim assistance with regard to providing information, two are rated important by more than 80% of the respondents, one is rated important by 70% to 80% of the respondents, and three are rated important by 60% to 70% of the respondents. It is important to the large majority of German respondents to receive information about their rights as a victim and to have Victim Support workers who communicate in language that is easy to understand. Although most respondents agree that Victim Support workers used language that is easy to understand, one in ten respondents who indicated they valued information about the right as a victim said they did not receive this information. Despite the fact that relatively small majorities of the respondents indicated that it is important to them to receive information on compensation, the criminal justice process, and other organisations that offer assistance, the respondents who did report that these kinds of victim services are important to them, relatively often reported they did not receive the information they wanted. 10.8% said they did not receive information about other organisations that offer support and assistance and one in five respondents who indicated it was important to them to receive information about compensation said that they did not get this information from Victim Support⁸. Furthermore, almost 40% of the victims who said it is important that Victim Support refers them to other support organisations indicated they were not referred to these organisations. Remarkably, a very small group of respondents agreed that Victim Support gave them information about the criminal justice process. Simultaneously, this proportion does not approach 100% when added to the percentage of respondents who reported that Victim Support did not provide this information. Further inspection of the data reveals that 36.5% of the respondents indicated this item was not applicable and for 28.1% information is missing regarding the services provided by Victim Support. It seems likely that this is related to the specific phrasing of the question in German. Rather than asking about information about the criminal justice process in general, the German questionnaire read 'Sie wurden über den Ablauf eines Strafprozesses informiert' which translates as "Gave you information about the criminal justice process". This may have been interpreted as referring to a specific trial. If no trial took place, many respondents may therefore have regarded the question as not applicable.

⁸ These findings should be interpreted with the eligibility criteria for compensation in mind. Given the fact that state compensation is only available for victims of violent crime, many victims of property crime will not be informed about state compensation as they will not be eligible to receive compensation.

Table 4.7. **Services provided by Victim Support – Information***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether Victim Support workers...	Agreed	Disagreed
86.5%	238	Gave you information about your right as a victim	75.6%	11.3%
85.5%	235	Used language that was easy to understand	96.6%	1.7%
78.5%	216	Gave you information about the steps necessary to receive compensation	56.5%	19.9%
69.8%	192	Gave you information about the criminal justice process	21.9%	10.9%
67.6%	186	Provided information about other organisations offering support and assistance	78.0%	10.8%
60.4%	166	Referred you to other organisations offering support and assistance	37.3%	38.0%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

With regard to Victim Support services that cover victims' need for participation, between 60% and 70% of the respondents indicated that these services are of importance to them (see table 4.8). Among those respondents who said these services were important to them, relatively substantial groups indicated they did not receive these services. A group of 28.0% of respondents who said it was important the Victim Support workers accompany them to criminal proceedings reported they were not accompanied. A comparably large group of respondents said they did not receive financial assistance (27.2%) or were not assisted with getting social compensation (26.9%). This could well be due to the fact that many victims do not receive either financial assistance or social compensation. Although two out of three respondents who valued a referral to legal aid reported they did indeed receive this referral, an additional 19.5% said they were not referred to legal aid. Results with regard to Victim Support covering the cost for legal aid are comparable.

Table 4.8. **Services provided by Victim Support – Participation***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether Victim Support workers...	Agreed	Disagreed
71.6%	197	Help you to get social compensation ^a	45.7%	26.9%
70.9%	195	Referred you to legal aid	66.7%	19.5%
67.3%	185	Cover the cost for legal aid	58.9%	21.1%
66.9%	184	Provided financial assistance	56.0%	27.2%
59.6%	164	Accompanied you to criminal proceedings	33.5%	28.0%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

^a The specific situation in Germany required a slightly different translation of this item in German. It read 'Sie wurden dabei unterstützt, Leistungen nach dem Opferschädigungsgesetz zu beantragen'

Some four in five respondents indicated it was important to them that Victim Support workers ask about lost and damaged property (table 4.9). The majority of these respondents also reported Victim Support workers enquired about lost and damaged property (69.6%).

Table 4.9. **Services provided by Victim Support – Compensation***

Importance	N	Can you indicate whether Victim Support workers...	Agreed	Disagreed
78.9%	217	Asked about lost and damaged property	69.6%	8.3%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

With regard to the assistance victims received from Victim Support to cope with anxiety, five of six indicators were perceived as important by more than 75% of the respondents (see table 4.10). It was most important for respondents to be supported for as long as they wanted and to receive emotional support (89.5% and 87.6% respectively). Not all respondents who said these were important aspects of Victim Support's role, however, experienced these types of support: 14.1% of the respondents indicated they did not receive emotional support, and 16.3% of respondents were not supported for as long as they felt was necessary. These percentages of victims who did not receive the types of services that they think are important are even higher with regard to the other forms of support that can be offered to victims to cope with anxiety. Approximately a quarter of the respondents who value Victim Support to reduce their feelings of fear, assistance in gaining recognition as a victim, and social support reported that they did not receive these services from Victim Support. Finally, although 'only' three in five respondents said it was important to them to receive a voucher for psychological counselling, 44.2% of these respondents indicated they did not receive this voucher. This latter finding should be seen in the light of the conditions to grant a voucher⁹.

Table 4.10. **Services provided by Victim Support – Coping with anxiety***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether Victim Support workers...	Agreed	Disagreed
89.5%	246	Supported you for as long as you felt was necessary	63.0%	16.3%
87.6%	241	Gave you emotional support	56.0%	14.1%
79.3%	218	Reduced your feelings of fear	37.6%	26.6%
78.5%	216	Help you gain recognition as a victim of a crime ^a	52.8%	23.1%
75.6%	208	Gave you social support	43.8%	25.0%
59.3%	163	Gave you a voucher for psychological counselling ^b	38.7%	44.2%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

^a In German, this item reads 'Die Mitarbeiter helfen Ihnen, als Opfer einer Straftat anerkannt zu werden'.

^b In German, this item reads 'Die Mitarbeiter gaben Ihnen einen Beratungsscheck für eine psychotraumatologische Erstberatung'.

In general, respondents valued Victim Support workers to help them improve their safety: each of the three indicators concerning safety was rated as important by more than 70% of the respondents (see table 4.11). A larger majority of respondents who said it was important that Victim Support workers make them feel safer agreed that Victim Support workers did manage to increase their feelings of safety. The proportion of respondents who reported that they received advice on their security was smaller, with 60.7% of respondents who valued this service indicating that they received advice and 15.3% of these respondents saying they did not. One in five respondents who valued Victim Support to reduce the risk of revictimisation said they did not experience a reduction of that risk as a result of Victim Support's efforts.

⁹ These findings should also be seen in the light of the conditions for material help offered by WEISSER RING. These vouchers are a kind of material help and were only given when the victim is needy.

Table 4.11. **Services provided by Victim Support – Safety***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether Victim Support workers...	Agreed	Disagreed
88.4%	243	Made you feel safer	79.8%	8.2%
83.3%	229	Offered advice on your security	60.7%	15.3%
72.7%	200	Reduced the risk of the offence happening again	30.5%	20.5%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

4.4. ADDITIONAL ANALYSES

Comparing respondents with different opinions regarding the importance of services

As explained in the methods chapter, we analysed whether significant differences existed with regard to victims' perceptions about the provision of services between respondents who felt an aspect of victim services was important and those who felt it was *very important*. After correcting for the amount of comparisons, these two groups of victims differed significantly with regard to eight indicators of quality services (see table 4.12). Five of these indicators referred to respectful treatment by Victim Support workers, one to information, one to coping with anxiety, and one to safety. In all cases, respondents who felt the service was very important agreed to a larger extent that Victim Support workers provided the specific service than respondents who indicated the service was *important*. In terms of effect sizes, the differences between the two groups mainly represent small ($d < .50$) to medium-sized ($.50 > d > .80$) differences. Unfortunately, there is no way of knowing what comes first: Do victims value the services they received as more important than the services they did not receive (or that they received to a lesser extent) or do victims in some way or other interact in such a way with Victim Support and the police to ensure they receive those services they consider to be very important?

Table 4.12. **Differences between respondents rating services as important or very important**

Service	T	p	d
Treated you politely	3,54	< 0,01	0,56
Took the time to hear all the facts you wanted them to know	3,57	< 0,01	0,59
Showed understanding for your situation	3,76	< 0,01	0,64
Showed empathy / compassion	3,78	< 0,01	0,56
Protected your identity and personal details	3,28	< 0,01	0,67
Gave you information about your right as a victim	3,14	< 0,01	0,57
Gave you emotional support	3,07	< 0,01	0,43
Reduced your feelings of fear	2,93	< 0,01	0,44

Comparing men and women

After correcting for the number of comparisons, one (medium-sized) significant difference was found between men and women with regard to the perceived importance of victim services provided by Victim Support. Men attached more value to receiving information about the steps necessary to receive compensation than women did ($t(127.03) = 3.22$; $p < .01$; $d = .57$). No significant gender differences existed (after Holm's correction for the number of comparisons) in the levels of agreement with regard to whether or not services were provided by Victim Support.

4.5. CONCLUSION

In keeping with the results of the French chapter 3, the results of the German survey offer a clear picture of the way victims view the support and assistance they received. The key findings are the following:

- *Near unanimity on the importance of certain indicators - Victim Support.* Nearly all the indicators under the heading of respectful treatment were seen as important by the respondents. Most indicators achieved an importance rating of just below 90%, and some even higher. Clear information, particularly concerning victims' rights was also deemed to be important by about five out of six respondents. The same is true for receiving emotional support, for as long as the respondent felt was necessary, and for being helped to feel safer and less anxious.
- *Importance of all indicators - Victim Support.* All indicators were seen as important by a large majority of respondents. The indicators with the lowest importance scores - being offered a voucher for psychological counselling and being accompanied during the criminal proceedings- were seen as important by about 60% of respondents.
- *Link between importance and experience - Victim Support.* The findings reveal that on nearly all indicators the experience with Victim Support services was positive, with only two exceptions: being referred to another organisation and receiving a voucher for psychological counselling. In addition the results suggest a strong coincidence of importance of indicators and experience. The indicators that were seen to be important by (nearly) all victims were also offered to most victims.
- *Evidence of issues that might be improved, not clear quality gaps.* On two indicators - being referred to another organisation and receiving a voucher for psychological counselling - the number of respondents denying to have the experience outnumbered the persons stating to have done so, but this result should be seen in the light of the relatively small share of respondents finding these indicators important and the fact that these services are not granted to all victims. Some of the victims who did not receive these services will not have been eligible. Just over quarter of victims denied feeling safer after the encounter with victim support, even though 80% of victims found this to be an important indicator. Further research should explore whether action should be taken to improve victims experience on these indicators.

5.1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW CHAPTER

Scotland is a country that is part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. It has well over 5 million inhabitants. According to the 2004/2005 sweep of the International Crime Victim Survey (ICVS) it has a relatively low victimisation rate – both in comparison to elsewhere in the UK and within the European Union - with 13% of the population being victimised annually. This translates into over 600,000 falling victim to crime each year. Reporting rates of crime are higher than the EU-average in Scotland, with the rate for five types of common crimes¹⁰ being 61% in the 2004/2005 sweep of the ICVS. According to the ICVS, the take-up rate of victim support in Scotland is 22%, which amounts to nearly 150,000 victims annually.

The Scottish legal system is a mixed system made up of elements of common law and civil law (see Brienen and Hoegen, 2000). The Scottish criminal justice system is an adversarial system, in which the victim has no legal standing; the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service prosecutes offenders on behalf of the State and in the public interest. Although historically victims of crime have no right to participate in criminal proceedings other than as a witness, some rights have been provided to victims in an attempt to make the criminal justice process more inclusive towards the victim, allowing them a chance to provide representations to criminal justice agencies or to receive specific information in relation to their case, in certain circumstances. In addition, specific provisions for vulnerable witnesses have also been put in place.

Firstly, victims whose offender has been sentenced to 18 months or more in custody are eligible to join the Victim Notification Scheme, which provides them with certain information relating to their case; this includes, most importantly, the date of release of the offender from prison, and allows the victim to make representations to the Parole Board for Scotland if the offender is being considered for release. Secondly, from 2009, victims (or their relatives in fatal cases) of serious crimes are given the opportunity to make a written statement to the court to tell them how the crime has affected them physically, emotionally and financially. Victim statements will normally be given to the court if the accused pleads guilty, or is found guilty after a trial and is considered before the accused is sentenced.

For information provision more generally, a service is provided through the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service which provides information and advice to victims and witnesses of crimes reported to the Procurator Fiscal. This is called Victim Information and Advice (VIA), and the service is provided in cases that involve: domestic abuse, hate crimes, sexual offences, crimes where any trial is likely to involve a jury, child victims and witnesses, and vulnerable witnesses or victims who may need additional support. The VIA service gives information about the criminal justice system, keeps victims informed about progress in their case (including information on bail decisions), discusses additional support that may help if they have to give evidence and puts them in touch with organisations that can offer practical and emotional support, such as Victim Support Scotland.

This links to the provisions that are in place for vulnerable witnesses. The Vulnerable Witnesses (Scotland) Act 2004 put into place additional support measures to help witnesses who are particularly vulnerable give evidence in court. These include the use of screens, in-court supporters, and live television links for child and vulnerable adult witnesses. Further improvements are on the way, with the Victim and Witnesses (Scotland) Act 2014 redefining vulnerable witness, including child witness, to improve the identification and support

¹⁰ Theft from a car, theft of a bicycle, burglary, attempted burglary and theft of personal property.

available to enable them to give their best evidence; the age under which a witness is defined as a child witness (and therefore vulnerable) will be raised from 16 to 18 years, and victims of domestic abuse, sexual offences, stalking and human trafficking will automatically be classed as vulnerable witnesses under the new legislation, which is still to come fully into force. The aim of the Victims and Witnesses (Scotland) Act 2014 is to transpose the EU Victim's Directive into national legislation, ensuring that victims are able to obtain case-specific information, the safety of victims and witnesses is ensured during and after investigation and proceedings, victims and witnesses are supported, and that they are able to participate effectively in the criminal justice system.

The Victim Support movement in the UK began in Bristol in 1974, when people from the local community came together to help victims of crime. This was in recognition of the fact that, at that time, the needs of victims of crime were largely unrecognised by the criminal justice system and there was little formal support for victims. In 1978, the National Association of Victim Support schemes (NAVSS) was established as an umbrella organisation for local victim support schemes throughout the United Kingdom. In 1981, the first Scottish victim support scheme was established and by the mid-eighties, many local communities across Scotland were coming together to set up local victim support schemes. It was decided to set up a separate national association for Scottish schemes, separate from NAVSS, in recognition of the geographical distances involved and the separate Scottish legal system. The Scottish Association of Victim Support Schemes (now Victim Support Scotland) was established in 1985. There are strong working links with Victim Support organisations throughout the UK, Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland.

