



VICTIM'S INVOLVEMENT IN P/CVE

EXAMPLES OF PUBLIC POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES IN PRISON AND IN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS

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Support

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

KPI	Key Performance Indicator
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization, namely associations in this paper
P/CVE	Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism
RAN (PS)	Radicalisation Awareness Network (Policy Support)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper provides an overview of the public policies and programmes in prison and education that involve victims of terrorism in the prevention and countering of violent extremism (P/CVE) in five EU member states: France, Belgium, Italy, Germany, and Spain.

It discusses the legal basis for the involvement of victims in P/CVE, the role and benefits of victims' associations and NGOs, and the objectives, benefits, limitations, challenges, safeguards and risks of these policies for the perpetrators, victims, and the society. It shows that the policies and programmes vary across the countries, depending on the history and nature of terrorism, the availability of restorative justice mechanisms, and the degree of institutionalisation and evaluation of the initiatives.

The role of victims in Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) activities appears limited, partly due to the recent interest in victims of terrorism and the lack of specific legal frameworks. In prisons and education, victims are included through restorative justice policies, which facilitate meetings between victims and perpetrators. These initiatives are present in Spain, France, and Belgium, but not in Germany.

NGOs play a crucial role as intermediaries between victims and the state, but these practices are small in scale and heavily reliant on NGOs and individuals. This raises questions about the effectiveness and impact of these policies, and the need for cross-border evaluations to improve them.

Policies and practices vary among the five EU Member States studied. Including terrorism in educational curricula is seen as a good starting point, and while restorative justice principles are implemented in prisons, the validation process and evaluation of these meetings differ.

It concludes that involving victims in P/CVE activities is a step towards the appeasement of all parties, but it also requires careful consideration of the needs, expectations, and potential harm of the participants, as well as the development of a standard framework of control and assessment.

Recent political declarations, like the Venice Declaration, suggest future convergence in European countries' approaches. However, the lack of rigorous external evaluations hinders evidence-based convergence. Systematic cross-border evaluations are essential for the proper development of P/CVE programs involving victims. While including victims in these programs is a positive step, much work remains to fully develop this approach.

METHODOLOGY

The paper aims to offer an overview of Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) public policies and programmes in prison and the educational system involving victims of terrorism in five EU Member States which have experienced different waves and types of terrorist attacks (France, Belgium, Italy, Germany, and Spain), based on desk research through available literature and material.

The need for this first overview is linked to the absence of previously written deliverables on victims by the RAN PS. Therefore, the present paper intends to focus on victims and to advance knowledge and increase MS' understanding of the topic by providing a consolidated overview of the existing policies and programmes in prison and education for the involvement for victims in P/CVE in the above-mentioned five EU Member States.

The paper takes into account the legal basis for victims' involvement in P/CVE, their role as well as the benefits and risks associated with these policies for the involved actors (perpetrators, victims, society). These five EU Member States have been selected based on the extent of terrorist and extremist violence experienced and the existence of strong victims' associations.

The following sources have been used:

- Academic literature in English, French, Spanish, and Italian, with a priority on those published after 2018.
- Grey literature in English, French, Spanish, Italian, and German (reports, documents, and other materials produced by public authorities, non-governmental organisations, and other relevant actors) with a priority on those published after 2018.
- Other publicly available information (press articles, Ministry websites, official press releases, etc.)

Data was collected through various means including bibliographic research and interviews.

INTRODUCTION

According to the Council of the EU and the European Council's website, "terrorist offences are acts committed with the aim of seriously intimidating a population; unduly compelling a government or international organisation to perform or abstain from performing any act; seriously destabilising or destroying the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or an international organisation".¹

Recital 27 of the Counter-terrorism Directive provides a definition of victims of terrorism in line with the Victims' Rights Directive. In particular, a victim of terrorism is "a natural person who has suffered harm, including physical, mental or emotional harm or economic loss, insofar as that was directly caused by a terrorist offence, or a family member of a person whose death was directly caused by a terrorist offence and who has suffered harm as a result of that person's death".²

Since the emergence of the victims' movement in the late 80s, victims have been fighting intensively for achieving an essential role in policy design and advocacy through victims' associations or even individually at their own initiative. Victims of terrorism represent a specific group of victims of crime with particular needs (immediate emergency assistance, recognition, respect, acknowledgement, participation, security,

¹ [The EU's response to terrorism](#) based on [Directive \(EU\) 2017/541 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2017 on combating terrorism](#)

² [Directive \(EU\) 2017/541 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2017 on combating terrorism](#)

compensation, etc).³ Their needs for respect and recognition beyond their suffering have been a constant demand, and today their role in countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism is starting to become acknowledged through their inclusion in a series of activities.

Indeed, several EU Member States have created policies involving victims in P/CVE activities (research, testimony sharing, consultation for legislative reforms, prevention and intervention work, etc.).⁴ The present paper focuses on policies and programmes within prisons and the educational system in five EU member States: France, Belgium, Italy, Germany, and Spain. These policies enable victims to meet perpetrators in prison and share their stories in classrooms. They present a series of benefits for the actors involved (perpetrators and victims) as well as for the society. However, the limitations, challenges, and risks require consideration as part of their design and their implementation.

This overview will address the following primary research question:

- Which are the public policies and programmes in prison and education of the selected countries (France, Belgium, Italy, Germany, and Spain) for the involvement of victims in P/CVE?

And the following sub-questions:

- What is the legal basis for the involvement of victims in P/CVE, and what can be their role?
- How is cooperation with NGOs structured and what needs does this cooperation cover?
- Which are the objectives, benefits, limitations, challenges, safeguards and risks of these policies for the perpetrators, victims, and the society?

VICTIMS' INVOLVEMENT IN P/CVE AND COOPERATION WITH NGOS

In recent years, EU Member States have experienced large-scale terrorist attacks. Victims' associations and victims' support organisations for victims of terrorism were formed or strengthened to promote victims' interests (medical assistance, recognition, respect, participation in trial proceedings, etc.) and voices into the society. Victims' involvement in P/CVE has taken many different forms, namely testimonials, raising awareness, engaging in the design of policies, participating in restorative meetings with perpetrators, etc.⁵

The need of this first overview is linked to the absence of previous written deliverables on victims by the RAN PS. Victims of terrorism are important actors in countering terrorism as they have directly experienced the

³ Pemberton A. (2010)

⁴ Ihler B. & RAN (2023): [Inspiring Practices for the Meaningful Inclusion of Victims/Survivors of Terrorism in P/CVE Work](#) p. 4.

