

**ISO: FI**

**COUNTRY: Finland**

**MINISTRY:** Ministry of Justice

**OFFICE:**

**Victim Support Finland.** The main part of the assistance and support referred to in Article 24(3)(b) and (c) can be provided by Victim Support Finland <https://www.riku.fi/en/home/>.

**The State Treasury** provides assistance with claims regarding compensation for victims of terrorism. [http://www.statetresury.fi/en-US/Citizens\\_and\\_Communities/Compensation\\_and\\_benefits/Crime\\_damages](http://www.statetresury.fi/en-US/Citizens_and_Communities/Compensation_and_benefits/Crime_damages)

**NOTES:** The State Treasury page provides all information regarding compensation from state funds for personal injury and suffering and for material and financial loss due to a crime. It also provides with application forms for claims for compensation.

Victim Support Finland has 7 regional offices and 30 service points around the country

**PHONE:** **The State Treasury :** + 358 295 50 2736

**Victim Support Finland:** Helpline 116 006 / Legal advice 0800 161 177

IN the urgency a helpline may be opened, either by the authorities themselves or for example by the Finnish Red Cross, following an official decision to do so.

**MAIL:** The State Treasury: **crime.damages@statetresury.fi**

**ADDRESS:**

**WEB SITE:** [http://www.statetresury.fi/en-US/Citizens\\_and\\_Communities/Compensation\\_and\\_benefits/Crime\\_damages](http://www.statetresury.fi/en-US/Citizens_and_Communities/Compensation_and_benefits/Crime_damages)

Name of the law:

link to the law

Specific Law:

## FOLLOW UP on the transposition of Directive on Combatting Terrorism from Finland

This information provided by the Ministry of Justice , Department of Criminal Policy of Finland to questionnaire prepared by EPAVT to track the Directive on Combatting Terrorism 2017/541 of 15th March, articles 24/25/26, that must be transposed to national laws before September 2018.

### 1. The Name of the Office that in your country will be responsible to provide support services for victims of terrorism.

In Finland, the support services addressing the specific needs of victims of terrorism, as referred to in Article 24(2) of the Directive Combating Terrorism 2017/541/EU (Directive (EU) 2017/541 of the European Parliament and of the Council on combating terrorism and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/475/JHA and amending Council Decision 2005/671/JHA), will be provided by **Victim Support Finland**.

The main part of the assistance and support referred to in Article 24(3)(b) and (c) can be provided by Victim Support Finland within the framework of the general victim support services that the organisation also otherwise and already now provides.

This is supported by Victim Support Finland's activities in Victim Support Europe (VSE), the European umbrella organisation for victim support organisations. When it comes to the emotional support referred to in point (a), the conversational support and counselling provided by Victim Support Finland cover this. Victim Support Finland does not provide services of a psychologist or any other trauma services but, instead, it refers clients to the necessary support services. Victim Support Finland has good connections to local crisis care centres through its extensive network of offices. All services provided by Victim Support Finland are confidential and free of charge, and it uses interpretation services when needed.

Victim Support Finland does not, for the time being, have any service models developed specifically for victims of terrorism, nor does it have an alarm system that would guarantee the provision of extended assistance on a very short notice. The preparation of service models for victims of terrorism is included in the operating plan of Victim Support Finland for 2018. The aim is to integrate these service models into the general victim support services already provided by the organisation. The preparedness of Victim Support Finland needs to be further improved in order to enable victims to access support services immediately after a possible terrorist attack. In the event of a terrorist attack, it is, in principle, possible for Victim Support Finland already at the moment to extend its telephone and chat services and provide special information required by victims of terrorism on its website within a reasonable time after the attack (the next weekday at the latest).

The emotional and psychological support referred to in paragraph 3(a), such as trauma support and counselling, means psychosocial support provided by the public social welfare and healthcare system. In Finland, the provision of psychosocial support in the event of major accidents is at the responsibility of the social welfare and healthcare system. This also applies to terrorist attacks. **Social emergency and crisis centres and emergency social services** participate in the reconciliation of psychosocial support for individuals and communities and provide urgent crisis and social work assistance in the form of psychosocial support and urgent social welfare services (for example accommodation, urgent social assistance and other necessary social welfare services). Furthermore, crisis assistance is also provided by municipal crisis groups, psychiatric nurses at health centres, and the crisis centres of the Finnish Association for Mental Health available in 22 different localities.

In the event of a major accident, the authorities assigned in contingency plans for psychosocial support shall organise the provision of psychosocial support together with the third sector and possibly religious communities in accordance with the regional contingency plans and the Health Care Act. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health may order the Social Emergency and Crisis Centre of Vantaa to support the director of local psychosocial support by providing expert assistance and resources. These activities may include, depending on the situation, establishment of a crisis centre and/or evacuation centre, establishment of a contact point for family members, communication with victims and their family members, organisation of crisis assistance, urgent social work, possible opening of a helpline either by local operators or the Finnish Red Cross, following of the social media coverage of the incident, and provision of information in social media. The role and activities to be undertaken by the psychologist emergency response team of the Finnish Red Cross is always decided on a case-by-case basis.