Victim Support Scotland has had charitable status since August 1985 and since its establishment has become the lead organisation in Scotland providing emotional support and practical assistance to all victims of crime. As well as providing direct services to people affected by crime, Victim Support Scotland works to improve and increase knowledge about victims and witnesses through research studies, projects, appropriate publicity and information materials. The organisation has been instrumental in raising the profile of victims and witnesses in the public, parliamentary and criminal justice arenas and has become a major player in the criminal justice system, influencing government policy and helping to improve the experience of victims and witnesses of crime. In addition to national advocacy work, Victim Support Scotland works closely with other victim support organisations in Europe and across the World to further the interests of victims on an international basis.

VSS has around 150 staff and 700 volunteers, and provides assistance to approximately 175,000 victims and witnesses each year. Victim Support Scotland supports victims of *all* crime, and workers are trained to support individuals affected by rape and sexual assault, domestic abuse, and murder, although the majority of our services are provided to those affected by lower tariff crime such as assault, theft, and housebreaking. VSS services are free and confidential, provided by trained volunteers and staff through community-based victim support services and court-based witness services. The services provided include: offering information regarding the criminal justice process; delivering practical support (insurance, criminal injuries compensation, installing alarms, accompaniment to doctors etc.); providing emotional support (formal counselling or psychological services are not provided); working as an advocate for crime victims' and witnesses' rights in the criminal justice system; liaising with justice agencies on behalf of the victim/witness, or appropriate agencies regarding antisocial behaviour; supporting crime victims in providing input to the criminal justice process through victim impact statements; and effective and appropriate referrals to other suitable organisations.

In Scotland, the methods used to collect the data varied for the two versions of the questionnaire. For the survey that included questions on the police, paper copies of the survey were offered to service users in 25 of the Victim Service offices across the country to individuals whose contact with the organisation was ending. This started in the middle of April 2014 and continued until the end of June. Victims were offered the survey and the chance to complete this while still in the office or to take it away with them to complete at home; a prepaid envelope was given out so that they could send this back to VSS free of charge. This was mostly done in person, although service users whose support came to an end over the telephone were made aware of both the written and the online versions of the questionnaire. All adult service users were included in this method of data collection. Due to a low response rate through this method of collection, a further 340 surveys were sent out by post to users of the Victim Service on 22nd May 2014 (until the end of June). A sample was taken from the organisation's case record management system, with the following conditions: victims aged over 18 years old, with whom personal contact had been established and the case had been closed at least two weeks before the sample was taken; including all crime categories except domestic abuse.

For the prosecution service version of the questionnaire, 100 surveys were posted out to service users of the Witness Service at the end of February 2014, as it would be much more likely that these individuals would have had personal experience of the prosecution service. A sample was taken from the case record management system of individuals aged 18 or over who had used the Witness Service and whose case had been closed between 1st June 2013 and 1st July 2013; only individuals who we had established personal contact with (either through the telephone or in person) were contacted, and no domestic cases were used. Only eight respondents indicated they had had contact with the prosecutor's office with regard to the offence that had happened to them. Because of this small number, no analyses were conducted to evaluate the victims' perspectives on these services.

The chapter is structured as follows. Section 5.2 provides the overview of the background and the characteristics of the respondents, and section 5.3 reports on the respondents' experience with Victim Support Scotland. Section 5.4 discusses the results concerning the Scottish police and section 5.5 provides an overview of the main conclusions.

5.2. DESCRIPTION OF THE RESPONDENTS AND THE CRIMES THEY SUFFERED

The Scottish dataset includes 72 respondents. The majority of these respondents were women (69.4%) and 75.0% of the respondents were 35 years or older (see table 5.1). Two in five respondents were single (40.3%) and a slightly larger group lived with a partner or was married (43.0% in total). Most respondents were either employed (40.3%), disabled (18.1%) or retired (16.7%). In addition, the sample contained small groups of homemakers, unemployed people, and students. The Scottish survey did not contain a question about the respondents' level of education.

Table 5.1. **Demographic characteristics of the Scottish respondents (N = 72)**

	N	%
Gender		
Male	21	29.2%
Female	50	69.4%
Unknown	1	1.4%
Age		
18-24	6	8.3%
25-34	11	15.3%
35-49	26	36.1%
50-65	21	29.2%
66 and older	7	9.7%
Unknown	1	1.4%
Civil status		
Single	29	40.3%
Married	26	36.1%
Living with a partner	5	6.9%
Divorced or separated	9	12.5%
Widowed	2	2.8%
Unknown	1	1.4%
Occupational position		
Employed	29	40.3%
Looking for work (unemployed)	5	6.9%
Keeping home (homemaker)	5	6.9%
Retired	12	16.7%
Disabled	13	18.1%
Going to school / college (student)	2	2.8%
Other	5	6.9%
Unknown	1	1.4%

The majority of the respondents had contact with Victim Support in the twelve months preceding the data collection (93.1%). Two respondents did not answer the question whether they had been in contact with Victim Support in the previous twelve months, and three respondents indicated they had no contact with Victim Support in that period. Table 5.2 presents the type of offence for which the respondents were in contact with Victim Support. As explained in the methods chapter, respondents were included in this analysis regardless of whether or not they had been in contact with Victim Support in the preceding 12 months. Respondents could indicate multiple offences and on average, respondents suffered 1.8 offences (SD = 1.1). Table 5.2 shows that assault and verbal abuse were most frequently reported. Sexual abuse and theft were among the next-most-often reported offences, albeit much less frequent than assault and verbal abuse. Housebreaking, vandalism, and domestic violence were each reported by approximately 10% of the respondents. Different types of offences were rarely reported. One in five respondents (20.8%) had been a victim of the same type of crime before, and 37.5% had previously suffered other types of crime.

Table 5.2. **The offence for which respondents contacted Victim Support (N = 127)**

Offence	N	%
Theft	10	13.9%
Housebreaking	8	11.1%
Robbery	5	6.9%
Vandalism	8	11.1%
Threat / Verbal abuse	27	37.5%
Assault	36	50.0%
Stalking	4	5.6%
Sexual violence / abuse	11	15.3%
Domestic violence / abuse	8	11.1%
Discrimination / Hate crime	5	6.9%
Other	8	11.1%

With regard to the offence for which respondents contacted Victim Support, just over half of the respondents (55.6%) knew the offender before the offence occurred. In the majority of these cases, the offender was a friend, acquaintance, or neighbour (35.0%) or a relative (32.5%). Partners and former partners made up for 12.5% of the known offenders. Six respondents knew the offender for other reasons (15.0%) and for two respondents the relationship with the offender is unknown (5.0%).

A majority of the respondents reported the offence to the police themselves (73.6%) and seven of these respondents indicated that the offence was also reported to the police by someone else. 15 respondents (20.8%) indicated they did not report the offence to the police themselves but someone else did, and three respondents (4.2%) said that the police discovered the offence themselves. For one respondent information is missing on whether or not the offence was reported to the police. The respondents who said either they or someone else reported the offence to the police were asked to give the reason or reasons for reporting the crime. Table 5.3 shows what reasons were endorsed and what percentage of these respondents gave each of these reasons. By far the most endorsed reasons are that respondents felt the offender(s) deserved to be punished and that respondents considered the crime to be so serious the police had to be informed (both reasons have been selected by 61.8% of the respondents). In addition, half of the respondents was very afraid after the crime and almost half of the respondents feared the offence would be repeated. Moreover, more than two in five respondents sought acknowledgement of what had happened to them and a slightly smaller proportion of respondents wanted the police to intervene. Finally, a third of the sample said they wanted the police to protect them and their families. The remaining reasons, that can be considered to be of a more practical nature, were selected by much smaller subgroups of respondents.

When asked about the most important reason to report, 77.8% of the respondents selected a single most important reason. When limiting the analysis of the most often mentioned reasons to this subgroup, the desire that the offender would be punished (17.9%), being afraid after the crime (16.1%), the desire to be protected by the police (14.3%), the perceived seriousness of the crime (14.3%), and the fear that the offence would be repeated (12.5%) each were selected by almost equal numbers of victims. All other reasons were chosen as the most important one by very small groups of respondents and will not be reported here separately.

Table 5.3. **The reasons for reporting the crime (N = 68)**

Reason	N	%
I was very afraid after the crime	35	51.5%
I wanted the police to refer me to agencies offering forms of support	10	14.7%
I wanted the police to protect me and my family	23	33.8%
I was afraid the offence would be repeated	31	45.6%
I thought the offence was so serious the police had to be informed	42	61.8%
I wanted the police to intervene	26	38.2%
I felt the offender(s) deserved to be punished	42	61.8%
I wanted to be compensated for my damage	6	8.8%
I wanted to recover what had been lost	6	8.8%
It was required for my insurance	2	2.9%
I wanted what happened to me to be acknowledged	29	42.6%
Other reason	6	8.8%

All but one respondent indicated that the offence had consequences for them. For a large majority of the respondents (87.5%), the offence resulted in emotional distress (see table 5.4). Moreover, almost half of the respondents reported they suffered physical injuries as a result of the crime (47.2%). As could be expected based on the types of crimes that respondents experienced (as described in table 2), lower proportions of respondents indicated that their property was lost or damaged. When asked whether they had received compensation for the crime, 16.9% of the respondents reported that they had been fully compensated for the damage caused by the offence and 7.0% said they had been partly compensated. Most respondents, however, had not received compensation (see table 4). Respondents who were not (entirely) compensated for their damages were asked to what extent they felt this was a problem. Quite a large minority of respondents said they did not consider this to be a problem (37.9%). Nevertheless, almost half of the respondents indicated this was either a large (22.4%) or a small (24.1%) problem. Another 15.5% of the respondents who had not been (entirely) compensated did not answer this question.

A majority of the respondents (59.7%) said that someone had been charged for committing the offence against them. Almost a third of the respondents (30.6%) reported no one had been charged and 8.3% of the respondents indicated they did not know whether the offender had been charged. Information was missing for one respondent. The respondents who said that no one had been charged (N = 22) were asked to what extent they thought this was a problem. The majority of these victims said it was either a large (63.6%) or a small (22.7%) problem to them that no one had been charged. One respondent indicated they did not consider it to be a problem that no one had been charged and two of the respondents who said no one had been charged did not answer the question whether or not this was a problem to them.

Table 5.4. **Consequences and compensation of the crime**
(N = 72 for consequences; N = 71 for compensation)

	N	%
Consequences		
Loss of property	13	18.1%
Damage to property	16	22.2%
Physical injury	34	47.2%
Emotional distress	63	87.5%
No consequences	1	1.4%
Did you receive compensation?		
Yes, entirely	12	16.9%
Yes, in part	5	7.0%
No, not yet	12	16.9%
No, not at all	41	57.7%
Unknown	1	1.4%
If you were not (entirely) compensated, was this a problem?^a		
No problem at all	22	37.9%
A small problem	14	24.1%
A large problem	13	22.4%
Unknown	9	15.5%

^a The number of respondents who were asked this question is 58

5.3. VICTIMS' PERSPECTIVES ON SERVICES PROVIDED BY VICTIM SUPPORT

Table 5.5 shows the importance that victims attach to being treated respectfully by Victim Support workers. The table also provides information on the proportion of victims who felt they were indeed treated in a respectful way as well as the proportion of victims who did not feel treated respectfully by Victim Support workers. Table 5.5 shows that, in general, respondents highly value being treated in a respectful way: four of the eight indicators were rated important by more than 90% of the respondents and three indicators were rated important by more than 80% (but less than 90%) of the respondents. In addition, large groups of respondents who considered these seven indicators to be important also agreed that Victim Support workers acted accordingly.

The eighth indicator of respectful treatment—specific practical assistance—was deemed important by fewer respondents (68.1%). Within this group of respondents who consider this to be an important aspect of victim assistance, however, one in five say they did not receive practical assistance.

Table 5.5. **Services provided by Victim Support – Respectful treatment***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether Victim Support workers...	Agreed	Disagreed
93.1%	67	Treated you politely	97.0%	3.0%
93.1%	67	Took the time to hear all the facts you wanted them to know	91.0%	7.5%
91.7%	66	Showed understanding for your situation	97.0%	3.0%
90.3%	65	Paid sufficient attention to your wishes and needs	83.1%	10.8%
88.9%	64	Made you feel like you were taken seriously	89.1%	4.7%
88.9%	64	Protected your identity and personal details	87.5%	6.3%
87.5%	63	Showed empathy / compassion	90.5%	4.8%
68.1%	49	Provided specific practical assistance, like filling out forms	61.2%	20.4%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

None of the six indicators of the quality of victim assistance with regard to providing information is rated important by more than 90% of the respondents (table 5.6). Instead, four are rated important by more than 80% of the respondents (but less than 90%), one is rated important by more than 70% of the respondents (but less than 80%), and one is rated important by slightly less than 70% of the respondents. The most highly valued aspect of information-related victim assistance is receiving assistance in language that is easy to understand. The percentage of respondents who indicated it is of importance to them that Victim Support workers gave information about their rights as a victim and who valued receiving information about other organisations that offer support and assistance is fairly comparable to the proportion of people who said the use of easily understandable language is important. Strikingly different, though, is the proportion of respondents who agreed that they received information about the rights as a victim and about other organisations offering support. Whereas almost all respondents who said this is important to them also indicated that Victim Support workers indeed used easily understandable language, approximately two thirds of the respondents who value information about their rights and about other support organisations said they received this information. 12.9% and 16.4% respectively indicated they did not receive these forms of information. Somewhat similar results were found with regard to the provision of information about the criminal justice process.

The remaining two information-related indicators of quality support—referral to other support organisations and information about the steps necessary to receive compensation—were experienced by approximately half of the people who indicated these issues were important to them. Of the respondents who think it is important to be referred to other support organisation, one in five said they were not referred. Of the respondents who think it is important to receive information on how to receive compensation, one third indicated Victim Support workers did not provide this information.

Table 5.6. **Services provided by Victim Support – Information ***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether Victim Support workers...	Agreed	Disagreed
87.5%	63	Used language that was easy to understand	92.1%	4.8%
86.1%	62	Gave you information about your rights as a victim	69.4%	12.9%
84.7%	61	Provided information about other organisations offering support and assistance	67.2%	16.4%
80.6%	58	Gave you information about the criminal justice process	72.4%	13.8%
77.8%	56	Referred you to other organisations offering support and assistance	50.0%	19.6%
69.4%	50	Gave you information about the steps necessary to receive compensation	54.0%	34.0%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

With regard to Victim Support services that cover victims' need for participation, the Scottish questionnaire only inquired whether respondents received financial assistance (see table 5.7). Just over one third of the respondents indicated that this is an important aspect of victim assistance. Among those respondents who said this is important to them, one third said they did not receive financial assistance.

Table 5.7. **Services provided by Victim Support – Participation ***

Importance	N	Can you indicate whether Victim Support workers...	Agreed	Disagreed
37.5%	27	Provided financial assistance	37.0%	33.3%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

Almost all aspects of victim assistance related to coping with anxiety were rated as important by 80% to 90% of the respondents (table 5.8). The notable exception is receiving social support which was rated important by less than 70% of the respondents.