⁵ Ihler B. & RAN (2023): [Inspiring Practices for the Meaningful Inclusion of Victims/Survivors of Terrorism in P/CVE Work](#)

violence and trauma of terrorist acts. For many of them engaging in P/CVE work is part of their healing process but also provides support to other victims and survivors.⁶

This section will discuss, on the one hand, the legal basis of victims' involvement and their potential role in P/CVE at EU level and, on the other hand, the cooperation between NGOs and stakeholders. These stakeholders can be entities within the judicial system or entities within the school system. This section will highlight that all these practices remain very small in scale and rely mostly on NGOs and individuals.

VICTIMS' INVOLVEMENT IN P/CVE AS A RESPONSE TO THEIR RIGHTS AND NEEDS

The qualification of a person as a victim of terrorism gives rise to a series of rights and protection measures. In particular, victims of terrorism are entitled to:

- the right to understand and to be understood (Art. 3 Victims' Rights Directive);
- the right to information (Art. 4, 5, 6 Victims' Rights Directive and Art. 24.3(b) and 26 Counter-terrorism Directive);
- the right to access support services (Art. 8 Victims' Rights Directive and Art. 24 Counter-terrorism Directive);
- the rights to access justice, including the right to be heard (Art. 10 Victims' Rights Directive), the right to access to legal aid (Art. 13 Victims' Rights Directive and Article 24(6) Counter-terrorism Directive), the right to reimbursement of expenses (Art. 14 Victims' Rights Directive), the right to a decision on compensation from the offender (Art. 16 Victims' Rights Directive), and the rights of victims resident in another Member State (Art. 17 Victims' Rights Directive and Article 26 Counter-terrorism Directive);
- the right to protection (Art. 18, 19, 21, 20, 22, 23 Victims' Rights Directive and Article 25 Counter-terrorism Directive), including right to privacy and protection of secondary victimisation;⁷ and
- the right to compensation (as seen in particular the Directive relating to compensation to crime victims).⁸

These rights give an important role to victims inside and outside the courtroom and they can provide the basis for their involvement in P/CVE. Additionally, engaging victims in P/CVE policies constitutes a response to their needs of respect and recognition. Indeed, involving victims in P/CVE policies can provide for acknowledgement

⁶ Milošević A. & RAN (2023)

⁷ "Secondary victimisation" is victimisation that occurs not as a direct result of the criminal offence but as a result of the response of public or private institutions and other individuals to the victim [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2023\)2 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on rights, services and support for victims of crime](#)

⁸ See also Revised Guidelines of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the protection of victims of terrorist acts (2017), VIII.

outside the criminal justice proceedings.⁹ It can also respond to their need for participation, which goes beyond judicial proceedings.¹⁰

In other words, taking into account victims' voices in policy and legislative initiatives contributes to the satisfaction of their need for participation, as it offers them the possibility to express their views during the drafting process and to inform those policies with their experiences.¹¹ It also respects their rights and responds to the revised version of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism strategy, which recognises "the role that victims of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations can play, including in countering the appeal of terrorism".¹²

On the other hand, incorporating victims into educational activities addresses the need to present a counter-narrative to those propagated by terrorists and extremist groups. Victims' involvement can significantly influence young people who are at risk of recruitment by providing them with first-hand accounts of the consequences of violence. This also educates the wider public, fostering empathy and understanding. Additionally, including victims in prison programmes aligns with the objectives of these initiatives for the perpetrators. These objectives typically involve encouraging offenders to take responsibility, express remorse, share emotions, repair the harm caused, or provide answers to the victims, etc.¹³

The role of victims in P/CVE activities can vary from including their views in policy design, involving them in restorative justice encounters with former perpetrators - to engaging them in awareness campaigns and the teaching of history within the educational system.

HOW IS THE COOPERATION WITH NGOS STRUCTURED AND WHAT DOES THIS NEED TO COVER?

France, Belgium, Italy, Germany, and Spain have experienced very different waves of terrorism since the 1960s – with Europe continually under threat from jihadist terrorism ever since the attacks of September 11, 2001, in the United States. These differences cover the associated political demands, historical periods, operating methods, nature of the places targeted and typology of the victims. However, there are a certain invariants as to how public authorities and civil society have organised their responses to these attacks.

The States, through their administrations, their political powers, and their judicial systems, fulfil numerous roles in matters of terrorism. They are responsible for protecting citizens, providing medical care and compensation for victims, bringing terrorists to justice and convicting them of the crimes committed. This broad scope of action does not, however, mean that States handle every aspect of the response to terrorism. In all the countries studied, civil society associations play an important role intervening in addition to public services to rebuild social ties. Thus, the official response of the State apparatus through law enforcement and accountability mechanisms and the soft response through NGOs are two complementary approaches.

As such, victims and victim support associations play the role of trusted third parties between the State, society and, in certain contexts, terrorists inside prisons. The NGOs mentioned in this document are either victims'

⁹ Directorate-General for internal Policies (2017) [How can the EU and the member States better help the victims of terrorism?](#)

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy: eighth review, [A/RES/77/298](#)

¹³ Biffi E. & RAN (2021)

associations, which bring together victims and their loved ones, or victim support associations which are long-term structures generally with access to more resources. In the context of this paper, the associations studied take part in programmes to prevent extremism and violent actions in schools and prisons. These associations establish bonds of trust with victims which enable them to prepare them to get involved in activities within these environments and bonds of trust with the institutions concerned to guarantee the quality of the work made.

Associations are well-positioned to propose experiments and innovations because they are closely connected to the field and understand victims' needs and expectations in detail. Successful proposals and experiments can become official policies. For instance, in France, a compensation fund was created as a result of requests from these associations¹⁴.

When scaling up programs, associations can engage victims and discuss opportunities for their participation on a larger scale. This leads to an ad hoc collaboration model where States support these associations through financial or in-kind assistance, such as secondments.

POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES IN PRISON AND EDUCATION FOR THE INVOLVEMENT OF VICTIMS IN P/CVE IN FRANCE, BELGIUM, ITALY, GERMANY, AND SPAIN

FRANCE

France has endured multiple waves of attacks since the mid-20th century and has experienced persistent Islamist terrorist attacks on its soil and against French interests abroad since the mid-1990s. This nearly continuous wave of terrorism has sustained a pool of victim-related NGOs, nurturing various initiatives since the 1980s, with about a dozen associations still active as of 2024. Islamist attacks have claimed 274 lives on French soil since 2012, making France the European country most affected by Islamist attacks since Daesh proclaimed the caliphate.

