

Working groups on:

- hate crime reporting, recording and data collection
- hate crime victim support,
- hate crime training

KEY GUIDING PRINCIPLES ON COOPERATION BETWEEN LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

This document is not legally binding and is intended for guidance only. It can therefore provide neither legal advice on issues of national law nor an authoritative interpretation of EU law, which remains within the sole remit of the Court of Justice of the European Union.

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The European Commission’s Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers (DG JUST) would like to express its gratitude to the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) for its leadership, the coordination, and the extensive input in the development of these key guiding principles, drawing on their wide-ranging knowledge and expertise.

1. Purpose and background

The purpose of the key guiding principles is to provide guidance to national authorities and in particular law enforcement authorities on establishing and sustaining partnerships and mechanisms for structured cooperation with civil society organisations (CSOs) in the area of combating hate crime.

CSOs play an important role in safeguarding and promoting fundamental rights, social inclusion and equality across the European Union (EU). International norms and standards underpin the importance of the role of CSOs, recognise their contribution as a source of 'evidence-based policymaking' and emphasise the need to develop partnerships with CSOs in efforts to combat hate crime.¹ International treaty and expert bodies consistently recommend that cooperation between the police and affected individuals and groups should be strengthened,² and EU policy instruments set out concrete means for applying multi-stakeholder and participatory partnerships.³

The key guiding principles build on the existing guidance that the EU High Level Group on combating hate speech and hate crime⁴ has endorsed and describe the benefits of structured cooperation between CSOs and law enforcement authorities in further detail. The EU High Level Group developed the guiding principles with the key contribution and coordination by the FRA-led working group on hate crime reporting, recording and data collection, and the support as well as input from the other two working groups:

- on hate crime victims' support systems and services support coordinated by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR); and
- on hate crime training and capacity building for national law enforcement coordinated by the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL) and the European Commission.

The working groups are composed of representatives from the EU Member States, the European Commission, FRA, CEPOL, ODIHR, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), and CSOs.⁵

Note on terminology

¹ See Art. 11 (2) of the Treaty on European Union and Art. 15 (1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. See also Art. 25 of the [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights](#); [Guidelines for civil participation in political decision making](#), [Ensuring protection – European Union Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders](#) and [Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Decision No. 621. Tolerance and the fight against racism, xenophobia and discrimination](#). For more information on access to participation and decision making, see FRA (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights) (2021), [Protecting civic space in the EU](#), Chapter 5, Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union (Publications Office).

² See, for example, European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) (1996), [ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 1 on Combating Racism, Xenophobia, Antisemitism and Intolerance](#); ECRI (2018), [ECRI report on Spain](#); ECRI (2019), [ECRI report on Romania](#); ECRI (2020), [ECRI report on Austria](#); Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (2016), [Concluding observations on the fifteenth to seventeenth periodic reports of Portugal \(CERD/C/PRT/CO/15-17\)](#).

³ For example, the [EU Strategy on Victims' Rights 2020–2025](#) sets out "strengthening cooperation and coordination among all relevant actors" as one of its key priorities (pp. 15–16; 19–20). So does the [LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020–2025](#), which commits to "[foster] an enabling environment for civil society [and that] the Commission will maintain and encourage structured, open dialogue and consultation with civil society in law and policy-making". [A Union of equality: EU Anti-Racism Action Plan 2020–2025](#) pledges to create "a permanent framework for exchange [...] reaching out to and engaging more with civil society actors on the ground" (pp. 22–23); the [Council Recommendation on Roma equality, inclusion and participation \(2021/C 93/01\)](#) includes a number of concrete steps for developing "Partnerships and institutional capacity" with CSOs; and the [EU Strategy on Combating Antisemitism and Fostering Jewish Life \(2021–2030\)](#) recognises that "the reinforced involvement of [CSOs] and Jewish communities is key for the strategy to be successful".

⁴ The EU High Level Group on combating racism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance, set up in 2016, was renamed to a 'High Level Group on combating hate speech and hate crime' to reflect its current scope of action, i.e. tackling hate crime and hate speech manifesting in different forms, beyond racist and xenophobic motives as covered by the Framework Decision on combating racism and xenophobia.