Among the respondents who indicated it is important that Victim Support workers support victims for as long as they feel necessary, 12.3% said this was not how they experienced Victim Support's assistance. A comparable group of respondents who valued emotional support said they did not receive that type of support from Victim Support. Just short of 70% of the respondents who think it is important that Victim Support workers recognise their harm and suffering feel that this need was met in their contact with Victim Support. The percentage of people who reported this need was not met, however, is the smallest of all aspects of victim assistance to cope with anxiety.

A minority of the people who said it was important that Victim Support workers reduced their feelings of fear indicated that they felt that Victim Support workers did do so (39.7%). An almost equally large group neither agreed nor disagreed when asked whether Victim Support workers reduced their feelings of fear (37.9%; not in table), and 17.2% indicated that Victim Support workers did not reduce their feelings of fear. Although receiving social support seems to be of relatively less importance to respondents, less than half of those who did

value this aspect of victim support agreed they received this type of assistance (42.0%). 38% of the respondents who said this was important to them, neither agreed nor disagreed when asked whether Victim Support workers gave them social support (not in table).

Table 5.8. **Services provided by Victim Support – Coping with anxiety***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether Victim Support workers...	Agreed	Disagreed
90.3%	65	Supported you for as long as you felt was necessary	76.9%	12.3%
84.7%	61	Gave you emotional support	70.5%	9.8%
84.7%	61	Made you feel your harm and suffering had been sufficiently recognised	68.9%	6.6%
80.6%	58	Reduced your feelings of fear	39.7%	17.2%
69.4%	50	Gave you social support	42.0%	12.0%

*The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

Two of the three indicators concerning safety were rated as important by almost 80% of the respondents (see table 5.9). The proportion of respondents agreeing with the statements that Victim Support workers offered advice on their security and made them feel safer ranged between 60 and 70%. On the other hand, a minority of the people who said it is important to them that Victim Support workers reduces the risk of the offence happening again agreed that this was true for their situation (37.0%).

Table 5.9. **Services provided by Victim Support – Safety***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether Victim Support workers...	Agreed	Disagreed
79.2%	57	Offered advice on your security	68.4%	12.3%
77.8%	56	Made you feel safer	60.7%	8.9%
63.9%	46	Reduced the risk of the offence happening again	37.0%	23.9%

*The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

5.4. VICTIMS' PERSPECTIVES ON SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE POLICE

The analyses with regard to victims' perceptions of their contact with the police were conducted on the group of respondents who indicated they had reported the offence to the police and who had had contact with the police in the twelve months preceding the data collection. Of all respondents, 55.6% (n = 40) indicated they had had contact with the police in the preceding 12 months with regard to the offence that had happened to them. Almost a quarter (23.6%) of the respondents said they did not have contact with the police (n = 17) and for 20.8% of respondents no information was available.

Table 5.10 shows the importance victims attach to the aspects of police services that reflect respectful treatment. As was the case with regard to services offered by Victim Support, the overwhelming majority of respondents indicated it is important to them to be treated in a respectful way: for six of eight respectful treatment indicators 85% to 92.5% of the respondents said these were of importance to them. The level of agreement with regard to whether or not they were actually treated in a respectful way by the police, however, is considerably lower in comparison with respondents' perceptions of the services offered by Victim Support. Only one aspect of respectful treatment—being treated politely—was experienced by more than 75% of the respondents who valued this aspect. In all cases, between 10% and 25% of the respondents who said a specific aspect of respectful treatment is important to them, reported that the services they received were not characterised by respectful treatment. For instance, one in five respondents said they did not feel they were taken seriously, and an equally large group of respondents indicated that they did not feel that the police officers showed understanding for their situation. Over a quarter of the respondents who said it is important to be treated with empathy did not experience that in their contact with the police, and almost a quarter of the respondents felt the police did not respond to their initial contact quickly enough.

The aspect of respectful treatment that received the lowest ratings refers to not having to repeat your account of the events too often. Almost 40% of the respondents who felt it was important that they did not have to repeat their account of the events too often, did in fact feel this had been the case (31.3%; the item was formulated as indicated in table 10 and, as a result, the percentage of agreement reflects the proportion of respondents who felt this aspect was lacking in the police services).

Table 5.10. **Services provided by the police – Respectful treatment***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether the police officers...	Agreed	Disagreed
92.5%	37	Took the time to hear all the facts you wanted them to know	73.0%	16.2%
90.0%	36	Made you feel like you were taken seriously	72.2%	19.4%
90.0%	36	Showed understanding for your situation	72.2%	19.4%
90.0%	36	Responded to your initial contact quickly enough	61.1%	22.2%
87.5%	35	Treated you politely	77.1%	11.4%
87.5%	35	Showed empathy / compassion	60.0%	25.7%
85.0%	34	Protected your identity and personal details	64.7%	11.8%
72.5%	29	Made you repeat your account of the events too often ^a	37.9%	44.8%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

^a Respondents were asked to what extent they considered it important that the police *did not* make them repeat their account too often. With regard to the services that were provided, however, respondents were asked to what extent they agreed that the police *did* make them repeat their account too often. For this item, the percentage of *disagreement* reflects a higher quality of services.

Receiving sufficient and accurate information from the police is of importance to a large majority of the respondents (table 5.11). Again, however, respondents often indicate they did not receive the information they wanted. Most striking is the finding 60.0% of the respondents who considered it is important to receive information about their rights as a victim indicated that they did not receive this information from the police. Also, more respondents felt they were insufficiently informed about developments in their cases (45.7%) than the percentage of respondents who did feel they were adequately informed. With regard to receiving information from the police on their next steps, the proportions of respondents agreeing and disagreeing on this statement is almost equally large. In addition, many respondents felt they were insufficiently informed about further support and assistance or about Victim Support (35.5% and 32.4% respectively). In fact, the only aspect of information-related victim assistance that was experienced by a convincing majority of the respondents relates to the use of language that is easy to understand.

Table 5.11. **Services provided by the police – Information ***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether the police officers...	Agreed	Disagreed
87.5%	35	Used language that was easy to understand	77.1%	5.7%
87.5%	35	Kept you informed about further developments in your case	34.3%	45.7%
87.5%	35	Provided information about your rights as a victim	25.7%	60.0%
85.0%	34	Gave you information about Victim Support	47.1%	32.4%
85.0%	34	Gave you information about their next steps	41.2%	38.2%
77.5%	31	Gave you information about further support and assistance	51.6%	35.5%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

Indicators with regard to participation form an important part of the services that victims expect from the police (table 5.12). Again, however, the possibilities to improve police services seem to be readily available. Only a third of the respondents who valued police officers paying sufficient attention to their wishes and needs agreed that police officer did so, while just over a third disagreed. Another 27.0% neither agreed nor disagreed (not in table). Of the people who said it is important that police officers ask for sufficient information to follow up on their report, less than half said this was the case and more than one third said this was not their experience. Finally, a minority of respondents were asked for their input before a decision was made: 50% of the people who reported this was important to them said that the police did not ask for their input.

Table 5.12. **Services provided by the police – Participation ***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether the police officers...	Agreed	Disagreed
92.5%	37	Paid sufficient attention to your wishes and needs	32.4%	35.1%
90.0%	36	Asked for sufficient information from you to follow up on your report	47.2%	36.1%
80.0%	32	Asked you for input before making decisions	28.1%	50.0%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

Many victims find it important that the police ask about their losses and damages (see table 5.13), but 14.7% of the respondents that said this was important reported that the police did not ask them about this issue. Also, although three quarters of the respondents think it is important that the police give them information about the steps necessary to receive compensation, experiences with regard to the provision of this type of information split evenly among these respondents: 40% said they did receive this information and another 40% indicated they did not receive this information.

Table 5.13. **Services provided by the police – Compensation***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether the police officers...	Agreed	Disagreed
72.5%	29	Asked about your losses and damages	34.5%	48.3%
57.5%	23	Gave you information about the steps necessary to receive compensation	8.7%	69.6%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

With regard to assistance in coping with anxiety and increasing feelings of safety, many respondents felt that the police did not do enough (tables 5.14 and 5.15). Half of the respondents who said it was important that the police assist in reducing their feelings of fear reported that this does not reflect their experience (table 5.14). Opinions about whether or not the police assisted victims in increasing their safety were more or less split across each of the three aspects of this indicator (table 15).

Table 5.14. **Services provided by the police – Coping with anxiety***

Importance	N	Can you indicate whether the police officers...	Agreed	Disagreed
90.0%	36	Reduced your feelings of fear	33.3%	50.0%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

Table 5.15. **Services provided by the police – Safety***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether the police officers...	Agreed	Disagreed
92.5%	37	Made you feel safer	45.9%	40.5%
90.0%	36	Reduced the risk of the offence happening again	41.7%	47.2%
85.0%	34	Offered advice on your security	47.1%	47.1%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

The final set of indicators of the quality of police services refer to retribution: identifying and charging the offender. Both issues are considered to be important by substantial majorities of the respondents (table 5.16). In both cases, approximately three in five respondents who say these aspects of police assistance are important to them agree that the police did enough to achieve this. On the other hand, a third of the respondents think the police did not do enough to charge the offender and just over a quarter of the respondents think the police did not do enough to identify the offender.

Table 5.16. **Services provided by the police – Retribution***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether the police officers...	Agreed	Disagreed
85.0%	34	Did enough to charge the offender	61.8%	32.4%
82.5%	33	Did enough to identify the offender	57.6%	27.3%

*The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

5.5. CONCLUSION

Like the previous chapters, some clear conclusion can be drawn on the basis of the findings concerning the Scottish victim assistance. The results especially concerning the police have to be interpreted with caution due to the low numbers of respondents. The key findings are the following:

- *Near unanimity on the importance of certain indicators - Victim Support.* Nearly all the indicators under the heading of respectful treatment were seen as important by the respondents. Most indicators achieved an importance rating of just below 90%, and mostly even higher. The same is true for receiving emotional support, and to a slightly lesser degree receiving clear information. Receiving advice on safety issues is seen as important by a large majority, but receiving financial assistance is not.
- *Link between importance and experience - Victim Support.* The results reveal a strong connection between importance of indicators and experience with them. The proportion of victims reporting poor experience was very small. The indicators with relatively large proportions - still under 25% of respondents - stating not to have received the service, should also be viewed in the light of the fact that these indicators (receiving practical support, for instance) were not necessary for a large group of victims.
- *Evidence of issues that might be improved in the police services.* The results of the police did not tell the same positive tale as Victim Support. Most indicators were seen to be highly important, but this was not always matched by similar proportions of respondents reporting good experience. Most respondents did feel they were respectfully treated.
- *Some probable quality gaps.* For most other indicators of the police, the number of respondents reporting

poor experience equalled or even outnumbered those reporting good experience, whether the indicators were related to information, participation, compensation, safety, coping with anxiety or retribution. Here more research is needed, given the small numbers of respondents included in the current survey: the results signal that there might be room for improvement in the way victims perceive police performance.

6.1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW CHAPTER

Over 10 million people live in Portugal, making it the 11th most populous country of the European Union, while it is the 13th in size. According to the International Crime Victim Survey (ICVS) Portugal has one of the lowest crime levels in Europe, with about 11% (roughly 1.1 million people) falling victim to crime annually. Reporting rates are about average for the European Union, with 51% reporting the crime to the police. The take-up rate of victim support, according to the ICVS is about 4%, meaning that about 40,000 victims received support from ‘a specialised agency’.

The Portuguese criminal procedure is a civil law system, similar to the French and German criminal proceedings. The victim is not formally defined in Portuguese criminal law; the term is only used occasionally, with the Penal code and the Code of Criminal Procedure referring to the ‘injured person’, the ‘claimant’ or the ‘auxiliary prosecutor’. The latter, the *assistente*, is a similar figure as the *Nebenklage* in Germany, and offers victims the formal status of active participants in the criminal proceedings, on a procedural footing equaling that of the accused. This reform of the Penal code in 1982 provided this legal role to not only victims of crime themselves, but also certain associations, for instance those protecting victims against violence. The *assistente* is a potentially powerful position for victims of crime; however the necessity and costs of legal assistance coupled with the lack of awareness of this role and what it entails means that few victims in Portugal assume this position.

The cause of this lack of awareness is located in the relatively poor levels of information provided to victims of crime. This also hampers other areas of Portuguese victim assistance. In improving the position of victims over the past 30 years, information provision has featured heavily. Most recently in 2010, the Code of Criminal Procedure was amended to improve the level of information provision by the prosecution service. The prosecutor has a central role in information provision, often delegated to the police, and art. 247 CCP was extended to extend the prosecutor’s obligations in this area.

The past 30 years has seen an ebbing and flowing of the Portuguese system of compensation for victims through criminal proceedings. Before 1988, the Portuguese system allowed the courts to award compensation on their own initiative. No action on the part of the victim was required. Following 1988 however, this feature of Portuguese criminal proceedings was abolished, instead making compensation through court proceedings entirely contingent on the victim’s claim. Following action from APAV, this situation, which turned out to be against victims’ best interest, was partly reversed: since 1998 the courts can again award damages on their initiative, but with the limitation that this can only happen under special circumstances, when the rights and needs of victims of crime require special protection (Brienen and Hoegen, 2000).

Much of the advances in victim assistance within Portuguese practice are due to the efforts of the Portuguese Association for Victim Support (APAV). It is a private, non-profit and charitable organisation whose primary mission is to support victims of crime, their families and friends, providing them with free of charge, confidential and quality services. APAV works to ensure that the stature of the victim is fully recognised, valued and effective, contributing to the improvement of public, private and social policies focused on victims of crime. APAV was founded on the 25th of June in 1990. Altogether, APAV has 41 full-time paid employees and a network of 220 volunteers nationwide to perform the various functions and services.

From its foundation in 1990 until 2013, APAV supported around 255 thousand people, averaging 10,000 per year. APAV’s head office has the function to maintain and ensure APAV’s strong public identity, as well as to establish liaison duties, support, planning and compliance with the performance standards at national level, as well as the

development of international, EU-projects. APAV's service delivery operates through different networks: a national network of victim support offices provides direct, free and confidential support to victims of crime, their families and friends, as well as services and other activities of information, awareness raising and prevention of violence and crime. APAV has 15 Victim Support Offices spread throughout the country. In addition, there is the UAVM network, providing support for migrant victims, and APAV's network of shelters. APAV has established referral systems with the Public Security Police (PSP), the ILGA (International lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex association), the Republican National Guard, and specifically for family and friends of victims of homicide from the Judiciary Police (PJ).

In addition, APAV has been in the vanguard of developing understanding of issues relating to key areas of victim support, including the following subjects: **support for victims and family members of homicide victims; migrants, exploitation and discrimination**; cybercrime; risk assessment; and quality management. Moreover, APAV has developed the Infovictims website, which aims to inform victims of their rights, addressing the functioning of the criminal justice system in a simple and accessible language.