¹⁴ [Mort de Françoise Rudetzki, « artisane inlassable de la cause des victimes »](#)

POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES IN THE PRISON SYSTEM

In the French penitentiary system, the policies and programmes involving victims are mainly part of restorative justice initiatives and include, in particular, the organisation of meetings between victims and perpetrators. Law No. 2014-896 of August 15, 2014, relating to the individualisation of sentences and strengthening the effectiveness of criminal sanctions, formalised restorative justice through article 10-1 of the code of criminal procedure. According to this article: "During any criminal procedure and at all stages of the procedure, including during the execution of the sentence, the victim and the perpetrator of an offence, provided that the facts have been recognized, may be offered a measure of restorative justice."¹⁵

The circular of March 15, 2017, allows "broad appropriation of this new measure which pursues an objective of restoring social bonds transcending the usual dynamics of our criminal procedure" by establishing the practical methods of implementation.

In practice this provision has only been used once in the context of a terrorist detained in a prison in Seine et Marne following the request of an association, France Victimes 77-AVIMEJ aiding victims of Seine et Marne which had heard the appeal of a civil party in the V13 trial.¹⁶ Work is currently underway on the subject. Conferences¹⁷ organised with the French Institute for Restorative Justice (IFJR) and various associations are beginning to initiate and prepare the necessary work.

However, there is another framework for organising these victim/inmate meetings which proves to be both more flexible whilst also more difficult to implement: all parties must agree on the opportunity of the meeting: the victim, the offender the SPIP and a judge. Since there is little precedent to assess the criteria for such an opportunity, the process can seem arbitrary. This involves relying, within the 79 penitentiary establishments which are developing them, on the PPRV "Programs for the prevention of violent radicalization".¹⁸ These programmes were created as part of the National Radicalisation Prevention Plan in February 2018¹⁹ and make it possible to organise meetings in establishments that wish to do so. This type of meeting therefore only takes place at the end of their sentence for voluntary prisoners whose release is planned; the judicial authority also has a right of veto via the sentence enforcement judge. They are therefore not *de jure*.

¹⁵ [LOI n° 2014-896 du 15 août 2014](#) Translated by the authors of this paper.

¹⁶ [Au procès des attentats du 13-Novembre, le concept de justice restaurative fait son chemin pour "ne pas rester dans un désir de vengeance" |](#)

¹⁷ [2ème congrès international de l'Institut Français pour la Justice Restaurative](#)

¹⁸ [Désengager et réinsérer](#)

¹⁹ [Prévenir pour protéger](#)

In France, Georges Salines, father of a woman killed in the November 13, 2015, attacks in Paris,²⁰ notably used this scheme several times to meet²¹ alone, or in pairs, with radicalised prisoners in prison. The plan then goes through the SPIP (Penitentiary Integration and Probation Service) as part of the preparation for an inmate's release and the meeting is subject to prior approval by a judge.

In practice these meetings are held through associations, in this case the French Association of Victims of Terrorism, several prisoners participate, as well as specially trained representatives of the social body and mediators.²²

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POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Islamists attacks of the last decade, notably the attacks of January and November 2015 in or near Paris, triggered several changes in school curricula which came to include references to terrorism²⁶. The national programme titles, still taught as of 2024, are: “the protection of democracies: national security and defence; fight against terrorism; state of emergency and emergency legislation; cybersecurity”, “new forms of conflicts: terrorism, asymmetrical conflicts and renewal of the confrontation of powers”, “the Clausewitz model put to the test of irregular wars: from Al Qaeda to Daesh “.

The Ministry of National Education specifies that meetings with associations and victims should be favoured. In keeping with this development, a project to involve victims in meetings with students was initiated by a teacher, Chantal Anglade,²⁷ who was herself a victim. The target audience was students

²⁰ [La justice restaurative est-elle féministe ?](#)

²¹ [Justice restaurative à Pau : « J'ai eu envie d'agir pour qu'il n'y ait pas d'autres 13-Novembre »](#)

²² [Les rencontres détenus-victimes : le dialogue pour s'apaiser et se reconstruire](#)

²³ [La justice restaurative est-elle féministe ?](#)

²⁴ [Justice restaurative à Pau : « J'ai eu envie d'agir pour qu'il n'y ait pas d'autres 13-Novembre »](#)

²⁵ [Les rencontres détenus-victimes : le dialogue pour s'apaiser et se reconstruire](#)

²⁶ <https://eduscol.education.fr/3283/journee-nationale-d-hommage-aux-victimes-du-terrorisme-11-mars>

²⁷ [« Programme « Terrorisme : Et si on écoutait les victimes? Et si on écoutait les élèves? » avec l'AFVT »](#)

from high schools (*lycées* in France) aged between 15 to 18. This project was then structured with the permanent secondment of this professor, whose salary was paid by the State, to the AFVT associative structure to carry out this mission.

In this context, the project relied on school programmes, the potential for teachers to involve “major witnesses”, word of mouth from initial interventions, significant media coverage, and the capacity of the AFVT to mobilise numerous victims throughout the country. The program's activities were highlighted and promoted during the March 11th, 2024, ceremony hosted by the Prime Minister for the European Remembrance Day for Victims of Terrorism. It is part of the “meetings with witnesses” that professors can organise in connection with the course of study.

The development of this programme had the notable effect of bringing a public actor into the same niche as this associative programme: the *Musée Mémorial du Terrorisme*. Its mission is “to give meaning to victims’ suffering by providing keys to understanding a history that is still being written”,²⁸ and it is aimed at a broad public. Using the same model, it organises victim testimonies in schools and plans to hold meetings between students and witnesses within its premises.²⁹ This innovative approach of hosting meetings outside the walls in a dedicated space rich in terrorism artefacts should create new opportunities for engagement.

BELGIUM

Belgium has suffered sporadic terrorist attacks on its soil for around fifty years, but the massive and destabilising wave of Islamist attacks over the past ten years is the first of its kind in the country. The first attack in this latest series; notably of the Jewish Museum in Brussels - took place on May 24, 2014. The attacks on Brussels in 2016 proved pivotal with the creation of the first Belgian associations gathering victims of terrorism: V-Europe and Life4Brussels³⁰.

Islamist attacks have claimed 42 lives on Belgian soil since 2014, and Belgium has been used as a rear base by Islamists to commit attacks in Europe.

POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES IN THE PRISON SYSTEM

Concerning meetings in prison, Belgium has an important legal arsenal that is more complex than in France because it reflects the federal system made up of communities and regions.³¹ These laws are written so that restorative justice modalities can be initiated by judicial authorities, services or even the parties, victims, or perpetrators themselves. The judicial authorities, after obtaining the perpetrator's acceptance and providing written information about the procedure to the victim(s), mandate the services

²⁸ <https://musee-memorial-terrorisme.fr/en/mission>

²⁹ <https://musee-memorial-terrorisme.fr/monde-scolaire>

³⁰ [Acte terroriste - Informations et aide](#)

³¹ See Filippi J. (2014)

to implement restorative justice procedures, subject to the agreement of both the victim(s) and perpetrator(s).

In practice this therefore means that in the event that victims and incarcerated people agree to meet, no external validation is needed, except if there is a risk of disturbing public order. The first legal texts, in particular article 37 quarter of the law of April 8, 1965, were originally written for minors but already stated that:

If mediation or restorative group consultation leads to an agreement, the agreement, signed by the person who is presumed to have committed an act classified as an offense [...] must be approved by the judge or court. [...] The judge or court can only refuse approval if the agreement is contrary to public order.³²

In practice, the *Mediante* association generally serves as the needed trusted third party³³ and allows the organisation, preparation, and mediation of these meetings, with mediators present at all stages of the procedure. The V-Europe and Life4Brussels associations confirmed during the trial of the March 22nd, 2016, Brussels attacks that they planned to organise such meetings³⁴ thanks to the developments included in the law since 2005³⁵ and in particular the Law of Principles of January 12, 2005, concerning prison administration and the legal status of prisoners.³⁶

POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Terrorism is not explicitly part of the teaching programmes in Belgium³⁷, but this does not prevent organising meetings between victims of terrorism and students. These meetings involve victims presenting their experiences, followed by a question-and-answer discussion. Some of these exchanges can be transnational, such as a delegation of students from a high school in Anderlecht attending commemorations in France in 2016 alongside victims. On Belgian soil, these meetings in high schools are part of the work on radicalisation carried out by certain teachers. These teachers organise the meetings during the hours devoted to teaching morality or religion and invite victims to testify about their experiences as victims of terrorism. This approach allows teachers to question the motives of the terrorists, discuss the laws implemented to fight terrorism, and highlight the suffering caused by terrorist attacks.

³² https://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/img_l/pdf/1965/04/08/1965040806_F.pdf

³³ [Information sur la communication entre auteur et victime suite à une infraction à caractère terroriste](#)

³⁴ [Procès des attentats de Bruxelles : plusieurs victimes des attentats envisagent de rencontrer les condamnés](#)

³⁵ http://www.antoniocasella.eu/restorative/JR_Belgique_2008.pdf

³⁶ [Loi de principes concernant l'administration des établissements pénitentiaires ainsi que le statut juridique des détenus](#)

³⁷ [Search for the word terrorism in school curricula](#)

However, the practice is less institutionalised than in France. France has a history of victims' associations or assistance for victims of terrorism dating back to 1986 with the creation of SOS Attentats. Belgium's associations are much more recent, created in response to the attacks of March 22, 2016.

ITALY

Italy has experienced an enduring wave of extremist attacks from the late 1960s to the late 1980s. These attacks were committed by far-left and the far-right leaning terrorist groups. This period of political terrorism is called Years of Lead (*Anni di piombo*) and has claimed 380 lives. Italy has mostly been spared by the wave of Islamist terrorist attacks that has hit other parts of Europe over the past decades. The main association of victims, called AIVITER, was created in 1985³⁸ and is still active today.

POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES IN THE PRISON SYSTEM

Following the trials in Italy, in relation to the Years of Lead attacks, more than 4200 terrorists have been imprisoned³⁹. Some of these terrorists, along with several victims, have been exploring additional ways to address the aftermath of the crimes. While specific laws against terrorism have been in place since the 1970s⁴⁰, the concept of restorative justice was only first implemented in 2022.

An weekend experiment, detailed in a book titled *Il libro dell'incontro. Vittime e responsabili della lotta armata a confronto*,⁴¹ took place between victims, terrorists, and members of civil society. After many years of preparation, the experiment led to yearly meetings between the participants from 2007 to 2011, resulting in heated discussions that were welcomed as a way to heal wounds, allowing victims to express their anger and perpetrators to share their perspectives. The weekend was considered a success by its participants and the book garnered interest for restorative justice in Italy.

Although it was not a meeting held in prison, this example provided new ideas for reforms in Italy. The concept of restorative justice being implemented in prisons was enshrined in law through the Cartabia Reform in 2022, particularly in articles 42 to 67.⁴² It introduces the concept of *Disciplina organica della giustizia riparativa* which translates to "Organic discipline of restorative justice", giving restorative justice a real role in the Italian justice system. For example, restorative outcomes have become common attenuating circumstances,⁴³ providing clear incentives for perpetrators to participate. The effectiveness of this law will largely depend on the availability of trained mediators. Nevertheless, it offers the prospect of new meetings between perpetrators and victims behind bars in Italy in the years to come. However, it is too soon to assess its overall effects.

³⁸ [AIVITER](#)

³⁹ Soulou K. (2018)

⁴⁰ Schimel A. (1986)

⁴¹ Bertagna G. & Ceretti . & Mazzucato C. (2015)

⁴² [La giustizia riparativa alla luce della nuova riforma](#)

⁴³ [La disciplina organica della giustizia riparativa e l'esito riparativo come circostanza attenuante comune](#)

POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

The Years of Lead are to be taught to all high school students in the country as part of the broader history of the 20th century. This initiative aims to provide a platform for victims of this wave of terrorism to share their experiences with students. Victims' associations are utilising this opportunity to testify in front of students, both in schools and near memorial sites, to keep the memory alive.

A good example can be found in Bologna where 85 people were murdered in an explosion, on August 2, 1980. The attack was organised by a right-wing extremist group. Paolo Lambertini, who lost his mother during this attack, says that “for several years, I had not told my story to anyone, I was probably looking for anonymity, I was not interested in saying that I am the son of... I then began to see how young people react to this type of testimony. From the moment they experience emotions, I find them very interested.” The young people referred to here are students from high schools and colleges, aged 15 and older.

The work of NGOs that facilitate meetings between historians, victims, and students has gained the attention of the regional government of Emilia-Romagna. As a result, Cinzia Venturoli, one of the participating historians, has been hired. Between August 2018 and February 2019, the city had already organised 90 such meetings, hosting a total of 3,700 students. With the help of Cinzia Venturoli, more projects have been developed, including the writing of a theatre play.

On a larger scale, a national contest called “CONCORSO NAZIONALE Tracce di memoria” has existed since 2014 and aims to “propose to local institutions the implementation of an initiative (a new title, the organisation of a public debate, etc.) so that the adopted victim finds their place in collective memory and the work carried out by students has an impact on Territory”. This contest creates a space for victims and survivors to take part in meetings with students to help them create a project for the contest.

