



VIKTIMOLOŠKO DRUŠTVO SRBIJE

Victimology Society of Serbia

PRESS RELEASE ON THE OCCASION OF FEBRUARY 22 – EUROPEAN VICTIMS' DAY

The organization **Victim Support Europe** was established in 1991, and on the proposal of representatives from Sweden, February 22 was declared **European Victims' Day** with the aim of raising public awareness about the consequences suffered by victims of crime and encouraging society to more effectively and fully protect victims' rights. Since then, this day has been marked across Europe with various events. **Victimology Society of Serbia (VDS)** began observing this day in 2005.

On the occasion of this year's European Victims' Day, the Victimology Society of Serbia (VDS) wishes to draw public attention to the importance of recognizing victims' rights and needs, as well as the importance of effective support and protection. **VDS calls on all relevant institutions in Serbia to take measures within their competencies to ensure that victims have easier access to existing state and non-governmental organizations providing help and support.** As part of its contribution to achieving this goal, the Victimology Society of Serbia seeks to inform the public about available services for victim support and, in doing so, to alleviate the consequences for those who have experienced traumatic and unexpected events. Information on state and non-governmental organizations providing support to victims is available via the [link](#).

We also remind the public that VDS operates a Victim Support Service – **VDS Info and Victim Support**, which is available to all victims of crime. Since its establishment, the service has had over 10,000 contacts (both women and men) regarding various forms of crime: domestic violence, workplace bullying, stalking, property crimes, threats, and other forms of violence. Within the VDS Info and Victim Support Service, the program **“From Victim to Winner: Using Personal Capacities to Overcome Violence”** is implemented. The program is based on an approach that sees victims as active participants in the change process, rather than passive recipients of help.

On the occasion of this year's Victims' Day, **the Victimology Society of Serbia sends a message to all victims that they are not alone and are not to blame for what happened to them.** We emphasize the importance of reaching out to state and non-governmental organizations for help, support, and empowerment. **Timely information can be lifesaving!**

The **Victimology Society of Serbia (VDS)** is an independent, non-profit association of citizens, founded on November 12, 1997, with the aim of improving and protecting the rights and position of victims of crime, war, human rights violations, and other forms of suffering. More about **VDS** can be found at: www.vds.rs.

Ismeta Mujezinovića 21/6 · 11000 Beograd · Srbija

Tel: +381 11 22 88 040

Tel/fax: +381 65 548 64 21

E-mail: vdsrbija@gmail.com