In order to identify what legislative amendments and practices are required in the implementation of the Victims Directive (Directive 2012/29/EU), APAV organised the Working Group on Policy Victims, which is currently undertaking a detailed analysis of the Portuguese judicial system for each minimum rule that the Directive establishes. This is a discussion group on the reform of criminal law and criminal procedural law, a multidisciplinary group with advisory function that contributes to defining the challenges and possible solutions to find the direction for proper implementation of the Directive in Portugal. Several topics have been already covered, such as stalking; the right to information; entitlement to protection; access to victim support; and victims with special needs. The results of this discussion group will assist APAV on the development of a final document, which will reflect APAV's position on the best way to implement the Directive in Portugal.

In Portugal, the application of the questionnaire began with the division of the questionnaire for 3 types of victims: contact with victim support offices, contact with victim support offices and with the police, and contact with victim support offices and with prosecutors.

APAV's first choice to collect the data was the written method. The telephone method was also proposed, but victims were not available to answer questions by phone, mainly due to the length of the questionnaire. In Portugal, the web-based application was not a possibility for safety reasons. The questionnaires were distributed to the 15 local victim support offices, to the Support Unit for Migrant Victims (UAVM) and to APAV's shelters, to be applied by Victim Support Workers who work in the field. The contacts with the victims were made face-to-face, either when they came to our local offices, or for victims who are in the shelters. In these particular cases the victims were all victims of domestic violence.

APAV included victims who had direct contact with the services that provided them support, mainly in the last 12 months. Minors were excluded, but the set-up did offer the possibility to include victims of domestic violence and victims or family members of homicide that otherwise would have been difficult to reach. The data collection took place between the 20th of January and the 15th of May, 2014. APAV contacted 200 respondents and received responses from 127 respondents, yielding a response rate of 63%.

The chapter is structured as follows. Section 6.2 provides the overview of the background and the characteristics of the respondents, and section 6.3 looks at the respondent's experience with APAV. Sections 6.4 and 6.5 offer the results of the police and the prosecution services respectively. Lastly, section 6.6 provides an overview of the main conclusions.

6.2. DESCRIPTION OF THE RESPONDENTS AND THE CRIMES THEY SUFFERED

The Portuguese dataset included 127 respondents. The overwhelming majority of these respondents were women (92.1%) and two thirds of the respondents were 35 years or older (see table 1). Slightly more than half of the respondents were single (54.3%) while just over one third of the respondents lived with a partner or with a larger family (34.6%). Most respondents were either employed (37.8%) or looking for work (31.5%). Almost one in ten were retired or disabled (9.4%) and 7.9% of the sample consisted of homemakers. Half of the sample had not finished high school and another quarter of the sample had a high school diploma (see table 6.1). The final quarter of the sample had a post-secondary education or attended university.

Table 6.1. **Demographic characteristics of the Portuguese respondents (N = 127)**

	N	%
Gender		
Male	9	7.1%
Female	117	92.1%
Unknown	1	0.8%
Age		
18-24	13	10.2%
25-34	28	22.0%
35-49	47	37.0%
50-65	32	25.5%
66 and older	5	3.9%
Unknown	2	1.6%
Civil status		
Single	69	54.3%
Living together as a couple	28	22.0%
Living with a larger family	16	12.6%
Other	12	9.4%
Unknown	2	1.6%
Occupational position		
Employed	48	37.8%
Looking for work (unemployed)	40	31.5%
Keeping home (homemaker)	10	7.9%
Retired / disabled	12	9.4%
Going to school / college (student)	7	5.5%
Other	7	5.5%
Unknown	3	2.4%
Highest level of education		
Able to read and write	2	1.6%
Preschool	3	2.4%
Primary school	42	33.1%
High school, not finished	17	13.4%
High school	31	24.4%
Technology Specialisation Courses (post-high-school education)	4	3.1%
University	27	21.3%
Unknown	1	0.8%

The majority of the respondents contacted Victim Support in the twelve months preceding the data collection (90.6%). One respondent did not answer the question whether she/ he had been in contact with Victim Support in the previous twelve months, and 11 respondents indicated they had not contacted Victim Support in that period. Table 2 presents the type of offence for which the respondents contacted Victim Support. As explained in the methods chapter, respondents were included in this analysis regardless of whether or not they had been in contact with Victim Support in the preceding 12 months. Respondents could indicate multiple offences and on average, respondents suffered 1.7 offences (SD = 1.2). Table 6.2 shows that domestic violence was most frequently reported. Verbal abuse and assault were among the second-most-often reported offences, albeit much less frequent than domestic violence. Stalking and sexual violence were reported by approximately 10% of the respondents, and homicide was reported by 7.1% of the respondents. Different types of offences were rarely reported. Over two in five respondents (42.5%) had been a victim of the same type of crime before, and 26.8% had previously suffered other types of crime.

Table 6.2. **The offence for which respondents contacted Victim Support (N = 127)**

Offence	N	%
Theft	1	0.8%
Housebreaking	0	0.0%
Robbery	1	0.8%
Vandalism	2	1.6%
Threat / Verbal abuse	44	34.6%
Assault	37	29.1%
Stalking	13	10.2%
Sexual violence / abuse	12	9.4%
Domestic violence / abuse	89	70.1%
Hostage taking	1	0.8%
Homicide	9	7.1%
Discrimination / Hate crime	5	3.9%
Other	6	4.7%

With regard to the offence for which respondents contacted Victim Support, almost all respondents (95.3%) knew the offender before the offence occurred. In the majority of these cases (76.0%), the offender was a partner or a former partner. Relatives made up for 14.9% of the known offenders and friends, acquaintances, and neighbours constituted 7.4% of the known offenders. The remaining two known offenders were a colleague and an employer.

A majority of the respondents reported the offence to the police themselves (63.8%) and a group of 12.6% respondents indicated they did not report the offence to the police themselves but someone else did. Two respondents (1.6%) said that the police discovered the offence themselves and 21.3% of the respondents indicated that the police were never informed of the offence. The respondents who said either they or someone else reported the offence to the police were asked to give the reason or reasons for reporting the crime. Table 6.3 shows what reasons were endorsed and what percentage of these respondents gave each of these reasons.

By far the most endorsed reasons are that respondents were very afraid after the crime and they feared the offence would be repeated. In addition, almost half of the respondents wanted the police to protect them and their families and an equally large share of the respondents said that the offender(s) deserved to be punished. Just over two in five respondents indicated that they reported the offence because it was of a serious nature and a similarly large group wanted the police to intervene. Finally, a quarter of the respondents sought acknowledgement of what had happened to them and an equally large group of respondents wanted the police to refer them to agencies that offer support. In general, we can conclude that a desire for police action (arrest, protection, acknowledgement) was the most important reason for respondents to report the crime. More practical reasons, such as insurance agency’s requirements or recovering what was lost, were less often given.

When asked about the *most important* reason to report, the most often mentioned reasons were the desire to be protected by the police (13.4%), the fear that the offence would be repeated (12.4%), and being afraid after the crime (10.3%). The opinion that the offender(s) deserved to be punished was mentioned as the most important reason to report the offence by 9.3% of the respondents. All other reasons were chosen as the most important one by very small groups of respondents and will not be reported here separately. Not all respondents provided a ‘most important’ reason, though: 40.2% of the 97 respondents who either reported the offence to the police themselves or in whose cases someone else reported the offence did not answer the question regarding the most important reason to report.

Table 6.3. **The reasons for reporting the crime (N = 97)**

Reason	N	%
I was very afraid after the crime	60	61.9%
I wanted the police to refer me to agencies offering forms of support	26	26.8%
I wanted the police to protect me and my family	47	48.5%
I was afraid the offence would be repeated	58	59.8%
I thought the offence was so serious the police had to be informed	41	42.3%
I wanted the police to intervene	39	40.2%
I felt the offender(s) deserved to be punished	46	47.4%
I wanted to be compensated for my damage	10	10.3%
I wanted to recover what had been lost	12	12.4%
It was required for my insurance	3	3.1%
I wanted what happened to me to be acknowledged	27	27.8%
Other reason	8	8.2%

Table 4 provides the reasons victims had not reported the offence to the police. Because of the small group of respondents reporting on reasons not to report the offence to the police, we will have to take care in interpreting these results. Nevertheless, we can conclude that being afraid of the offender is the most often mentioned reason not to report an offence. A third of the respondents indicated they did not think reporting the offence would have changed anything in their situation. In addition, five out of 27 respondents who did not report the offence to the police said they did not believe the police would do something about it.

Table 6.4. **The reasons not to report the crime (N = 27)**

Reason	N	%
The offence was not serious enough	3	11.1%
It was not necessary for my insurance	1	3.7%
That would not have helped my situation	9	33.3%
I was advised not to	1	3.7%
I thought the police would not do anything about the offence	5	18.5%
I was afraid of the offender	12	44.4%
Other reason	6	22.2%

All but two respondents indicated that the offence had consequences for them. For a large majority of the respondents (92.1%), the offence resulted in emotional distress (see table 5). Moreover, almost half of the respondents reported that they suffered physical injuries as a result of the crime (48.8%). As could be expected based on the types of crimes that respondents experienced (as described in table 2), lower proportions of respondents indicated that their property was lost or damaged. When asked whether they had received compensation for the crime, only one respondent reported that he or she had been fully compensated for the damage caused by the offence. Most respondents had not received compensation (see table 6.5). Respondents who were not (entirely) compensated for their damages were asked to what extent they felt this was a problem. A large group of respondents indicated this was a large problem for them (43.9%) and a substantial part of the respondents said it was a small problem (24.6%). Taken together, this group forms the majority of the people who had not been (entirely) compensated.

A large majority of the respondents (85.0%) said that no one had been arrested for committing the offence against them and only one in ten respondents (9.4%) reported that the offender had been arrested. 2.4% of the respondents did not know whether someone was arrested and information was missing for 3.1% of the respondents. The respondents who said that no one had been arrested (N = 108) were asked to what extent they thought this was a problem. Half of these victims indicated it was either a large (24.1%) or a small (27.8%) problem to them that no one had been arrested. Almost two in five indicated they did not consider it to be a problem that no one had been arrested (38.9%). Some 10% of the respondents who said no one had been arrested did not answer the question whether or not this was a problem to them (9.3%).

Table 6.5. **Consequences and compensation of the crime**
(N = 127 for consequences; N = 125 for compensation)

	N	%
Consequences		
Loss of property	7	5.5%
Damage to property	10	7.9%
Physical injury	62	48.8%
Emotional distress	117	92.1%
Did you receive compensation?		
Yes, entirely	1	0.8%
Yes, in part	3	2.4%
No, not yet	41	32.8%
No, not at all	70	56.0%
Unknown	10	8.0%
If you were not (entirely) compensated, was this a problem?^{ab}		
No problem at all	28	24.6%
A small problem	28	24.6%
A large problem	50	43.9%
Unknown	8	7.0%

^a The number of respondents who were asked this question is 114

^b This question was slightly altered in the questionnaire for the Portuguese sample.

6.3. VICTIMS' PERSPECTIVES ON SERVICES PROVIDED BY VICTIM SUPPORT

Table 6 shows the importance that victims attach to being treated respectfully by Victim Support workers. The table also provides information on the proportion of victims who felt they were indeed treated in a respectful way as well as the proportion of victims who did not feel treated respectfully by Victim Support workers. The Portuguese questionnaire presents some slight differences in comparison with the German, French, and Scottish questionnaires. Specifically, the way respondents were surveyed about the protection of personal details was different when inquiring about the level of importance than when asking about the victims' experience. The latter aspect was measured using two different items whereas the former aspect was assessed using the item as included in the other translations of the questionnaire.

Table 6.6 shows that, in general, respondents highly value being treated in a respectful way: five of the eight indicators were rated important by more than 90% of the respondents and two indicators were rated important by more than 80% (but less than 90%) of the respondents. In addition, almost all respondents who considered these seven indicators to be important also agreed that Victim Support workers acted accordingly. The eighth indicator—specific practical assistance—was deemed important by fewer respondents (78.0%). Although 'only' two thirds of the respondents indicated they received specific practical assistance, this does not correspond with a substantial group of respondents who said they did not receive this type of assistance but would have wanted to. Rather, almost a third of the respondents reported this type of assistance was not applicable in their case (not in table).

Table 6.6. **Services provided by Victim Support – Respectful treatment***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether Victim Support workers...	Agreed	Disagreed
92.9%	118	Treated you politely	98.3%	0.8%
92.1%	117	Took the time to hear all the facts you wanted them to know	94.0%	4.3%
92.1%	117	Showed understanding for your situation	96.6%	2.6%
91.3%	116	Made you feel like you were taken seriously	95.7%	0.9%
90.6%	115	Protected your identity and personal details	<i>n.a.</i>	<i>n.a.</i>
<i>n.a.</i>	<i>n.a.</i>	Treated your case confidentially	98.3%	0.9%
<i>n.a.</i>	<i>n.a.</i>	Showed consideration for your privacy	97.4%	0.9%
89.0%	113	Paid sufficient attention to your wishes and needs	97.3%	0.9%
86.6%	110	Showed empathy / compassion	92.7%	2.7%
78.0%	99	Provided specific practical assistance, like filling out forms	66.7%	3.0%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

Of the six indicators of the quality of victim assistance with regard to providing information, one is rated important by more than 90% of the respondents and two are rated important by more than 80% of the respondents (but less than 90%; see table 6.7). It is of importance to almost all respondents that Victim Support workers gave them information about their rights as a victim and a large majority indicated that they value Victim Support workers' use of language that is easy to understand. Furthermore, a large group of respondents thinks it is important to receive information about other organisations that offer support and assistance and an almost equally large group of respondents appreciate being referred to other organisations. The remaining two information-related indicators of quality support were considered to be important by a somewhat smaller group of respondents. Three quarters of the respondents said it is important to receive information about the criminal justice process and two thirds indicated that they value receiving information about how they could possibly receive compensation.

The proportions of respondents who indicated that they received the different information-related forms of victim assistance is in accordance with the importance they attach to each type of assistance: the most two important forms of assistance were experienced by more than 90% of the respondents, while the levels of experience of the remaining types of assistance approached the levels of importance attached to those services. It should be noted that for each of the forms of information-related assistance only very small groups of respondents indicated they did not receive these forms of assistance.

Table 6.7. **Services provided by Victim Support – Information***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether Victim Support workers...	Agreed	Disagreed
92.9%	118	Gave you information about your right as a victim	90.7%	2.5%
86.6%	110	Used language that was easy to understand	96.4%	1.8%
81.1%	103	Provided information about other organisations offering support and assistance	83.5%	1.9%
79.5%	101	Referred you to other organisations offering support and assistance	71.3%	5.0%
74.0%	94	Gave you information about the criminal justice process	73.4%	3.2%
66.0%	84	Gave you information about the steps necessary to receive compensation	60.7%	4.8%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

With regard to Victim Support services that cover victims' need for participation, approximately 80% of the respondents indicated that these services are of importance to them (see table 6.8). A marked exception, however, is the importance that respondents attach to receiving financial assistance with only half of the respondents indicating that this is an important aspect of victim assistance. Among those respondents who said these services were important to them, only small groups indicated they did not receive these services. This does not correspond, though, with large groups of respondents reporting they did receive these services. Rather, this type of assistance is not applicable for significant groups of respondents, with the highest proportions of respondents saying that accompanying them to criminal proceedings was not applicable (38.9%; not in table) and neither was receiving financial assistance (39.1%; not in table).