GERMANY

Over the last years, Germany has experienced high-impact terrorist and extremist incidents, including the 2016 Berlin truck attack, the 2016 Munich shooting, and the 2019 Halle synagogue shooting. According to the Ministry of the Interior and Community, Islamist-motivated international terrorism, together with the threat of right-wing extremism, still remain the greatest threats to German national security. At the federal level, the importance placed on victims of terrorist and extremist attacks is demonstrated by the Federal Government Commissioner for Persons Affected by Terrorist and Extremist Attacks Committed on National Territory. The associative landscape mainly consists of wide-ranging victims associations, not specific to victims of terrorism, such as the Arbeitskreis der Opferhilfen in Deutschland e. V. and the Weisser Ring e. V..

POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES IN THE PRISON SYSTEM

In Germany, although there are no specific programs involving victims of terrorism in P/CVE activities within the penitentiary system, victims can use the Offender-Victim-Mediation (TOA - *Täter-Opfer-Ausgleich*) which is the predominant form of restorative justice. In the context of the present study, no case linked to terrorism has been identified. The TOA is included in Section 46a of the Criminal Code and

Section 10 subsection 7 of the Juvenile Criminal Court Act. The TOA requires that the offender has tried to reconcile with the victim and has either fully repaired or made substantial efforts towards reparation, demonstrating sincere commitment to addressing the harm caused. The legal consequences include the mitigation of the sentence or, for minor sentences, waiver of the punishment. The Service office for Offender-Victim reconciliation and conflict resolution is a facility of the DBH-Fachverband e.V. The DBH-Fachverband e.V is a non-profit association specialising in social work, criminal law, and criminal policy.

The TOA takes place outside the judicial procedure, allowing the offender and the victim to communicate. It aims at reconciliation, reparation (material or immaterial), and future-oriented conflict management.

The TOA is a possibility offered to victims of any crime at any phase of the investigation or criminal proceedings and depends largely on the willingness of those involved. There are no specific regulations about who can carry out the TOA. Generally, social educators (mediators) trained in dealing with conflicts, as well as lawyers, are the ones involved in the process. The TOA can also be carried out in person or in writing. For example, if the victim does not wish to have personal contact with the perpetrator.

Contact with the specialist departments carrying out the TOA is usually established by the public prosecutor's office or by the court, but the initiative can also originate from the accused themselves, their defence lawyer, the injured party or their representative.

POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Despite numerous P/CVE projects at federal and regional levels, no specific programme aimed at engaging victims in P/CVE activities within the educational system has been found. The Federal Government Strategy to Prevent Extremism and Promote Democracy⁴⁴ (*Strategie der Bundesregierung zur Extremismoprävention und Demokratieförderung*)⁴⁵ refers to policies for radicalisation within the educational system, however, there is no provision for victims' inclusion in these programmes. The Federal Agency for Civic Education (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung/bpb) - a federal public authority providing citizenship education and information on political issues - has produced podcasts and videos on terrorism and right-wing extremism involving some of these victims.⁴⁶ The "InfoPool Right-Wing Extremism",⁴⁷ an online portal with information on right-wing extremism and its prevention provides resources aimed at various target groups, including teachers and school management.⁴⁸

NGOs work on projects in P/CVE independently of the State. The Bildungsinitiative Ferhat Unvar, an educational initiative launched by Serpil Temiz Unvar (mother of Ferhat Unvar who was a victim of the 2020 Hanau attack), organises the youth café which gathers teenagers and young adults to exchange ideas and discuss problems against racism.

⁴⁴ [Federal Government Strategy to Prevent Extremism and Promote Democracy](#)

⁴⁵ [Strategie der Bundesregierung zur Extremismoprävention und Demokratieförderung](#)

⁴⁶ [Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung - Suche "Terrorismus"](#)

⁴⁷ [Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung - Rechts Extremismus](#)

⁴⁸ [Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung - Schule](#)

The Bundesverband Mobile Beratung is an umbrella organisation of 50 mobile counselling teams in Germany that aids everyone - individuals, organisations, schools, companies, politicians or civil society - confronted with right-wing extremism, racism, anti-Semitism, conspiracy theories and right-wing populism. It is funded by the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth within its programme "Live Democracy!" and from the German Federal Government Commissioner for Migration, Refugees and Integration. The BMB organises training and conferences as well as publishes policy papers in the field of right-wing extremism.

SPAIN

Spain has a long history of terrorism with the involvement of a multitude of individuals and organisations. Throughout history, terrorist organisations from different ideologies have operated in the country: radical nationalists (mainly ETA), extreme left (GRAPO), extreme right (BVE, *Batallón Vasco Español*, Triple A, *Alianza Apostólica Anticomunista*, or GAE, *Grupos Armados Españoles*), and jihadist groups (jihadist cells linked to Al Qaeda, ISIS).

Among these organisations, ETA having announced its dissolution in 2008, was responsible for the death of more than 800 people between 1968 and 2010. On March 11, 2004, Jihadist cells linked to Al Qaeda caused the greatest terrorist attack in Spanish history in Madrid, which resulted in 193 fatalities and hundreds of injuries. More recently, Spain experienced the attacks in Barcelona and Cambrils, on August 17, 2017, with 16 people dead and more than a hundred injured.

The General Directorate of Support for Victims of Terrorism is responsible for providing care and support to victims of terrorism. At a regional level, the Municipality of Madrid has established a Government Commissioner for Attention to Victims of Terrorism. Similarly, the Community of Castilla y León has created the Commissioner for Victims of Terrorism.

Spain has many associations of victims of terrorism, some dating back more than 40 years: the Asociación de Víctimas del Terrorismo (AVT) was founded in 1981 and has a membership exceeding 6000 and the Colectivo de Víctimas del Terrorismo (COVITE) created in 1988 in the Basque country.

POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES IN THE PRISON SYSTEM

Involvement of victims in P/CVE activities within Spanish prisons has taken place within the broader context of restorative justice. According to Article 15 of Law 4/2015, of April 27, on the Statute of the Victim of Crime,⁴⁹ victims may access restorative justice services with the aim of obtaining adequate material and moral reparation for the damages resulting from the crime.

For this to occur, several requirements must be met:

1. The offender must have recognised the essential facts related to their responsibility.

⁴⁹ [Ley 4/2015, de 27 de abril, del Estatuto de la víctima del delito](#)

2. Both victims and offenders must give their consent after receiving the necessary information.
3. The mediation procedure must not pose a risk to the safety of the victim, nor cause re-victimisation.
4. It must not be prohibited by law for the crime concerned.

