

EStAR Network of Experts

Terms of Reference

Enhancing Stakeholder Awareness and Resources for Hate Crime Victim Support (EStAR) is a two-year project (1.2020-12.2021), implemented by the OSCE/ODIHR and VBRG - Association of Counseling Centers for Victims of Right-wing, Racist and Anti-Semitic Violence in Germany across 41 OSCE participating States.¹ The project will have a victim-centered approach, produce tools for improving protection and services for hate crimes victims and build capacity of service providers.

Expert Network Aims

As one of its main pillars, the project is setting up the first dedicated Network of Experts on hate crime victim support, comprising experts from Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and governments. The network is both an instrument and a final result of the Project. Its purpose is three-fold:

- to gather, exchange and aggregate knowledge, expertise and practices on specific aspects of hate crime victim support, in order to inform the development of the EStAR products and tools, thereby ensuring that the products and tools developed by EStAR are both state-of-the-art and reflect different national realities across the project region;
- to ensure that relevant national approaches are reflected in the tools and guidance produced by the project; and
- to help promote the EU/OSCE standards on hate crime victim support, and channel the relevant EStAR findings and products back to national contexts, for awareness and implementation.

Expert Network Composition and membership

Civil society experts, one from each project country (CSO members), from either (i) a CSO providing support to victims of hate crime in that country, (ii) a CSO involved in monitoring hate crimes, or (iii) a CSO advocating on behalf of hate crime victims.

41 government² experts, one representing each project State (Government members), from among either (i) criminal justice system practitioners experienced in working on hate crimes, or (ii) victim support system experts (preferably but not necessarily with hate crime specialization).

The CSO members will be selected by VBRG based on the mapping of victim support landscape across the EU and consultation with civil society. The criteria for expert selection, which VBRG will consider for CSO members, include:

- Experience providing services to hate crime victims
- Experience in monitoring, recording and reporting hate crimes
- Experience conducting advocacy on hate crime victims needs and demands.

The Government members will be identified by ODIHR based on prior collaboration, known expertise or membership in other hate crime or victim support relevant expert groups or consultative processes. The criteria for expert selection, which ODIHR will consider for Government members, include:

- Experience with hate crimes as police officer, prosecutor, coordinator, national equality body member/staff; or
- Experience with the functioning of national victim support system or providing support specifically to victims of hate crime.

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Where possible, a substitute member of the Expert Network will also be identified, who will however only participate in the Network if the primary member becomes unavailable.

Identified experts will be approached and offered membership in the Expert Network by ODIHR and VBRG. We will ask membership candidates to confirm:

- Availability to participate in two Expert Network conferences (July 2020 and 2021) and other EStAR activities;
- Availability to actively participate in Network's work in between these meetings by providing expert input;
- For Government members that their involvement has been validated by the body they represent.

Modalities of Expert Network work

ODIHR and VBRG will lead and coordinate the work of the Expert Network, and will ensure that its results are incorporated into the development of the tangible products of the project.

An online platform will be created enabling secure and effective involvement of Experts in the project's work in-between scheduled meetings. The platform will also serve as a forum for experts both from the CSO and governmental agencies to exchange information, raise challenges, look for solutions and engage in a dialog with each other. Planned events and meetings will be used to exchange information, gather further expert input and consult Expert Network members on ongoing EStAR activities. Costs associated with Experts' participation in planned events will be borne by the EStAR project.

The Expert Network members will be continuously informed by ODIHR and VBRG about the ongoing work on various products. Experts will be requested to provide relevant input and expertise, which will then be included in the Expert Network products.

ODIHR and VBRG will maintain a database of Expert Network members and will seek to keep all the slots filled at all times. If an Expert Network member becomes unavailable, they are expected to notify ODIHR and VBRG and a replacement member will be sought, based on the criteria listed above. Where a substitute network member has been identified, they will be upgraded to a full Network membership.

While the level of participation and engagement by individual members is left to their judgement, more active members may be prioritized for participation in some EStAR activities.

Welcome to EStAR Network of Experts!

[1] 27 EU Member States, Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and the United Kingdom.

[2] The notion of "government" includes entities with independent status (such as the equality bodies), which in some countries are a part of a government-run victim support scheme.