Table 6.8. **Services provided by Victim Support – Participation***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether Victim Support workers...	Agreed	Disagreed
82.7%	105	Referred you to legal aid	62.9%	1.0%
81.1%	103	Provided legal assistance	67.0%	1.9%
74.8%	95	Accompanied you to criminal proceedings	46.3%	3.2%
50.4%	64	Provided financial assistance	37.5%	6.3%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

Being asked about lost and damaged property (table 6.9) is important to just short of three in five respondents. A more or less equal percentage of these respondents also agreed that Victim Support workers provided this service. Again, this does not correspond with a substantial minority of people who did think this was an important aspect of victim assistance but were not asked about their losses and damages. Rather, this item did not apply to many respondents' situations (22.8%; not in table).

Table 6.9. **Services provided by Victim Support – Compensation***

Importance	N	Can you indicate whether Victim Support workers...	Agreed	Disagreed
57.5%	73	Asked about lost and damaged property	61.6%	1.4%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

Almost all aspects of victim assistance related to coping with anxiety were rated as important by approximately 90% of the respondents (table 6.10). The notable exception is receiving social support which was rated important by less than 70% of the respondents. The four highly valued types of victim assistance were also received by large majorities of the respondents who rated these services as important (ranging from 81.3% to 93.8%). A small group of people who said it was important that Victim Support workers reduced their feelings of fear, indicated that they felt that Victim Support workers did not do so (4.5%).

Although receiving social support seems to be of less importance to respondents, those who did value this aspect of victim support either agreed they received this type of assistance (64.4%) or indicated this was not applicable in their situation (16.5%; not in table).

Table 6.10. **Services provided by Victim Support – Coping with anxiety***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether Victim Support workers...	Agreed	Disagreed
90.6%	115	Supported you for as long as you felt was necessary	92.2%	0.0%
89.0%	113	Gave you emotional support	93.8%	0.0%
88.2%	112	Gave you psychological support	85.7%	1.8%
88.2%	112	Reduced your feelings of fear	81.3%	4.5%
87.4%	111	Made you feel your harm and suffering had been sufficiently recognised	90.1%	0.9%
68.5%	87	Gave you social support	64.4%	3.4%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

In general, respondents valued Victim Support workers to help them improve their safety: each of the three indicators concerning safety were rated as important by more than 80% of the respondents (see table 6.11). Almost all respondents who said it was important that Victim Support workers made them feel safe and that they offered advice on their security indicated that both services were indeed provided by Victim Support workers. A somewhat smaller—albeit still large—majority of respondents who valued Victim Support’s efforts to reduce the risk of reoffending indicated they experienced this type of victim assistance.

Table 6.11. **Services provided by Victim Support – Safety***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether Victim Support workers...	Agreed	Disagreed
89.8%	114	Made you feel safer	91.2%	0.9%
88.2%	112	Offered advice on your security	93.8%	0.0%
83.5%	106	Reduced the risk of the offence happening again	79.2%	3.8%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

6.4. VICTIMS' PERSPECTIVES ON SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE POLICE

The analyses with regard to victims' perceptions of their contact with the police were conducted on the group of respondents who indicated they had reported the offence to the police and who had had contact with the police in the twelve months preceding the data collection. However, not all respondents were presented this part of the questionnaire: of all respondents, 35.4% (n = 45) were asked whether or not they had had contact with the police in the preceding 12 months. Of these respondents, 88.9% (n = 40) indicated they had been in touch with the police in the preceding 12 months with regard to the offence that had happened to them. Just over one in ten (11.1%) said they did not have contact with the police. The analyses of victims' perspectives on services provided by the police have been conducted on the group of 40 respondents who had been in touch with the police. Considering this relatively small sample size, the results should be interpreted with caution.

Table 6.12 shows the importance victims attach to the aspects of police services that reflect respectful treatment. As was the case with regard to services offered by Victim Support, the overwhelming majority of respondents indicated it is important to them to be treated in a respectful way: for six of eight respectful treatment indicators 90% or more of the respondents said these were of importance to them. The level of agreement with regard to whether or not they were actually treated in a respectful way by the police, however, is considerably lower in comparison with respondents' perceptions of the services offered by Victim Support. Nevertheless, over four in five respondents said they were treated politely, indicated that the police took the time to hear all the facts they wanted them to know, and reported that their identity was protected. Also, just short of four in five respondents who said it was important that the police show understanding for their situation experienced this understanding in their contact with police officers. On the other hand, with regard to each of these four types of respectful treatment, approximately one in ten victims said they did not receive the treatment they wanted. Moreover, 14.7% of the respondents said they were not treated with empathy or compassion and 13.5% of the respondents did not feel they were taken seriously. Finally, half of the respondents who felt it was important not to be kept waiting for too long before they could report the offence indicated that they indeed had to wait for too long (52.6%; the item was formulated as indicated in table 6.12 and, as a result, the percentage of agreement reflects the proportion of respondents who felt this aspect was lacking in the police services). Also, just short of a third of the respondents who felt it was important that they did not have to repeat their account of the events too often, did in fact feel this had been the case (31.3%; the item was formulated as indicated in table 12 and, as a result, the percentage of agreement reflects the proportion of respondents who felt this aspect was lacking in the police services).

Table 6.12. **Services provided by the police – Respectful treatment***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether the police officers...	Agreed	Disagreed
95.0%	38	Made you wait too long before you could report the offence ^a	28.9%	52.6%
92.5%	37	Made you feel like you were taken seriously	73.0%	13.5%
92.5%	37	Took the time to hear all the facts you wanted them to know	81.1%	10.8%
92.5%	37	Treated you politely	86.5%	8.1%
90.0%	36	Showed understanding for your situation	77.8%	11.1%
90.0%	36	Protected your identity and personal details	80.6%	8.3%
85.0%	34	Showed empathy / compassion	61.8%	14.7%
80.0%	32	Made you repeat your account of the events too often ^b	31.3%	56.3%

^a The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

^b Respondents were asked to what extent they considered it important that the police *did not* make them wait too long. With regard to the services that were provided, however, respondents were asked to what extent they agreed that the police *did* make them wait too long. For this item, the percentage of *disagreement* reflects a higher quality of services.

^c Respondents were asked to what extent they considered it important that the police *did not* make them repeat their account too often. With regard to the services that were provided, however, respondents were asked to what extent they agreed that the police *did* make them repeat their account too often. For this item, the percentage of *disagreement* reflects a higher quality of services.

Receiving sufficient and accurate information from the police is of importance to almost all respondents (table 6.13). Again, however, respondents often indicate they did not receive the information they wanted. Most striking is the finding that more respondents felt they were insufficiently informed about developments in their cases (43.2%) than the percentage of respondents who did feel they were adequately informed. Many respondents felt they were insufficiently informed about further support and assistance or about Victim Support (27.8% and 26.3% respectively). In addition, 22.2% of the respondents said they were not informed about their rights as a victim and 20.6% of the respondents said the police did not inform them about their next steps. In fact, the only aspect of information-related victim assistance that was experienced by a convincing majority of the respondents relates to the use of language that is easy to understand.

Table 6.13. **Services provided by the police – Information***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether the police officers...	Agreed	Disagreed
95.0%	38	Gave you information about Victim Support	57.9%	26.3%
92.5%	37	Kept you informed about further developments in your case	40.5%	43.2%
90.0%	36	Gave you information about further support and assistance	58.3%	27.8%
90.0%	36	Provided information about your rights as a victim	63.9%	22.2%
87.5%	35	Used language that was easy to understand	88.6%	2.9%
85.0%	34	Gave you information about their next steps	70.6%	20.6%

^a The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

Indicators with regard to participation form an important part of the services that victims expect from the police (table 6.14). Again, however, the possibilities to improve police services seem to be readily available. According to almost three quarters of the respondents, the police officers who handled their case asked for sufficient information to follow up on the victim's report and made them aware of their right to participate in criminal proceedings. Still, one in five respondents said the police did not ask for sufficient information and 16.7% of the respondents said they were not

made aware by the police of their right to participate in criminal proceedings against the offender. Finally, just over a quarter of the respondents felt that the police did not pay sufficient attention to their wishes and needs.

Table 6.14. **Services provided by the police – Participation***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether the police officers...	Agreed	Disagreed
90.0%	36	Asked for sufficient information from you to follow up on your report	72.2%	22.2%
90.0%	36	Made you aware of your right to participate in criminal proceedings against the offender	72.2%	16.7%
85.0%	34	Paid sufficient attention to your wishes and needs	61.8%	26.5%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

Many victims find it important that the police ask about their losses and damages, but 14.7% of these respondents reported that the police did not ask them about this issue (table 6.15). Also, although three quarters of the respondents think it is important that the police give them information about the steps necessary to receive compensation, experiences with regard to the provision of this type of information split evenly among these respondents: 40% said they did receive this information and another 40% indicated they did not receive this information.

Table 6.15. **Services provided by the police – Compensation***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether the police officers...	Agreed	Disagreed
85.0%	34	Asked about your losses and damages	67.6%	14.7%
75.0%	30	Gave you information about the steps necessary to receive compensation	40.0%	40.0%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

With regard to assistance in coping with anxiety and increasing feelings of safety, many respondents felt that the police did not do enough (tables 6.16 and 6.17). Approximately one third of the respondents indicated that the police did not reduce the risk of the offence happening again and did not make them feel safer (33.3% and 31.4% respectively). Just over a quarter of the respondents reported that the police did not reduce their feelings of fear or offer advice on their security (28.6% and 26.5% respectively).

Table 6.16. **Services provided by the police – Coping with anxiety***

Importance	N	Can you indicate whether the police officers...	Agreed	Disagreed
87.5%	35	Reduced your feelings of fear	54.3%	28.6%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

Table 6.17. **Services provided by the police – Safety***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether the police officers...	Agreed	Disagreed
87.5%	35	Made you feel safer	57.1%	31.4%
85.0%	34	Offered advice on your security	61.8%	26.5%
82.5%	33	Reduced the risk of the offence happening again	48.5%	33.3%

*The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

The final set of indicators of the quality of police services refer to retribution: identifying and arresting the offender. Both issues are considered to be important by substantial majorities of the respondents (table 6.18). Also, of the victims who say it is important that the police put in efforts to identify the offender, over 70% agree that the police did enough to achieve this. On the other hand, one in five respondents think the police did not do enough to identify the offender. With regard to arresting the offender, a third of the respondents who said this was important to them also report that the police did enough to arrest the offender. A quarter of the respondents, on the other hand, did not agree that the police did enough to arrest the offender.

Table 6.18. **Services provided by the police – Retribution***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether the police officers...	Agreed	Disagreed
87.5%	35	Did enough to identify the offender	71.4%	22.9%
75.0%	30	Did enough to arrest the offender	33.3%	26.7%

*The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

6.5. VICTIMS' PERSPECTIVES ON SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE PROSECUTOR

The analyses with regard to victims' perceptions of their contact with the prosecutor's office were conducted on the group of respondents who indicated that, in the 12 months preceding the data collection, they had had contact with the prosecutor's office with regard to the offence that had happened to them. However, not all respondents were presented this part of the questionnaire: of all respondents, 23.6% (n = 30) were asked whether or not they had had contact with the prosecutor's office in the preceding 12 months. Of these respondents, 80.0% (n = 24) indicated they had been in touch with the prosecutor's office in the preceding 12 months with regard to the offence that had happened to them. As a result, the analyses of victims' perspectives on services provided by the prosecutor's office have been conducted on a sample of 24 respondents. Considering this small sample size, the results should be interpreted with great caution.

Table 19 shows the importance victims attach to respectful treatment by the prosecutor. As was the case with

regard to services offered by Victim Support and the police, the overwhelming majority of respondents indicated it is important to them to be treated in a respectful way: for four of six respectful treatment indicators 90% or more of the respondents said these were of importance to them. However, as was the case in the assessment of respectful treatment by the police, the level of agreement with regard to whether or not they were actually treated in a respectful way by the prosecutor again is considerably lower in comparison with respondents' perceptions of the services offered by Victim Support. Although three quarters of the respondents said they were treated politely, the proportion of respondents who did not experience respectful treatment ranged from 14.3% to 31.8% on all six aspects. Almost a third indicated that the prosecutor did not take the time to hear all the facts they wanted him or her to know, and a comparable proportion of the respondents felt they had had to repeat their account of the events too often (29.4%; the item was formulated as indicated in table 6.19 and, as a result, the percentage of agreement reflects the proportion of respondents who felt this aspect was lacking in the services provided by the prosecutor). Moreover, more than one in five respondents did not feel the prosecutor showed understanding for their situation. Finally, 18.2% of the respondents said they were not treated with empathy or compassion and 18.2% of the respondents did not feel they were taken seriously.

Again, these results are based on small numbers of respondents and, as a result, should be interpreted with caution. As a preliminary conclusion, however, it would seem justified to conclude that the communication between prosecutor and victim leaves room for improvement.

Table 6.19. **Services provided by the prosecutor's office – Respectful treatment***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether the prosecutor...	Agreed	Disagreed
91.7%	22	Made you feel like you were taken seriously	68.2%	18.2%
91.7%	22	Took the time to hear all the facts you wanted them to know	50.0%	31.8%
91.7%	22	Showed understanding for your situation	63.6%	22.7%
91.7%	22	Showed empathy / compassion	68.2%	18.2%
87.5%	21	Treated you politely	76.2%	14.3%
70.8%	17	Made you repeat your account of the events too often ^a	29.4%	35.3%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

^a Respondents were asked to what extent they considered it important that the prosecutor did not make them repeat their account too often. With regard to the services that were provided, however, respondents were asked to what extent they agreed that the prosecutor did make them repeat their account too often. For this item, the percentage of disagreement reflects a higher quality of services.

Receiving sufficient and accurate information from the prosecutor is of importance to a fair share of the respondents (table 6.20). A large group of respondents, however, report that they were insufficiently informed about the prosecutor's next steps (31.6%) and the percentage of respondents that say they did not receive information about their rights as a victim is higher than the proportion of respondents who do agree they received this information. In fact, the only aspect of information-related victim assistance that was experienced by a convincing majority of the respondents relates to the use of language that is easy to understand. Still, 10.0% reported the prosecutor did not use easily understandable language and this reflects the highest percentage of respondents across all organisations victims deal with. Perhaps this is associated with the more specialist role the prosecutor has that poses more challenges to the prosecutor in his or her direct communication with victims.

Table 6.20. **Services provided by the prosecutor’s office – Information***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether the prosecutor...	Agreed	Disagreed
83.3%	20	Used language that was easy to understand	65.0%	10.0%
79.2%	19	Gave you information about their next steps	42.1%	31.6%
75.0%	18	Provided information about your rights as a victim	27.8%	38.9%

*The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded ‘do not agree or disagree’ or ‘not applicable’ as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

Participation as an indicator of victim assistance provided by the prosecutor was assessed with a single item inquiring whether the prosecutor paid sufficient attention to the victim’s wishes and needs (table 6.21). Two thirds of the respondents who consider this an important aspect of victim assistance—21 out of 24 respondents who had contact with the prosecutor—indicated the prosecutor did pay sufficient attention to their wishes and needs whereas some one in five respondents disagreed.