The second paragraph of the article stipulates that confidential discussions may not be disseminated without the consent of both parties.

- Reparative meetings involving members of the ETA

An example of restorative justice in Spain occurred at the Nanclares penitentiary facility in 2011 and 2012. This initiative involved members of the ETA and facilitated contact between victims and perpetrators.⁵⁰ The meetings took place outside the penitentiary, focusing on the personal evolution of the perpetrators. Initially, there was no possibility to grant penitentiary benefits or improvements in the conditions of execution of the sentence for the involved perpetrators. However, at a later stage, the participation of prisoners was positively assessed influencing their progression in grade and the application of other penitentiary measures.⁵¹ In total thirteen meetings were held between perpetrators and victims.⁵² 12 were in person and one included exchanges of written correspondence. The experience was evaluated very positively from the participants.⁵³ However, the project came to a sudden halt due to budget cuts and a change in penitentiary policy following the change of Government.⁵⁴ Three "reparative meetings", promoted by the then Ministry of the Interior, were organised in 2012 but under a different design (the initiative started from the victims without the involvement of a professional facilitator).⁵⁵ In 2021, this programme restarted under the broader project of restorative justice for all types of prisoners.⁵⁶

At a regional level, the Basque Strategy for Restorative Justice 2022-2025⁵⁷ includes the possibility for "restorative meetings" between perpetrators of terrorist crimes and victims. Action A22 of the current Coexistence, Human Rights and Diversity Plan - Udaberri 2024⁵⁸ considers "Accompany the implementation of the new Basque penitentiary model, especially in its restorative dimension". In 2021, the Basque Council for Participation of Victims of Terrorism approved a document on the steps to be taken regarding recognition and reparation of victims of terrorism.⁵⁹ Among the proposals included in the document, the importance of restorative justice is highlighted. In particular, the document suggests creating spaces to facilitate encounters for prisoners who wish to meet with their victims.⁶⁰ Victims have

⁵⁰ See Marcos Madruga F. (2022) and Pascual Rodríguez P.(2013) and Film "Maixabel".

⁵¹ Maculan E. (2021)

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Maculan E. (2021) citing Pascual Rodríguez P.(2013) and M. Lasa Iturrioz, «Encuentros restaurativos: una experiencia positiva», en A. Rivera y E. Mateo (eds.), Víctimas y política penitenciaria, 191-198; See also [Víctimas y expresos de ETA ven positivos sus encuentros restaurativos diez años después](#)

⁵⁴ Maculan E. (2021)

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ [20 presos de ETA reactivan los encuentros con víctimas paralizados hace una década | España | EL PAÍS \(elpais.com\)](#)

⁵⁷ [Estrategia Vasca de Justicia Restaurativa 2022-2025](#)

⁵⁸ [Udaberri 2024 Plan de Convivencia, Derechos Humanos y Diversidad](#)

⁵⁹ Consejo Vasco de Participación de las Víctimas del Terrorismo (2020) [Documento-Consensuado-cas..pdf \(euskadi.eus\)](#)

⁶⁰ Ibid. p. 8

the autonomy and freedom to decide whether to participate in these meetings.⁶¹ Additionally, it ensures that such gatherings do not lead to further harm for the victims.

- Victim-offender encounter following 11-M in Madrid⁶²

On 1 February 2013, one of the convicted perpetrators of the 11-M attacks, sentenced to prison for facilitating the 11-M attacks by selling 200 kilograms of explosives to the terrorists, met with Jesús Ramírez, one of the victims and former president of the “11-M Afectados por el Terrorismo” association. The encounter took place on the initiative of the perpetrator who changed his attitude and admitted his responsibility in the 11-M attacks.⁶³ His change in attitude was triggered by a medical operation his mother had to undergo.⁶⁴ The restorative encounter was held in the El Dueso prison in Santoña (Cantabria) in cooperation with the prison director and lasted 3 hours. It was facilitated by restorative justice facilitators (Julián Carlos Ríos Martín and Esther Pascual) who prepared the face-to-face meeting for 4 months. Jesús Ramírez was informed about the possibility of meeting the perpetrator by phone and later, in October 2012, a preparatory meeting took place at a cafeteria where he shared his story with the facilitators. The facilitators and Jesús Ramírez all travelled together by car to El Dueso prison.

The facilitators set ground rules for the encounter (honesty, truth and sincerity), asked the perpetrator to share his motivation to meet Jesús Ramírez and gave him the possibility to explain his side of the story, and to provide both his thoughts and apologies. Jesús Ramírez had also the opportunity to share his experience before, during and after the attacks. The facilitators also asked a number of specific questions whilst keeping the dialogue alive and relevant.

POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

- “Memory and Prevention of Terrorism” and “Testimonies of victims of terrorism in the classrooms”

“Memory and Prevention of Terrorism”⁶⁵ is a joint educational project of the Ministries of the Interior and of Education and Vocational Training, the Centre for the Memory of Victims of Terrorism, and the Victims of Terrorism Foundation. The project consists of seven didactic units aimed at students and teachers of Compulsory Secondary Education and Baccalaureate. These didactic units cover the history of terrorism, the promotion of empathy for the victims of terrorism, and the rejection of terrorist violence. The topic of terrorism is addressed across and inside the subjects of Geography and History, History of the Contemporary World, Philosophy, Psychology and Ethical Values. These didactic units include activities

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² The encounter is describe in detail in Biffi E. and RAN (2021)

⁶³ José María Olmo, “La nueva vida de Trashorras: ha conseguido el segundo grado y se confiesa con víctimas”, *El Confidencial*, 9 February 2014.