⁵ For more information, see the [webpage](#) of the EU High Level Group and the [FRA website](#).

For the purposes of this document:

- CSOs are “voluntary self-governing bodies or organisations established to pursue the essentially non-profit-making objectives of their founders or members. [...] NGOs can be either informal bodies or organisations or ones which have legal personality”;^{*}
- structured cooperation is understood as taking place within a strategic framework that is appropriately resourced and supported by leadership, and that includes measurable immediate and longer-term goals.^{**}

^{*} Council of Europe, Committee of Ministers (2008), [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2007\)14 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the legal status of non-governmental organisations in Europe](#), 10 October 2007, paragraph I (1).

^{**} European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) (2018), [Hate crime recording and data collection practice across the EU](#), Luxembourg, Publications Office.

1.1. Why establish structured cooperation between law enforcement and civil society organisations?

CSOs play an important role in understanding and responding to hate crime. Many have knowledge and understanding of the needs of victims of hate crime, the local contexts and the challenges faced by individuals and groups at risk of hate crime victimisation. Partnerships between police and CSOs allow responses to be tailored to hate crime, can support operational police work and, above all, help build trust and confidence in responsible authorities.

Overall, active and meaningful participation of CSOs could inform and contribute to various state actions to combat hate crime, including those within the mandate of law enforcement authorities. Such actions include:

- reaching out to individuals and groups at risk of hate crime victimisation and raising awareness of their rights, including through schools and educational activities;
- encouraging reporting of hate crimes and empowering victims and witnesses to come forward;
- facilitating reporting by enabling third-party reporting;
- participating in and contributing to effective referral arrangements for victims;
- informing recording and data collection methodologies for example by providing insights into common and emerging bias indicators;
- increasing institutional capacities by carrying out joint training sessions and contributing to the development of practical guidance;
- assisting victims to report hate crimes and access specialist support, providing victims and witnesses with emotional support, practical help, information and accompanying victims to report as the “person of trust”.

Cooperation between law enforcement authorities and CSOs has progressed in recent years across the EU and continues to develop in response to local needs.⁶ However, practices differ significantly across and within Member States, and cooperation is often on an ad hoc and incident-specific basis, evidence shows.⁷ Broadening the scope and forms of collaboration and embedding commitments in institutional agreements help ensure continuity and sustainability of cooperation arrangements.

Partnership agreements between law enforcement authorities and CSOs commit them to action. Putting those commitments into practice helps states combat hate crime and deliver on their positive obligations to fully respect, protect and promote fundamental rights.

⁶ See, for example, ‘[Compendium of practices for combating hate crime](#)’; and Perry, J. (2019), ‘[Connecting on hate crime data in Europe](#)’, Brussels, CEJI.

⁷ FRA (2021), [Encouraging hate crime reporting – The role of law enforcement and other authorities](#), Luxembourg, Publications Office; and FRA (2018), [Hate crime recording and data collection practice across the EU](#), Luxembourg, Publications Office.

1.2. How to use the key guiding principles

The key guiding principles aim to inspire national authorities and to provide guidance on establishing and fostering structured cooperation with CSOs by:

- outlining key preconditions – **horizontal principles** – for effective cooperation between law enforcement authorities and CSOs (principles 1–5); and
- identifying key principles for partnerships with CSOs, which support:
 - encouraging hate crime **reporting** (principle 6);
 - improving hate crime **recording** and **data collection** (principles 7-8);
 - ensuring **specialist support** to hate crime victims (principles 9-11); and
 - developing hate crime **training** (principle 12).

The key principles on reporting, recording and data collection, victim support and training (principles 6-12) draw on the existing guidance that the high-level group adopted (see box), and further explore the benefits of structured cooperation between law enforcement authorities and CSOs in these areas.