Table 6.21. **Services provided by the prosecutor’s office – Participation***

Importance	N	Can you indicate whether the prosecutor...	Agreed	Disagreed
87.5%	21	Paid sufficient attention to your wishes and needs	66.7%	19.0%

*The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded ‘do not agree or disagree’ or ‘not applicable’ as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

Many victims find it important that the prosecutor asks about their losses and damages, but 15.8% of these respondents reported he or she did not ask them about this issue (table 6.22). Furthermore, a remarkable result appears with regard to the provision of information about the steps necessary to receive compensation: none of the respondents who said this was important to them reported they received this type of information from the prosecutor.

Table 6.22. **Services provided by the prosecutor’s office – Compensation***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether the prosecutor...	Agreed	Disagreed
79.2%	19	Asked about your losses and damages	42.1%	15.8%
66.7%	16	Gave you information about the steps necessary to receive compensation	0.0%	56.3%

*The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded ‘do not agree or disagree’ or ‘not applicable’ as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

With regard to assistance in coping with anxiety and increasing feelings of safety, the majority of the respondents reported that they felt it is important that the prosecutor provides these types of assistance (tables 6.23 and 6.24). These respondents, however, are quite divided with regard to their experiences. In each case,

a minority of the respondents indicated they received these types of assistance. In each case, a somewhat comparable proportion of respondents indicated they did not receive these types of assistance. The remaining respondents either indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed, reported these issues did not apply to their situation, or did not answer the questions regarding their experiences.

Table 6.23. **Services provided by the prosecutor’s office – Coping with anxiety***

Importance	N	Can you indicate whether the prosecutor...	Agreed	Disagreed
87.5%	21	Reduced your feelings of fear	19.0%	38.1%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

Table 6.24. **Services provided by the prosecutor’s office – Safety***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether the prosecutor...	Agreed	Disagreed
87.5%	21	Made you feel safer	33.3%	23.8%
70.8%	17	Reduced the risk of the offence happening again	29.4%	29.4%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

The final set of indicators of the quality of prosecutor services refer to retribution: prosecuting and convicting the offender. The item asking about the importance of the efforts to convict the offender was missing for 13 of the 24 respondents which means we cannot truly interpret the percentages reported for this type of victim assistance. Regarding the prosecution of the offender, most respondents indicate they think this is an important aspect of victim assistance to be provided by the prosecutor (70.8%). However, nine respondents who indicated this was important did not answer the question whether they thought the prosecutor did enough in their specific cases. The respondents who did agree that the prosecutor did enough make up just over a third of the respondents who said it is important. A quarter of this group disagrees with the statement.

Table 6.25. **Services provided by the prosecutor’s office – Retribution***

Importance (rank ordered)	N	Can you indicate whether the prosecutor...	Agreed	Disagreed
70.8%	17	Did enough to prosecute the offender	35.3%	23.5%
37.5%	9	Did enough to convict the offender	22.2%	11.1%

* The percentage of respondents who did (not) agree with the statement was calculated for the group of respondents who indicated they considered the statement to represent an important aspect of the services that were offered. The percentages do not add to 100% because respondents who responded 'do not agree or disagree' or 'not applicable' as well as missing values on this question are not included in the table.

6.6. CONCLUSION

In keeping with the results of the previous chapters, the findings on the Portuguese victim support offered some clear conclusions. The key findings are the following:

- *Near unanimity on the importance of certain indicators - Victim Support.* Nearly all the indicators under the heading of respectful treatment were seen as important by the respondents. Most indicators achieved an importance rating of just below 90%, and some even higher. The same is true for receiving emotional support, and being made to feel safe. Clear information, particularly concerning victims' rights was also deemed to be important by about more than 80% of the respondents.
- *Importance of all indicators - Victim Support.* The indicators relating to the support in navigating the criminal justice system were found to be slightly less important, but still by a large majority of victims. This finding should be interpreted in the light of the fact that many respondents might not have any interaction with the criminal justice system beyond reporting the crime to the police.
- *Link between importance and experience regarding Victim Support.* The results reveal a strong connection between importance of indicators and experience with them. The proportion of victims reporting poor experience was very small. The main differences between indicators was the proportion of victims reporting good experiences, here the indicators with the highest importance rates, also achieved positive experience rates of around 90%.
- *Evidence of issues that might be improved in the police and prosecution services.* The results of the police and the prosecution service did not paint the same overwhelmingly positive picture as Victim Support, but most respondents were positive about their experience with both actors. In addition, the results on the indicators that were seen to be most important by victims often also revealed the highest experience rates.
- *Some probable quality gaps.* The number of respondents who answered the questions concerning the prosecution service is too low to draw strong conclusions. The results indicate that although victims find being kept informed of the progress of the case by the police to be of the utmost importance, more victims said they were not informed than said they were. In addition for a number of high importance indicators, including information about further (victim) support, safety, having the report handled quickly and without unnecessary repetition and attention to the victim's needs, poor experience rates exceeded 25%. These issues merit further investigation.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

7

7.1. PROJECT VICS (VICTIMS' RIGHTS TO QUALITY SERVICES): BACKGROUND AND KEY IDEAS

The EU victims directive

2015 could prove to be a watershed year in the history of victims' rights in Europe. In November of that year the EU Member States are required to have transposed Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime into their national legislation. The Directive is the most ambitious international legal instrument in the field of victims' rights to date, both in scope and depth.

The extent to which the Directive will reach its ambition of improving the lot of victims of crime across Europe however, depends in a large part upon the extent to which the Directive's articles become effective in the daily practice of criminal justice procedure. This is something that cannot be evaluated from legislation alone: if the experience of the past 40 years of victimology has taught us one thing, it is that a wide gulf can separate the law on the books from the actual lived experience of victims of crime. This is acknowledged in the Directive itself: in article 28 and recital 64 of the Directive, specific mention is made of the requirement to deliver statistics and data on the access to the rights afforded by the Directive.

However, this in itself will not be sufficient as official data only captures part of the reality of victimisation and crime, and needs to be supplemented with research into victims' experiences as well. In the Council of Europe Recommendation Rec (2006)8, Article 17 specifically addresses research, calling upon states to "promote, support, and, to the extent possible, fund or facilitate fund-raising for victimological research, including comparative research by researchers from within or outside their own territory", while article 17.2 sets out the areas of research that should be included: criminal victimisation and its impact on victims; prevalence and risks of criminal victimisation including factors affecting risk; the effectiveness of legislative and other measures for the support and protection of victims of crime – both in criminal justice and in the community; and the effectiveness of intervention by criminal justice agencies and victim services. The latter two are particularly relevant to estimate the success of the Directive in improving the experience of victims of crime. Indeed without reliable, comparative research findings on these issues it will be difficult to assess the extent to which the Directive contributed to improved experiences of victims of crime.

Project VICS

Laying the groundwork for this was the main aim of project VICS. In this pilot research project, funded by the European Commission, the Portuguese Association for Victim Support (APAV) and the International Victimology Institute Tilburg, in cooperation with INAVEM in France, the WEISSER RING in Germany and Victim Support Scotland, developed a survey method, and piloted its questionnaire in four different countries (Portugal, France, Germany and Scotland). The questionnaire aims to chart the experiences of victims with victim assistance, including the services offered by police forces and prosecution services to victims of crime, as well as the activities of victim support and builds upon research endeavors previously undertaken in the Netherlands.

7.2. VICS QUESTIONNAIRE

The approach in the VICS Questionnaire revolves around the central notion that quality in victim assistance relates to the extent to which the services match victims’ needs. Measuring this match entails querying victims’ experiences with services and their relative importance. This approach is also used in health care services, and the model of the CQ-index (Consumer Quality index), which was developed for this sector, served as an example for this (see Sixma et al, 1998).

Chapter 2 of the report details that the CQ-index of experiences and importance of experiences is based upon the following needs: respectful treatment, information and participation; and compensation, protection/safety, reduction of anxiety/stress and retribution (incl. apprehension, prosecution and punishment of the offender). Respondents were asked to score a list of quality indicators based on their own experiences. Their experiences were measured through statements on a five-point Likert scale running from 1 (completely disagree) to 5 (completely agree). Table 7.1 provides an example of the way these questions were put to respondents (the full questionnaire is available in the appendix).

Table 7.1. **Example of experience questions**

Can you indicate whether Victim Support workers...	Completely disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Completely Agree
C.1.1. Treated you politely					
C.1.2. Took the time to hear all the facts you wanted them to know					
C.1.3. Showed understanding for your situation					
C.1.4. Showed empathy/compassion					
C.1.5. Paid sufficient attention to your wishes and needs					
C.1.6. Made you feel like you were taken seriously					
C.1.7. Protected your identity and personal details					
C.1.8. Provided information about other organisations offering support and assistance					

Following the experience questions the respondents were then asked to indicate the importance of the same indicators, using a four-point scale (1 = not important at all, 4 = very important).

Table 7.2. **Example of importance questions**

How important is it to you that Victim Support workers...	Not important at all	Somewhat important	Important	Very important
C.3.1. Treat you politely?				
C.3.2. Take the time to hear all the facts you want them to know?				
C.3.3. Show understanding for your situation?				
C.3.4. Show empathy/compassion?				
C.3.5. Pay sufficient attention to your wishes and needs?				
C.3.6. Make you feel like you are taken seriously?				
C.3.7. Protect your identity and personal details?				
C.3.8. Provide information about other organisations offering support and assistance?				

There were slight differences in the questions per country, as the remit of the organisation in different countries may vary. These differences are shown in the country chapters, while the questionnaire in Appendix A shows which questions were either exclusively posed in one country or not applicable to another. In addition, the different countries vary in the organisations that were included in the questionnaire. The German questionnaire was applied only to the experience with victim support, while the French questionnaire included the police. The Portuguese and Scottish questionnaires also reviewed the prosecution service. In the latter cases two different samples (a Victim Support-Police and a Victim Support-prosecution service sample) were recruited for the study. In addition, the approach taken to the recruitment of respondents varied per country: mail surveys were used, face-to-face recruitment of respondents, or web-surveys.

The purpose of the current pilot study was not to compare the different countries with each other, but instead to draw conclusions about the overall picture of victim assistance across countries, and to review the applicability of the questionnaire in different member states. Given that the context and method of approaching respondents varied, the consistency in the responses was all the more striking. As the results of each of the country chapters (3 through 6) reveal, the same basic picture emerged from each of the countries. We will discuss the findings for Victim Support (section 7.3) and victim assistance by the police (section 7.4.). In the project the experience with the prosecution service was also examined, both in Scotland and in Portugal. Due to the small sample size in Scotland, findings concerning the prosecution service were only available for Portugal. We therefore refer to chapter 6 for the relevant findings.

7.3. VICTIM SUPPORT

Near unanimity on the importance of certain indicators of Victim Support.

The purpose was not to compare the different countries with each other, but instead to demonstrate the usefulness of applying a specific type of questionnaire to assess the quality of victim assistance in different contexts. Nevertheless, although no international comparison was intended, the results with regard to several of the indicators reveal a strikingly uniform picture across all four countries. First of all, some indicators of Victim Support are rated as important by large majorities of the respondents in each country (see tables 7.3 and 7.4). Regarding respectful treatment, respondents are almost unanimous about its importance: 90% of the respondents reported this is an important aspect of Victim Support services. The remaining indicators for the quality of Victim Support services were rated as important by large majorities of approximately 80% of the respondents. The exception to this rule related to the indicator addressing participation. Across all countries, approximately 70% of the respondents indicated that participation was important to them. The cross-country agreement was smallest, however, with regard to this indicator because this indicator was measured quite differently in Scotland. Receiving assistance and support with participation in the criminal justice process and receiving compensation were viewed as important by most respondents as well, and the slightly smaller proportion of respondents should be viewed in light of the fact that not all victims have further interaction with the criminal process and/or are in the position to make a compensation claim.

Link between importance and experience of Victim Support services.

The proportion of respondents reporting poor experience was small. In many cases there is a strong link between the importance and experience of Victim Support services. Most indicators that were seen to be important by the large majority of all victims, were also offered to large majorities of these victims and hardly any evidence of quality gaps (high importance, low experience) was found. Nevertheless, some more between-country nuances appeared. For instance, relatively large proportions of German and Scottish respondents indicated their need for participation was not met (approximately 25% of German respondents and 33% of Scottish respondents); in the Scottish context, this referred to the provision of financial assistance only. For the German context a more detailed information is given in chapter 4. Also, approximately 25% of the German respondents indicated their need to cope with anxiety was not met by Victim Support. This is related to the country and victim support organisation specific task situation. Finally, relatively large proportions of German and Scottish respondents indicated VS did not succeed in reducing the risk of revictimisation (approximately 20%), whereas French and Portuguese respondents quite often agreed VS did achieve this (between 60% and 80%). However, instead of interpreting these differences in terms of between-country differences in victim assistance quality, we would like to emphasise that this indicates that the instrument that was tested can, in fact, be used to reveal possibilities to increase victim assistance quality in different contexts.

Table 7.3. Overall Process indicators for Victim Support services – Importance and Experience across all countries

	Importance	Experience
Respectful treatment	89.5%	91.3%
Information	79.1%	73.0%
Participation	65.9%	52.5%

Table 7.4. Overall outcome indicators for Victim Support services – Importance and Experience across all countries

	Importance	Experience
Compensation (FR, DE, PT)	74.3%	73.6%
Coping with anxiety	81.3%	70.1%
Increasing security	80.8%	68.5%

7.4. VICTIM ASSISTANCE BY THE POLICE

With regard to the police services, the results across all countries — France, Portugal, and Scotland — again showed some clear similarities. In general, respondents overwhelmingly agreed on the importance of police services. Most aspects of the quality indicators were considered to be important by more than 80% of the respondents in each country.

Unlike the results for Victim Support, however, results from France, Portugal, and Scotland indicated evidence of clear quality gaps in police service delivery. Although the experiences of the Portuguese respondents revealed a smaller quality gap than was the case in France and Scotland, we can conclude that victims' experience with police service delivery was poorer than with service delivery by Victim Support. This was particularly evident with regard to increasing feelings of safety and coping with anxiety. While a large majority of victims say they think it is important that the police increases their feelings of safety and assists them in coping with anxiety, not even half of the respondents said the police assisted them in this way. Furthermore, despite their great need for information, many respondents indicated this need was not met: more than 40% of all respondents said they did not receive information about their rights as a victim and were not kept informed about new developments in their case. Also, a third of the respondents who indicated it is important to receive information about further assistance and support said they did not receive this information. Moreover, respondents often indicated they had to wait too long before they could report the offence and had to repeat what happened to them too many times.