⁶⁴ Biffi E. and RAN (2021)

⁶⁵ Ministry of Interior, [Didactic Units of the Educational Project “Memory and Prevention of Terrorism”](#)

to be carried out by students, as well as additional reference material. The Didactic Units are available in Spanish, Basque, Catalan, Galician, and English.⁶⁶

A second part of this project consists of the “Testimonies of victims of terrorism in the classrooms”⁶⁷ initiative. As part of this project, terrorism victims visit educational centres and give direct testimonies in the classrooms. The goals behind bringing victims’ direct terrorism testimonies into classrooms are twofold:

1. on the one hand, to raise awareness of the terrorism’s consequences on victims’ lives of people and on the society as a whole;
2. on the other hand, promote the rejection of violence and prevent radicalisation.⁶⁸

The project began in 2017 with more than 14,000 students participating in 225 schools.⁶⁹

- Restorative walks with youngsters (Basque Country)⁷⁰

A university project called “Walking Restoratively” (2018-2019) launched by Gemma Varona, lecturer in victimology at the University of the Basque Country, consisted in “restorative walks” aiming to bring together victims of terrorism and young university students. These walks around places significant to victims, such as where their loved ones died or locations dear to them, provided young people with the opportunity to discuss and reflect on the concepts of violence, war, terrorism, reconciliation, and the experiences of those affected. Conducted in public spaces, these walks allowed victims to participate and share their experiences as witnesses to these events, with the goal of prevention. A facilitator is present during these walks, and an interview is organised prior to the meeting.⁷¹ In some cases, a representative of the institution responsible for secondary victimisation of the victim is also present.⁷²

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ RAN Collection practice template, [Testimonies of victims of terrorism in the classrooms](#)

⁶⁸ [Testimonios de víctimas del terrorismo en las aulas](#)

⁶⁹ [Testimonios de víctimas del terrorismo en las aulas](#)

⁷⁰ RAN RVT and RAN EXIT meeting, Restorative Justice (3-4 December 2019): [The role of restorative justice in preventing and responding to violent extremism; Walking Restoratively: Gema Varona’s Insight into Restorative Justice in the Basque Country](#)

⁷¹ [Walking Restoratively: Gema Varona’s Insight into Restorative Justice in the Basque Country](#)

⁷² Ibid.

BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF POLICIES FOR THE INVOLVEMENT OF VICTIMS IN P/CVE

This section builds both on the case studies presented previously and broader studies.

BENEFITS OF VICTIMS' INVOLVEMENT

Engaging victims in P/CVE activities presents a series of benefits for the involved actors (perpetrators and victims) as well as for society.

FOR THE VICTIMS

For some victims, participating in P/CVE activities contribute to their healing process as they can find the answers they have been searching for or gain a sense of purpose for the future. These programmes often allow victims to have an active role and to use their experiences to protect potential future victims. This contrasts with the passivity⁷³ linked to the nature of victimhood: an individual does not choose to become a victim, but a victim can choose to engage in P/CVE programmes.

Victims' involvement in P/CVE activities can also result in finding the responses they have been searching for by talking directly to the perpetrator. Victims hope to better understand the motivations of the criminals who affected them.

Finally, their involvement can help fulfil the duty they might feel to prevent the violence they experienced from being inflicted on future generations. Indeed, intervening in classrooms and illustrating through their testimonies the extent to which violence is a dead end can reduce the likelihood of it happening again.

FOR THE PERPETRATORS

Regarding the perpetrators, meetings with victims in the context of restorative justice take place on a voluntary basis. Perpetrators willing to participate in such programmes usually must first show signs of disengagement and be ready to accept and understand the consequences of their acts. There is therefore a shift from a form of denial to acceptance.

Perpetrators can expect obvious benefits from entering such programmes, particularly as a way to prove some form of disengagement, potentially reducing their time in prison under standard sentence reduction schemes. The justice system typically limits direct interaction between opposing parties, often substituting lawyers for direct dialogue. Meetings in prison provide criminals with an opportunity to understand the nature of the crime they committed and why they were convicted.

Perpetrators find in restorative justice a way to meet their needs by making direct amends to victims, thus creating a path back into society⁷⁴.

⁷³ Dénouveau A. & Garapon A. (2019)

⁷⁴ [Concept, values and origin of restorative justice](#)

FOR SOCIETY

A crime results in victims, whose suffering should be alleviated, and perpetrators who will have to be reintegrated in society as citizens once their sentences are completed. Both parties must overcome numerous, and sometimes different, challenges such as fear, judgement, and the unknown.

Meetings between victims and criminals facilitate progress towards a form of pacification of social relations for all stakeholders. Such programmes effectively recreate civility for all directly aggrieved parties and, therefore, for society as well⁷⁵. The classic legal process replaces the desire for revenge with the application of the law. These meetings go a step further by focusing on rebuilding a way of living together between people linked by a crime.

LIMITATIONS, CHALLENGES, AND RISKS

P/CVE initiatives involving victims present several challenges, limitations, and risks which should be considered when designing these policies.

First, victims have a right to receive comprehensible information (Art. 3 Victims' Rights Directive) about all the possible ways to address their harm, including restorative justice initiatives. However, finding this information online is challenging. Restorative justice provisions in the domestic legislation or the existence of policies in education require knowledge of the law and the institutions. In the cases studied, victims who wish to participate in such initiatives should be involved with victims' groups or be informed by NGOs or their lawyer. It is advisable that States provide easily accessible information by dedicated website pages and databases concerning the different available possibilities for them to get involved in P/CVE activities.

Secondly, information on the implementation of these policies and their evaluation is scarce. For instance, the selection of victims to participate in the education policies, their preparation for the meetings with perpetrators or students, and their role in designing these policies is not clear. States should make such information public and include monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in these policies .

Thirdly, despite the important contribution of victims, their mental and psychological state should be considered, and the risks and challenges should be explained to them. Victims of terrorism have undergone intense psychological and emotional harm, and some might not have fully recovered.⁷⁶ Engaging in P/CVE policies requires having processed this harm and being aware of potential discomfort that might be experienced. For instance, regarding their involvement in educational activities, victims should be aware that their experience will be used to discuss broader questions and challenge dialogue about human rights, the rule of law, democracy, etc., and therefore differs from a commemoration activity.⁷⁷ Additionally, their experience might be questioned by the students or leave them indifferent. Also, security risks,⁷⁸ such as receiving threats, can result from their involvement in P/CVE activities. Victims participating in such efforts should be aware of these challenges.

Furthermore, policies involving victims should be taken in consultation with them, even if their involvement is often combined with other activities. However, the lack of professional expertise and their personal involvement in the event of violence could impact their feedback. Moreover, victims actively engaged in several P/CVE

⁷⁵ Zehr. H (2008)

⁷⁶ See Pemberton A. (2010)

⁷⁷ [RAN \(2018\): Enhancing the resilience of victims after terrorism attacks](#), p. 18.

⁷⁸ Ihler B. & RAN (2023): [Inspiring Practices for the Meaningful Inclusion of Victims/Survivors of Terrorism in P/CVE Work](#) p. 7.

activities might face the risk of “professionalisation” which contrasts with the healing perspective that participation in such activities can offer them. These risks should be considered by officials.