The authorities may decide that **a helpline** is to be opened by the authorities themselves or for example by the Finnish Red Cross. Trained volunteers from **the Finnish Red Cross** will be invited to manage the helpline. The Finnish Red Cross has concluded an agreement on preparedness matters with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, and under the agreement it has a coordinating role in the preparedness activities of organisations in the field of social welfare and health. The Finnish Red Cross has also established temporary **support centres** for the needs of local communities for example in the event of school shootings. These have been mainly organisation-based centres with the main emphasis on providing people with an opportunity to discuss the incident and to meet other people touched by it. The Finnish Red Cross also has an emergency response team consisting of psychologists, which can be resorted to in crisis situations to reinforce the psychosocial support provided by local authorities.

**The State Treasury** provides assistance with claims regarding compensation for victims of terrorism as referred to in point (c) and provides information about crime victims' right to receive compensation on its website and through its customer service. In Finland, the State Treasury acts as the assisting and deciding authority referred to in the Council Directive 2004/80/EC relating to compensation to crime victims, and it provides advice to authorities of other Member States of the European Union when they assist crime victims residing in their

states. The provisions governing the cooperation between the State Treasury and authorities of other Member States are laid down in the Act on the Compensation for Crime Damage (1204/2005) and in the Government Decree on Cooperation between the State Treasury and other Member States of the European Union in the Compensation for Crime Damage (1207/2005).

During the preparation of the implementation of the Directive in Finland, different needs for development have been brought up. These concern, for example, **the coordination of the victim support services** as part of the contingency planning taking place at different levels (national, regional and local), the need to involve Victim Support Finland in the cooperation on contingency planning, participation of organisations in preparedness exercises, transfer and availability of information between authorities in special situations equivalent to major accidents, and the **need to develop nationwide communication** in these situations. For example, websites and bulletins containing information on the victim support services could be created and further developed so that this information would be readily available in the event of a terrorist attack.

## 2. The telephone number that can be made public to provide with specific information for victims of terrorism.

- See point 1 above. A helpline may be opened, either by the authorities themselves or for example by the Finnish Red Cross, following an official decision to do so.

## 3. The Email that can be made public to provide with specific information for victims of terrorism.

- See point 1 above (possible needs for development).

## 4. What kind of information will this service provide? Will it work as a one stop office providing complete assistance and information?

- See point 1 above.

- Information regarding specific emotional and psychological support (YES/NO)
- Information regarding legal, practical or financial matters. (YES/NO)
- Assistance with claims regarding compensation for victims of terrorism. (YES/NO)
- How to become a party in criminal proceedings. (YES/NO)

**7. Will this office assist victims of terrorism in obtaining information from the country in which the terrorist attack took place if they are residents in your country and not in the Member State where the terrorist offence was committed?**

Victim Support Finland has direct contacts with the member organisations of Victim Support Europe operating in almost all EU countries. Information on victims' rights, support services and compensation systems is received through this network. Where necessary, a victim may also be referred directly to the support services provided by another Member State. The services provided by Victim Support Finland are available also to people residing in Finland who have become victims of a terrorist offence in another Member State. For this purpose, Victim Support Finland has transmitted information about its services to the Finnish diplomatic mission abroad via the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

In the capacity of the nationwide provider of psychosocial support services, the Social Emergency and Crisis Centre of Vantaa may provide acute assistance and after-care for people who reside in Finland and have become victims of a terrorist offence in another Member State. The assistance is organised in cooperation between the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Social Emergency and Crisis Centre of Vantaa, and the victim's municipality of residence.

Further information about the victim's right to compensation may be requested from the State Treasury in Finnish, Swedish and English. Also the State Treasury's website contains this information in Finnish, Swedish and English. Information concerning the Finnish system is also available on portals maintained by the Commission. The State Treasury acts as the assisting and deciding authority referred to in Directive 2004/80/EC and, in this capacity, it provides advice and assistance to both crime victims and authorities of other Member States.

When it comes to the practical activities, some needs for development may exist. For example, it is important to ensure that all necessary information is available in many different languages. There might be some room for improvement also in the communication activities and in the cooperation between the different actors. One of the questions that may require some thought is whether a specific guide or a website for victims is needed for situations where foreign nationals have become victims of a terrorist offence in Finland.

**8. In relation to the transposition of articles of Directive Combatting Terrorism, do you foresee a specific law for victims of terrorism or do you foresee a modification of an already existing law?**

Any legislative amendments are not expected.

9. Could you please tell us which law?

Any legislative amendments are not expected.

10. Will the treatment be identical for national victims and foreign victims?

Yes.