Table 7.5. **Process indicators for Police services – Importance and Services received across all countries**

	Importance	Services received
Respectful treatment	90.4%	65.7%
Information	90.0%	53.3%
Participation	91.7%	54.4%

Table 7.6. **Outcome indicators for Police services – Importance and Services received across all countries**

	Importance	Services received
Compensation	88.1%	38.5%
Coping with anxiety	88.3%	44.8%
Increasing security	88.3%	48.4%
Retributive justice	86.0%	56.7%

7.5. FINAL REMARKS

Taking all results into account, the research clearly demonstrates the instrument's usefulness in different contexts. The results are generally homogeneous with regard to the quality of Victim Support services but show that the instrument indicates several areas for improvement with regard to police services and does so in a country-specific way. Follow-up research can determine what drives the perceived quality gaps in victim assistance by the police, and whether the findings of this research generalise to other populations of victims in the countries surveyed.

In addition to providing a solid basis for the usefulness of the VICS questionnaire in different contexts, the research also revealed some possibilities to improve the instrument. First of all, the item asking whether a victim received specific practical assistance does not seem to reflect the same type of respectful treatment - the indicator this item belongs to - as do the other items that address respectful treatment. It is of importance to a considerably smaller proportion of the respondents who participated in this study. More importantly, however, the method to assess the need for compensation when dealing with the police seems to be in need of reconsideration. This indicator consists of two services that appear to reflect truly different aspects of victim services: *the police asked about your losses and damages and the police gave information about the steps necessary to receive information*. It seems advisable to consider whether the second item is, in fact, an aspect of the provision of information by the police to victims.

The results of this pilot research project suggest that the VICS CQ-method of measuring importance-experience can be of great use to evaluate victims' experiences with different actors providing victim assistance. Hopefully future research can reach larger samples of respondents, to increase confidence in the results: a clear limitation of the current research are the relatively small sample sizes in certain contexts. This applies in particular to respondents who could report their experience with later stages of the criminal justice process. The proportion of victims who come in contact with the prosecution services in a random sample is relatively small: targeted action is required if the performance of the prosecution service has to be fully evaluated.

The experience and the results of project VICS do provide confidence that the CQ-method of evaluating victims' experiences is a useful manner of gauging the performance of victim assistance service providers. More widespread use of the VICS-questionnaire across the EU member states will offer the European Commission and the governments of the Member States important information to see whether their increased efforts to support and protect victims of crime are having the desired effects. We therefore would like to express our hope that project VICS will be the start of a larger and sustained effort to monitor the experience of victims of crime across Europe. Project VICS might, in that way, prove to be an important step in improving the experience of those millions of Europeans who suffer the consequence of criminal victimisation on an annual basis.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear _____

Due to a criminal offence, you have recently had contact with Victim Support Scotland and possibly the police, the prosecution service and the judiciary. Victim Support Scotland is very interested in your experiences, whether or not you think that the crime was serious.

We are writing to invite you to participate in a survey which aims to evaluate the quality of victim assistance in Scotland, through both Victim Support services and services provided by criminal justice agencies. Your participation in the study will contribute to improving these services, and will also provide you with the opportunity to share your experiences.

Your participation is voluntary and if you choose not to participate, you do not need to take any action. All of your answers will be treated completely confidentially and will remain anonymous. To participate in the study, please return the enclosed questionnaire in the Stamped Addressed Envelope provided.

If you have any questions before you decide whether you wish to participate, please feel free to contact Nicola on **0131 662 5423** or by email at **Nicola.Merrin@victimsupportsco.org.uk**. She will be happy to provide further details, as required. If you would like to access support and information, you can contact Victim Support Scotland's Helpline on **0845 603 9213**, which is open between 8am and 8pm, Monday to Friday.

We sincerely hope that you will choose to share your experiences with us.

Yours Sincerely,

Frida Wheldon
Director of Corporate Services

A. INTRODUCTION (WEB-VERSION)

Content of the questionnaire

This survey will help us to understand the experienced quality of services delivered by staff members of police services, the prosecution, the judiciary and Victim Support Scotland. In this questionnaire we will tap into your experiences with some of these organisations. Your participation in the study will contribute to improving these services, and will also provide you with the opportunity to share your experiences.

Filling out this questionnaire will take between twenty to thirty minutes of your time. The length of the questionnaire differs depending on your experiences. We are extremely grateful for your co-operation.

Anonymity

All your answers to the survey will be treated completely confidentially and your anonymity is fully ensured. You can withdraw from the survey at any time. The results will not be used for commercial purposes. If you have any questions about the research please contact Nicola Merrin, Policy Officer on 0131 662 5423, nicola.merrin@victimssupportsco.org.uk. If you feel the need to talk to someone after answering the questions, please contact **the Victim Support Scotland Helpline on 0845 603 9213**.

B. QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE OFFENCE

You have been asked to participate in this survey, because the records of Victim Support Scotland show you have recently contacted the organisation concerning an offence that happened to you. For our research it is important that your experience is documented: even when the contact was brief or if it concerns a minor offence.

When answering the following questions, please indicate your answer by ticking the box beside the option that best describes your situation.

1. We would first like to make sure: have you had contact with Victim Support Scotland in the past 12 months concerning an offence that happened to you?

1.1. Yes

1.2. No > Even taking into account that you have not been in contact with our organisation recently, we would welcome your input in this questionnaire.

We would first like to ask you some questions with regard to the offence for which you had contact with

Victim Support Scotland. Please try to recall what happened then. If you have been in contact with Victim Support Scotland for different offences in the past 12 months, please keep the last offence in mind when answering the questions.

2. What was the offence for which you had contact with Victim Support Scotland? **[Please tick all that apply]**

- 2.1. Theft
- 2.2. Housebreaking
- 2.3. Robbery
- 2.4. Vandalism
- 2.5. Threat/verbal abuse
- 2.6. Assault
- 2.7. Stalking
- 2.8. Sexual violence/abuse
- 2.9. Domestic violence/abuse
- 2.10. Hostage taking/kidnapping
- 2.11. Homicide
- 2.12. Discrimination/hate crime
- 2.13. Other, _____

3. When did this offence take place?

- 3.1. Less than three months ago
- 3.2. Between three months and six months year ago
- 3.3. Between six months and one year ago
- 3.4. Between one year and three years ago
- 3.5. More than three years ago
- 3.6. Don't know/ can't remember

4. Did you know the offender before this offence occurred?

- 4.1. Yes
- 4.2. No > **Please go to question 6**

5. What was the nature of your relationship with the offender at the time of the offence?

- 5.1. Friend/Acquaintance/Neighbour
- 5.2. Relative
- 5.3. Partner/Former partner
- 5.4. Employer
- 5.5. A colleague
- 5.6. Unknown
- 5.7. Other, please specify _____

APPENDIX

6. Have you been a victim of this type of crime before?

- 6.1. Yes
- 6.2. No

7. Have you been a victim of other types of crime?

- 7.1. Yes
- 7.2. No > **Please go to question 9**

8. Please indicate the offence(s) [**Please tick all the apply**]

- 8.1. Theft
- 8.2. Housebreaking
- 8.3. Robbery
- 8.4. Vandalism
- 8.5. Threat/verbal abuse
- 8.6. Assault
- 8.7. Stalking
- 8.8. Sexual violence/abuse
- 8.9. Domestic violence/abuse
- 8.10. Hostage taking/kidnapping
- 8.11. Homicide (of relative or partner)
- 8.12. Discrimination/hate crime
- 8.13. Other, please specify _____

9. Returning to the offence for which you had contact with Victim Support Scotland. Has the offence been reported to the police? [**Please tick all that apply**]

- 9.1. Yes, I reported the offence to the police myself. > **Go to question 11**
- 9.2. Yes, someone else reported the offence to the police. > **Go to question 11**
- 9.3. No, the police discovered the offence themselves. > **Go to question 14**
- 9.4. No, the police has not been informed of the offence

10. What is the reason or are the reasons that you did not report the offence to the police? [**Please tick all that apply**]

- 10.1. The offence was not serious enough
- 10.2. It was not necessary for my insurance
- 10.3. That would not have helped my situation
- 10.4. I thought other people would report the offence
- 10.5. I was advised not to
- 10.6. I thought the police would not do anything about the offence

10.7. I was afraid of the offender

10.8. Another reason, please specify, _____

After question 10, please go to question 14

11. When was the offence reported to the police?

11.1. Less than three months ago

11.2. Between three months and six months ago

11.3. Between six months and one year ago

11.4. Between one year and three years ago

11.5. More than three years ago

11.6. Don't know/ can't remember

12. What was the reason or reasons for reporting the crime? **[Please tick all that apply]**

12.1. I was very afraid after the crime

12.2. I wanted the police to refer me to agencies offering forms of support

12.3. I wanted the police to protect me and my family

12.4. I was afraid the offence would be repeated

12.5. I thought the offence was so serious the police had to be informed

12.6. I wanted the police to intervene

12.7. I felt the offender(s) deserved to be punished

12.8. I wanted to be compensated for my damage

12.9. I wanted to recover what had been lost

12.10. It was required for my insurance

12.11. I wanted what happened to me to be acknowledged

12.12. Other reason, please specify, _____

13. If you had to pick just one of these reasons, which one would it be?

13.1. I was very afraid after the crime

13.2. I wanted the police to refer me to agencies offering forms of support

13.3. I wanted the police to protect me and my family

13.4. I was afraid the offence would be repeated

13.5. I thought the offence was so serious the police had to be informed

13.6. I wanted the police to intervene

13.7. I felt the offender(s) deserved to be punished

13.8. I wanted to be compensated for my damage

13.9. I wanted to recover what had been lost

13.10. It was required for my insurance

13.11. I wanted what happened to me to be acknowledged

13.12. Other reason, please specify, _____

14. Did the offence result in **[Please tick all that apply]**:

- 14.1. Loss of property
- 14.2. Damage to your property
- 14.3. Physical injury
- 14.4. Emotional distress
- 14.5. None of the above > **Please go to question 17**

15. Have you received compensation?

- 15.1. Yes, entirely > **Please go to question 17**
- 15.2. Yes, in part.
- 15.3. No, not yet.
- 15.4. No, not at all.

16. To what extent is it a problem that you have not been fully compensated for the damage caused by the offence?

- 16.1. No problem at all.
- 16.2. A small problem
- 16.3. A large problem

17. Was anyone charged for committing this offence against you?

- 17.1. Yes, > **Please go to section C**
- 17.2. No
- 17.3. Do not know > **Please go to section C**

18. To what extent is it a problem that no one was charged?

- 18.1. No problem at all.
- 18.2. A small problem
- 18.3. A large problem

C. VICTIM SUPPORT SCOTLAND

C.1. We would also like you to answer a number of questions about your experience with Victim Support Scotland. Try to recall what happened in your contacts with Victim Support Scotland workers. This includes both paid staff and volunteers. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Can you indicate whether Victim Support Scotland workers...	Completely disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Completely Agree
C.1.1. Treated you politely	x	x	x	x	x
C.1.2. Took the time to hear all the facts you wanted them to know	x	x	x	x	x
C.1.3. Showed understanding for your situation	x	x	x	x	x
C.1.4. Showed empathy/ compassion	x	x	x	x	x
C.1.5. Paid sufficient attention to your wishes and needs	x	x	x	x	x
C.1.6. Made you feel like you were taken seriously	x	x	x	x	x
C.1.7. Protected your identity and personal details	x	x	x	x	x
C.1.8. Provided information about other organisations offering support and assistance	x	x	x	x	x
C.1.9. Referred you to other organisations offering support and assistance	x	x	x	x	x
C.1.10. Gave you information about your rights as a victim	x	x	x	x	x
C.1.11. Accompanied you to criminal proceedings [not applicable in Scotland]					
C.1.12. Gave you information about the criminal justice process	x	x	x	x	x
C.1.13. Provided specific practical assistance, like filling out forms	x	x	x	x	x
C.1.14. Used language that was easy to understand	x	x	x	x	x
C.1.15. Provided legal assistance [not applicable in Scotland]					
C.1.16. Referred you to legal aid [not applicable in Scotland]					
C.1.17. Covered the cost for legal aid [not applicable in Scotland]					
C.1.18. Gave you information about the steps necessary to receive compensation	x	x	x	x	x
C.1.19. Asked about lost and damaged property [not applicable in Scotland]					
C.1.20. Provided financial assistance	x	x	x	x	x
C.1.21. Helped you to get social compensation [not applicable in Scotland]					

C.2. Again, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements

Can you indicate whether Victim Support Scotland workers...	Completely disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Completely Agree
C.2.1. Made you feel safer	x	x	x	x	x
C.2.2. Offered advice on your security	x	x	x	x	x
C.2.3. Reduced the risk of the offence happening again	x	x	x	x	x
C.2.4. Supported you for as long as you felt was necessary	x	x	x	x	
C.2.5. Gave you emotional support	x	x	x	x	
C.2.6. Gave you psychological support [not applicable in Scotland]					
C.2.7. Gave you social support	x	x	x	x	x
C.2.8. Made you feel your harm and suffering had been sufficiently recognised	x	x	x	x	
C.2.9. Reduced your feelings of fear	x	x	x	x	x

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C.3. Now we would like you to answer a number of questions about what you find **important** when you contact Victim Support Scotland. Think about your contact with Victim Support Scotland and try to think what would have really mattered to you and what you wanted Victim Support Scotland to do. Please rate the importance of the following issues on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being *not important at all* and 4 being *very important*.

How important is it to you that Victim Support Scotland workers...	Not important at all	Somewhat important	Important	Very important
C.3.1. Treat you politely?	x	x	x	x
C.3.2. Take the time to hear all the facts you wanted them to know?	x	x	x	x
C.3.3. Show understanding for your situation?	x	x	x	x
C.3.4. Show empathy/ compassion?	x	x	x	x
C.3.5. Pay sufficient attention to your wishes and needs?	x	x	x	x
C.3.6. Make you feel like you are taken seriously?	x	x	x	x
C.3.7. Protect your identity and personal details?	x	x	x	x
C.3.8. Provide information about other organisations offering support and assistance?	x	x	x	x
C.3.9. Refer you to other organisations offering support and assistance?	x	x	x	x
C.3.10. Give information about your rights as a victim?	x	x	x	x
C.3.11. Accompany you to criminal proceedings?	x	x	x	x
C.3.12. Provide information about the criminal justice process?	x	x	x	x
C.3.13. Provide specific practical assistance, like filling out forms?	x	x	x	x
C.3.14. Use language that is easy to understand?	x	x	x	x
C.3.15. Provide legal assistance [Not applicable in Scotland]				
C.3.16. Refer you to legal aid [Not applicable in Scotland]				
C.3.17. Cover the cost for legal aid [Not applicable in Scotland]				
C.3.18. Provide information about the steps necessary to receive compensation?	x	x	x	x
C.3.19. Ask about lost and damaged property [Not applicable in Scotland]				
C.3.20. Provide financial assistance	x	x	x	x
C.3.21. Help you to get social compensation	x	x	x	x

C.4. And concerning the following statements. Again we emphasise that the questions concern what would have really mattered to you and what you would have wanted Victim Support Scotland to do. Please rate the importance of the following issues on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being *not important at all* and 4 being *very important*.