The various P/CVE programs involving victims rely on NGOs and victims' associations. At the same time, these victims are healing from trauma, and while restorative meetings in prison can support psychological healing if done at the right time, they can also be a trigger for post-traumatic stress disorder. This raises two different needs: victims need appropriate training and assessment before participating in restorative meetings with prisoners or intervening in classrooms. This investment from them can be expected only if the continuity of these activities over time is ensured. This requires long-term funding for the implementation of the policies in education and in prison. The establishment of the Musée-Memorial in France presents the element of continuity where spaces for testimonies, reflection, and learning will be available for the victims and the broader public.⁷⁹

Finally, if the actors involved cannot fully comprehend beforehand the intentions of the other party, the meetings can be misleading. Clarifying every party's expectation is a lengthy and complex process that requires mediators, time, and continuous communication. Common questions include whether perpetrators expect to hear descriptions of the grief they caused or to answer questions about their motivations, and whether victims expect to receive answers or simply want to share their stories. One of the primary goals of preparation meetings with mediators is to align these expectations.

Most evaluations of these interventions are conducted through self-assessments by members of the participating associations, typically documented in their annual reports. These evaluations are subject to two significant biases: first, participants are often early advocates of the methods employed and thus exhibit a strong positive bias. Second, unsuccessful experimental programmes frequently go unreported, leading to a survivorship bias that further skews results positively in favour of the interventions. Additionally, large-scale programmes subject to public scrutiny have only recently been initiated, and comprehensive audits remain scarce, with notable exceptions in France and Spain.

France, with its programmes administered by the penitentiary administration, has been conducting these initiatives for several years, and some preliminary results have been published.⁸⁰ A study led by the *Université de Droit de Bordeaux* examined the entire duration of meetings set up in 2019 and 2020, with further evaluations conducted 6 months and 1 year after the meetings concluded. The study yielded the following results: participants reported high levels of satisfaction and felt reintegrated into the community, expressing more optimistic future projections. Victims appreciated being heard and understood, while perpetrators exhibited greater awareness of the consequences of their actions.

In addition to the French case study, the Spanish initiative at the Nanclares penitentiary facility, which facilitates contact between victims and perpetrators, has received very positive evaluations from the participating actors.⁸¹

SAFEGUARDS FOR A BETTER IMPLEMENTATION

There is a risk that victims participating in prison programmes may be exploited by perpetrators seeking personal benefits, such as exit from isolation or sentence reduction. However, this risk can be effectively mitigated by implementing mechanisms that involve experienced mediators at every stage of the process, from preparation

⁷⁹ [Musée Mémorial du Terrorisme - Mission](#)

⁸⁰ [SNEPAP-FSU \(2023\)](#) p. 40

⁸¹ Maculan E. (2021) citing Pascual Rodríguez P.(2013) and M. Lasa Iturrioz, «Encuentros restaurativos: una experiencia positiva», en A. Rivera y E. Mateo (eds.), *Víctimas y política penitenciaria*, 191-198; See also [Víctimas y expresos de ETA ven positivos sus encuentros restaurativos diez años después](#)

to post-meeting debriefings. The extensive experience gained from numerous restorative justice programmes around the world has significantly reduced this risk.

There is also a risk for victims participating in any kind of P/CVE programs may become professional victims, whose sense of purpose and livelihood are tied to their involvement in such programs. This would have the undesired effect of entrenching their victimhood rather than alleviating it. This significant risk can be mitigated through several layers of control: State oversight of victim or victim assistance associations involved in the programmes, and internal control processes within these associations managed by non-victims. This specific risk under the broader category of permanent re-victimisation, which is inherent in any activity where victims are required to repeatedly recount their experiences.

If P/CVE programs involving victims are to be developed on a larger scale, requiring more resources, it is essential to establish a standard framework of control procedures by external parties, similar to the approach taken by the *Université de Bordeaux*. Such a framework will prevent victims from having to self-assess and enable professionals to engage confidently, facilitating their interaction with varied audiences. The control framework should include the following elements:

- Interviews of all participants at every stage of the programme
- Satisfaction surveys for all participants at every stage of the programme
- Reconviction data
- Financial data to evaluate the cost of the programme.

The key ideas are to create KPIs to evaluate the scheme and enable comparisons with other schemes, including non-restorative ones.

CONCLUSION

Despite the violence and trauma experienced, the role of victims in P/CVE activities remains relatively limited in scope. This is not surprising, as interest in victims of terrorism is a recent development, and most countries lack a specific legal framework on the subject. Regarding policies in prisons and education in the countries studied in this paper, some common points can be noted. Victims of terrorism are included in policies within the context of restorative justice. These legal provisions, which facilitate meetings between victims and perpetrators, are specific to terrorism or extremism but are available to all victims of crimes. In terms of education, welcoming victims in classrooms and organising meetings with high school students have been implemented in Spain, France, and Belgium. No such initiatives have been observed in Germany.

In the implementation of these policies, NGOs play an active role as a trusted and necessary intermediary between victims and the State. A common characteristic is that all these practices remain very small in scale and rely primarily on NGOs and individuals. This situation raises several questions: the maturity of the safeguards in place to protect all participants in these meetings, the capacity of the state to assess the efficiency of its policies, and the impact these policies have on society. Cross-border evaluations of standard policies could be an effective method to reach a significant threshold.

As this paper shows, beyond shared generic concepts, policies and practices vary greatly among the five EU Member States studied. In terms of education, including terrorism in the curriculum appears to be a good starting point for establishing programmes involving victims. In terms of meetings in prison, while the principles of restorative justice are implemented in all five countries, key questions such as the validation process (whether *de jure* or not) and the inclusion of such meetings in the evaluation of the prisoner differ.

Recent political declarations, such as the Venice Declaration on the Role of Restorative Justice in Criminal Matters (December 2021), suggest that some form of convergence will occur across European countries in the coming years. The declaration specifically states that “its further development and efficient use can be seen both as an opportunity and a positive challenge for ameliorating the European criminal justice systems”.

However, the lack of rigorous external evaluations of existing programmes currently hinders convergence based on hard evidence. Adopting a systematic cross-border method of evaluation for all P/CVE programmes involving victims will be crucial for the proper development of such programmes.

Including victims in P/CVE programs is a step towards the appeasement of all parties. However, much work remains to be done to fully illuminate this path.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Arthur Dénouveau is a survivor of the attack committed at the Bataclan on November 13, 2015, he chairs the victims' association *Life for Paris*. He wrote essays for Gallimard, L'Aube and La Martinière dealing in particular with the possibility for victims to escape this status. Author of numerous columns, he took a position in 2022 for the repatriation of French children of jihadists detained in Syria and Iraq. More recently, he asked the French State to organize an anti-terrorism Grenelle to help build a political response to jihadism, particularly through prevention and counter-propaganda actions. He is a graduate of the Ecole Polytechnique.

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