



Project „ARVID – Advancing Access to Rights under Victims' Directive for Persons with Disabilities“ is implemented by Croatian Law Centre in partnership with Ministry of Justice and Public Administration (HR), Ombudsman for Persons with Disabilities (HR), Victim and Witness Support Association (HR), Peace Institute (SI) and Altra Association (SI).

ARVID – FINAL CONFERENCE CONCLUDING REMARKS

AWARENESS RAISING

For persons with disability (PwDs) to be aware of rights they have as victims of criminal offences or misdemeanours, it is of crucial importance for them to receive information on rights in a format adapted to the type of disability: 1) throughout all stages of proceedings - from the police, the state attorneys, the courts, but also 2) from associations of PwDs even before reporting the criminal offence/misdemeanour. In that sense, the associations of PwDs should build the capacity to provide the basic information on victim's rights.

INCLUDING PwDs INTO EXISTING SYSTEM OF VICTIM SUPPORT → EMPOWERING PwDs TO REPORT AND TO USE RIGHTS

PwDs, who are victims of criminal and misdemeanour offences, should be included in the existing system of assistance and support to victims. In order to achieve that, it is necessary to involve associations of PwDs, since their contribution would be valuable especially in detecting particular type of disability and in ensuring appropriate – intelligible and effective communication adapted to a specific type of disability.

INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT OF VICTIMS

Cooperation of all bodies involved in the individual assessment with associations of PwDs should be strongly encouraged. The individual



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assessment of a victim is the most suitable tool for establishing the existence and type of disability and the victim's needs for special protection and assistance, but it is also a starting point in adapting proceedings to the concrete victim. In that regard, any help provided by the associations of PwDs is valuable. The individual assessment should be carried out as early as possible in order for the victim PwD to be able to use all rights guaranteed by the law and existing victim support services.

EDUCATION

It is necessary to organize systematic education of lawyers (especially those who represent victims in criminal procedures), police officers and judicial officials on how to approach victims who are PwDs and how to adapt proceedings to their needs. It is strongly recommendable to consider the possibility of organising joint programmes for police and judicial officers. Institutions who provide education for these groups of professionals will consider the extent to which the Project results could be integrated in the educational programmes.