Existing key guiding principles and relevant elements of cooperation between authorities and CSOs in combating hate crime

The EU High Level Group has endorsed non-binding guidance regarding increasing the capacity of relevant authorities to ensure the implementation of legislation related to hate crime and protection of victims of hate crime.*

The four sets of key guiding principles endorsed by the EU High Level Group between 2017 and 2021 acknowledge the important role of CSOs in combating hate crime and set out concrete means to encourage cooperation between CSOs and law enforcement authorities.

This set of principles builds on and complements the existing principles and further explores the benefits of structured cooperation with CSOs as means to encourage hate crime reporting and improve hate crime recording and data collection.

The [key guiding principles on encouraging reporting of hate crime \(2021\)](#) call for:

- setting up structures that help authorities exploit synergies with CSOs and grassroots organisations to encourage and facilitate reporting;
- ensuring regular dialogue and structured cooperation with organisations and groups that have trusted relationships with at-risk individuals;
- involving CSOs in the design, implementation and evaluation of the impact of actions to encourage reporting of hate crime.

The [key guiding principles on improving the recording of hate crime by law enforcement authorities \(2017\)](#) highlight the role of CSOs in the following:

- exchanging data and information about local patterns, perpetrators and victims of hate crime to improve community policing;
- exchanging expertise to develop, refine and revise bias indicators;
- cooperating in the development of instructions, guidance or training on recording hate crime.

The [key guiding principles on ensuring justice, protection and support for victims of hate crime and hate speech \(2017\)](#) recognise that:

- setting up frameworks of cooperation allows for a more systematic and relationship-building approach to cooperation;
- ensuring the allocation of adequate resources guarantees the sustainability of CSOs, including the establishment of partnerships, the conclusion of formal service agreements and the establishment of national funds.

The [key guiding principles on hate crime training for law enforcement and criminal justice authorities \(2017\)](#) acknowledge the key role of CSOs as both trainers and advisors, by:

- bringing the victim's experience and perspective and facilitating the involvement of victims or victim groups;
- offering specialist intelligence and knowledge about the specificities of bias indicators affecting particular groups and on local hate crime patterns and trends;
- building the skills of public authorities to effectively engage with individuals and groups affected by hate crime and improve their confidence.

* Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law (the Framework Decision on Racism and Xenophobia) and Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA (the Victims' Rights Directive).

Respecting fundamental rights is a responsibility that is shared across all levels of governments and all public authorities. So is combating hate crime. These responsibilities call for enhanced efforts not only in setting up the means for cooperation with CSOs, but also within public bodies – horizontally between sectors and vertically between levels of national governance structures.

These key guiding principles aim to support national and local authorities alike. Indeed, some of these principles can be applied only at local level. It is in the hands of local police units, rather than central public authorities, to create and foster close cooperation with relevant local partners and generally with individuals and groups at risk of hate crime victimisation.⁸

In addition, the working group on hate crime recording, data collection and encouraging reporting has collated a [compendium of practices for combating hate crime](#), providing over 45 practical examples on how the key guiding principles that the EU High Level Group endorsed (see box above) are applied across the EU.

2. Key guiding principles on cooperation between law enforcement authorities and civil society organisations

Acknowledging that national frameworks and contexts differ, Member States are encouraged to apply the following key guiding principles when defining efforts to establish and foster structured cooperation with CSOs in the area of combating hate crime. The principles are complementary and interlinked.

Horizontal principles

1. Establish a culture of trust and transparency.
2. Respect CSOs' independence and ensure sustainability of cooperation.
3. Ensure broad representation and inclusive participation.
4. Formalise commitments through institutional agreements.
5. Engage CSOs throughout the design, implementation and evaluation of relevant measures to combat hate crime.

Encourage hate crime reporting

6. Enable third-party reporting through CSOs.

Improve recording and data collection

⁸ For more information, see FRA (2021), [Human rights cities in the EU – A framework for reinforcing rights locally](#), Luxembourg, Publications Office; FRA (2014), [Making rights real – A guide for local and regional authorities](#); European Forum for Urban Security (2018), [Preventing discriminatory violence: A new Efus working group open to all interested members](#); and OSCE ODIHR (2018), [Guide to addressing hate crime at the regional level](#).