How important is it to you that Victim Support Scotland workers...	Not important at all	Somewhat important	Moderately important	Very important	Not applicable
C.4.1. Make you feel safer	x	x	x	x	x
C.4.2. Offer advice on your security	x	x	x	x	x
C.4.3. Reduce the risk of the offence happening again	x	x	x	x	x
C.4.4. Support you for as long as you feel is necessary	x	x	x	x	
C.4.5. Give you emotional support	x	x	x	x	
C.4.6. Give you psychological support	x	x	x	x	
C.4.7. Give you social support	x	x	x	x	
C.4.8. Make you feel your harm and suffering has been sufficiently recognised	x	x	x	x	
C.4.9. Reduce your feelings of fear	x	x	x	x	x

C.5. Is there anything else that Victim Support Scotland did do, or could have done, that is important to you?

C.5.1. Yes, please specify _____

C.5.2. No

D. THE POLICE

The following questions concern your experience with the police, concerning the offence following which you had contact with Victim Support Scotland. As stated before it is important that your experience is recorded, even if the contact was brief or concerned a minor offence.

D.1. Did you have contact with the police in the past 12 months, concerning the offence that happened to you?

D.1.1. Yes

D.1.2. No > **Please go to section E (page 19)**

D.2. First we would like you to answer a number of questions concerning your experience with the police. Try to recall what happened in all your contacts with the police officers concerning this offence. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Can you indicate whether the police officers...	Completely disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Completely Agree
D.2.1. Treated you politely	x	x	x	x	x
D.2.2. Took the time to hear all the facts you wanted them to know	x	x	x	x	x
D.2.3. Showed understanding for your situation	x	x	x	x	x
D.2.4. Made you feel like you were taken seriously	x	x	x	x	x
D.2.5. Protected your identity and personal details	x	x	x	x	x
D.2.6. Showed compassion/ empathy	x	x	x	x	x
D.2.7. Responded to your initial contact quickly enough	x	x	x	x	x
D.2.8. Made you repeat your account of the events too often	x	x	x	x	x
D.2.9. Gave you information about their next steps	x	x	x	x	x
D.2.10. Used language that was easy to understand	x	x	x	x	x
D.2.11. Gave you information about further support and assistance	x	x	x	x	x
D.2.12. Gave you information about Victim Support Scotland	x	x	x	x	x
D.2.13. Kept you informed about further developments in your case	x	x	x	x	x
D.2.14. Gave you information about the steps necessary to receive compensation	x	x	x	x	x

D.3. Again, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements

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Can you indicate whether the police officers...	Completely disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Completely Agree
D.3.1. Asked for your input before making decisions	x	x	x	x	x
D.3.2. Asked for sufficient information from you to follow up on your report	x	x	x	x	x
D.3.3. Paid sufficient attention to your wishes and needs	x	x	x	x	x
D.3.4. Made you aware of your right to participate in criminal proceedings against your offender [Not applicable in Scotland]					
D.3.5. Provided information about your rights as a victim	x	x	x	x	x
D.3.6. Asked about your losses and damages	x	x	x	x	x
D.3.7. Made you feel safer	x	x	x	x	x
D.3.8. Offered advice on your security	x	x	x	x	x
D.3.9. Reduced the risk of the offence happening again	x	x	x	x	x
D.3.10. Reduced your feelings of fear	x	x	x	x	x
D.3.11. Did enough to identify the offender	x	x	x	x	x
D.3.12. Did enough to charge the offender	x	x	x	x	x

D.4. Now we would like you to answer a number of questions about what you find important when you contact the police to report a crime. Think about your contact with the police and try to think what would have really mattered to you and what you wanted them to do. Please rate the importance of the following issues on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being *not important at all* and 4 being *very important*.

How important is it to you that Victim Support Scotland workers...	Not important at all	Somewhat important	Important	Very important
D.4.1. Treat you politely?	x	x	x	x
D.4.2. Take the time to listen to all the facts you want them to know?	x	x	x	x
D.4.3. Show understanding for your situation?	x	x	x	x
D.4.4. Make you feel like you are taken seriously?	x	x	x	x
D.4.5. Protect your identity and personal details	x	x	x	x
D.4.6. Show compassion/ empathy?	x	x	x	x
D.4.7. Respond to your complaint quickly enough?	x	x	x	x
D.4.8. Do not make you repeat your account of the events too often?	x	x	x	x
D.4.9. Give you information about their next steps?	x	x	x	x
D.4.10. Use language that is easy to understand?	x	x	x	x
D.4.11. Provide information about further support and assistance?	x	x	x	x
D.4.12. Provide information about Victim Support Scotland?	x	x	x	x
D.4.13. Keep you informed about further developments in your case?	x	x	x	x
D.4.14. Give information about the steps necessary to receive compensation?	x	x	x	x

D.5. Please rate the importance of the following issues on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being *not important at all* and 4 being *very important*. Again we emphasise that the questions concern what would have really mattered to you and what you would have wanted the police officers to do.

How important is it to you that police officers...	Not important at all	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	Not applicable
D.5.1. Ask for your input before making decisions?	X	X	X	X	X
D.5.2. Ask for sufficient information from you to follow up on your report?	X	X	X	X	X
D.5.3. Pay sufficient attention to your wishes and needs?	X	X	X	X	X
D.5.4. Make you aware of your right to participate in criminal proceedings against your offender? [Not applicable in Scotland]					
D.5.5. Provide information about your rights as a victim?	X	X	X	X	X
D.5.6. Ask about your losses and damages?	X	X	X	X	X
D.5.7. Make you feel safer?	X	X	X	X	X
D.5.8. Offer advice on your security?	X	X	X	X	X
D.5.9. Reduce the risk of the offence happening again?	X	X	X	X	X
D.5.10. Reduce your feelings of fear?	X	X	X	X	X
D.5.11. Do enough to identify the offender?	X	X	X	X	X
D.5.12. Do enough to charge the offender?	X	X	X	X	X

D.6. Is there anything else that the police did do, or could have done, that is important to you?

D.6.1. Yes, please specify _____

D.6.2. No

E. ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

E.1. The following questions are designed to have you think about important issues concerning the offence for which you had contact with Victim Support Scotland. For each of the situations described below, you are asked to rate how confident you are that you can successfully deal with them. Because people differ from each other in the way that they deal with this type of event there is no single correct response. Please think about yourself currently, not about the day on which the offence occurred.

How able are you in...	1 I'm not at all able	2	3 I'm moderately able	4	5 I'm totally able
E.1.1. Dealing with the impact that the offence has had on my life	X	X	X	X	X
E.1.2. Carrying on with my everyday life.	X	X	X	X	X
E.1.3. Talking about the offence.	X	X	X	X	X
E.1.4. Dealing with frightening images or dreams about the offence.	X	X	X	X	X
E.1.5. Being optimistic since the offence	X	X	X	X	X
E.1.6. Seeking help from other people because of what happened.	X	X	X	X	X
E.1.7. Being emotionally strong.	X	X	X	X	X

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E.2. We would also like to know how you feel about the offence now. Please consider the following reactions which sometimes occur after an offence. The questions concern your personal reactions to the offence which happened to you. Again there are no right or wrong answers.

Please indicate whether or not you have experienced any of the following at least twice in the past week.	Yes	No
E.2.1. Upsetting thoughts or memories about the offence that have come into your mind against your will	x	x
E.2.2. Upsetting dreams about the offence	x	x
E.2.3. Acting or feeling as though the offence were happening again	x	x
E.2.4. Feeling upset by reminders of the event	x	x
E.2.5. Bodily reactions (such as fast heartbeat, stomach churning, sweatiness, dizziness) when reminded of the event	x	x
E.2.6. Difficulty falling or staying asleep	x	x
E.2.7. Irritability or outbursts of anger	x	x
E.2.8. Difficulty concentrating	x	x
E.2.9. Heightened awareness of potential dangers to yourself and others	x	x
E.2.10. Being jumpy or being startled at something unexpected	x	x

E.3. We are also interested in your opinion in general about the criminal justice system. This does not only relate to the treatment in your own case.

Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Can you indicate whether the police officers...	Completely disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Completely Agree
E.3.1. I have a great deal of respect for the police	x	x	x	x	x
E.3.2. On the whole, I trust the police officers	x	x	x	x	x
E.3.3. In general, police officers treat people in a fair manner	x	x	x	x	x
E.3.4. The courts generally guarantee everyone a fair trial	x	x	x	x	x
E.3.5. The basic rights of citizens are protected by the courts	x	x	x	x	x
E.3.6. Court decisions are almost always fair	x	x	x	x	x

F. GENERAL QUESTIONS

We would finally like to ask you some general questions about yourself.

F.1. What is your age?

1. 18-24
2. 25-34
3. 35-49
4. 50-65
5. 66 and over

F.2. What is your marital status?

1. Single
2. Living with partner
3. Married
4. Divorced or separated
5. Widowed

F.3. How would you describe your occupational position?

1. Employed
2. Looking for work (unemployed)
3. Keeping home (homemaker)
4. Retired
5. Disabled
6. Student
7. Other, please specify _____

F.4 What is your sex?

1. Male
2. Female

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME IN COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

Prosecution part:

D. THE PROSECUTION SERVICE

We would now like to ask you some questions about your experience with the prosecution service, concerning the offence following which you had contact with Victim Support Scotland. The Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) is the agency responsible for the prosecution of criminal cases in Scotland, making decisions such as to whether to take a case to court and then prosecuting this case; Procurators Fiscal are legally qualified prosecutors who work in specialist units and offices around Scotland.

As stated before it is important that your experience is recorded, even when the contact was brief or if it concerns a minor offence.

D.1. Did you have contact with the prosecution service in the past 12 months, concerning the offence that happened to you? This can also include any written communication you may have received from the prosecution service in this period.

D.1.1. Yes.

D.1.2. No > **To section E**

D.2 Did you speak to a staff member of the prosecution service either in person or on the telephone?

D.2.1. Yes.

D.2.2. No

D.3. First we would like you to answer a number of questions concerning your experience with the prosecution service. Try to recall what happened in all your contacts with the prosecution service (Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service) concerning this offence. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Can you indicate whether the staff of the prosecution service...	Completely disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Completely Agree
D.3.1. Treated you politely	x	x	x	x	x
D.3.2. Took the time to hear all the facts you wanted them to know	x	x	x	x	x
D.3.3. Showed understanding for your situation	x	x	x	x	x
D.3.4. Made you feel like you were taken seriously	x	x	x	x	x
D.3.5. Showed compassion/ empathy	x	x	x	x	x

Can you indicate whether the staff of the prosecution service...	Completely disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Completely Agree
D.4.1. Gave you information about their next steps	X	X	X	X	X
D.4.2. Used language that was easy to understand	X	X	X	X	X
D.4.3. Provided information about your rights as a victim	X	X	X	X	X
D.4.4. Kept you informed about further developments in your case	X	X	X	X	X

D.4 Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Can you indicate whether staff members of the prosecution service...	Completely disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Completely Agree
D.4.5. Protected your identity and personal details	X	X	X	X	X
D.4.6. Made you repeat your account of the events too often	X	X	X	X	X
D.4.7. Paid sufficient attention to your wishes and needs	X	X	X	X	X
D.4.8. Asked for your input before making decisions [Not applicable in Scotland]					
D.4.9. Asked for sufficient information from you to follow up on your report	X	X	X	X	X
D.4.10. Asked about your losses and damages	X	X	X	X	X
D.4.11. Gave you information about the steps necessary to receive compensation	X	X	X	X	X
D.4.12. Made you feel safer	X	X	X	X	X
D.4.13. Reduced the risk of the offence happening again	X	X	X	X	X
D.4.14. Reduced your feelings of fear	X	X	X	X	X
D.4.15. Did enough to prosecute the offender	X	X	X	X	X
D.4.16. Did enough to convict the offender	X	X	X	X	X

D.5. Now we would like you to answer a number of questions about what you find important in your contacts with the prosecution service following a crime. Think about your contact with the prosecution service and try to think what would have really mattered to you and what you wanted them to do. Please rate the importance of the following issues on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being *not important at all* and 4 being *very important*.

How important is it to you that staff members of the Prosecution Service...	Not important at all	Somewhat important	Moderately important	Very important
D.5.1. Treat you politely?	X	X	X	X
D.5.2. Take the time to listen to all the facts you want them to know?	X	X	X	X
D.5.3. Show understanding for your situation?	X	X	X	X
D.5.4. Make you feel like you are taken seriously?	X	X	X	X
D.5.5. Show compassion/ empathy?	X	X	X	X

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D.6. Again we emphasise that the questions concern what would have really mattered to you and what you would have wanted the prosecution service to do. Please rate the importance of the following issues on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being not important at all and 4 being very important.

How important is it to you that staff members of the prosecution service...	Not important at all	Somewhat important	Moderately important	Very important	Not applicable
D.6.1. Give you information about their next steps?	x	x	x	x	
D.6.2. Use language that is easy to understand?	x	x	x	x	
D.6.3. Provide information about your rights as a victim?	x	x	x	x	
D.6.4. Keep you informed about further developments in your case?	x	x	x	x	
D.6.5. Protect your identity and personal details	x	x	x	x	
D.6.6. Do not make you repeat your account of the events too often?	x	x	x	x	
D.6.7. Pay sufficient attention to your wishes and needs?	x	x	x	x	
D.6.8. Ask for your input before making decisions? [Not applicable in Scotland]					
D.6.9. Ask for sufficient information from you to follow up on your report?	x	x	x	x	
D.6.10. Ask about your losses and damages?	x	x	x	x	x
D.6.11. Give information about the steps necessary to receive compensation?	x	x	x	x	x
D.6.12. Make you feel safer?	x	x	x	x	x
D.6.13. Reduce the risk of the offence happening again?	x	x	x	x	x
D.6.14. Reduce your feelings of fear?	x	x	x	x	x
D.6.15. Do enough to prosecute the offender?	x	x	x	x	
D.6.16. Do enough to charge the offender?	x	x	x	x	

D.7. Is there anything else that the prosecution service did do, or could have done, that is important to you?

D.7.1. Yes, please specify _____

D.7.2. No

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry, no matter how small, should be recorded to ensure the integrity of the financial data. This includes not only sales and purchases but also expenses and income. The document provides a detailed list of items that should be tracked, such as inventory levels, supplier payments, and customer orders. It also outlines the procedures for recording these transactions, including the use of specific forms and the assignment of responsibilities to different staff members.

The second part of the document focuses on the analysis of the recorded data. It describes various methods for identifying trends and anomalies in the financial records. This includes comparing current performance with historical data and industry benchmarks. The document also discusses the importance of regular audits and reconciliations to detect and correct any errors or discrepancies. It provides a step-by-step guide for conducting these audits, from the selection of samples to the final reporting of findings.

The final part of the document addresses the communication of financial information. It explains how to prepare clear and concise reports for management and other stakeholders. This includes the use of charts and graphs to visualize complex data and the inclusion of key performance indicators (KPIs) to track progress over time. The document also discusses the importance of transparency and accountability in financial reporting, and provides guidelines for how to handle sensitive information and respond to inquiries from external parties.

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