7. Enhance comparability and compatibility of recording methodologies through systematic use of bias indicators.
8. Share data collection methodologies and set up a system for regular information exchange

Cooperate on supporting the victims of hate crime

9. Formally integrate CSOs providers of specialist support in the victim support system.
10. Jointly develop and implement methodology for individual needs assessment and set up communication channels.
11. Establish effective victim referral mechanism.

Enhance cooperation in hate crime training

12. Encourage exchange and collaboration in training activities aimed at constant improvement in the fight against hate crimes.

2.1. Horizontal principles – preconditions for establishing effective cooperation between law enforcement authorities and civil society organisations

Strengthening relations and setting up structured cooperation with CSOs can help law enforcement authorities to design and implement policies that reflect and respect the needs of the public, in general, and of groups at risk of hate crime victimisation, in particular. Ensuring meaningful participation allows CSOs' practical experience and expertise to inform and raise the legitimacy of proposed policies and operations. Finally, structured cooperation with CSOs promotes accountability for and effectiveness of the measures taken.

Identifying CSOs and investing in constructive relationships between law enforcement authorities and relevant CSOs could be an invaluable resource when investigating and preventing hate crime. This is of particular importance because hate crime has an impact not only on the individual victims, but also on the broader community, and on people's sense of security and confidence in the authorities.⁹ Equally important are standardised referrals between police, CSOs and victim support services, based on the results of an individual needs assessment of victims' protection and support needs. As the Victims' Rights Directive states, they are an indispensable element of states' efforts to deliver on victims' rights to access support.¹⁰

Overall, ensuring structured cooperation with organisations and groups that represent individuals at risk of hate crime victimisation enhances the effectiveness of the law enforcement authority response to hate crime. It also benefits hate crime victims in their engagement with the criminal justice system.

Recognising the benefits of strengthened cooperation with CSOs is the first step towards creating partnerships. Converting this recognition into reality and creating and sustaining effective cooperation between law enforcement authorities and CSOs require certain agreed parameters. The following horizontal principles draw on existing international guidelines for participation in decision making. They highlight some key elements of effective cooperation between law enforcement authorities and CSOs.¹¹

⁹ FRA (2012), [Making hate crime visible in the European Union: Acknowledging victims' rights](#), Luxembourg, Publications Office.

¹⁰ [Victims' Rights Directive](#), Art. 8.

¹¹ See Council of Europe, Committee of Ministers (2017), [Guidelines for civil participation in political decision making](#), 27 September 2017; European Center for Not-for-profit Law (2016), [Civil participation in decision-making processes](#), May 2016; Council of Europe (2009), [Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-Making Process](#), CONF/PLE (2009)CODE1, 1 October 2009; Council of Europe, Committee of Ministers (2007), [Recommendation CM/Rec \(2007\)14 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the legal status of non-governmental organisations in Europe](#), 10 October 2007, para. 74; and UNHRC (2016), [Resolution 33/22 on Equal participation in political and public affairs](#), A/HRC/33/22.

Principle 1: Establish a culture of trust and transparency

Any constructive partnership is premised on reciprocal trust and transparency. Expectations about the scope and nature of the cooperation should be managed from the start and should be based on mutual respect and agreement on common rules of engagement and cooperation.

Cooperation with CSOs requires time and effort. Not all CSOs would immediately agree to cooperate closely with law enforcement authorities, since some of them may not have previously had a (good) relationship with law enforcement authorities or they may even have experienced discriminatory policing practices, such as discriminatory profiling. As a result, their members could potentially have a negative perception of establishing such a partnership. At the same time, authorities may need to internally define the framework for cooperation with CSOs, acknowledge inherent power dynamics and differences, and take steps to guarantee that any partnership is based on equal standing and CSOs are treated as equal and essential partners.

It is therefore necessary to develop and commit to a 'critical friendship' between CSOs and law enforcement authorities, balancing their different roles and responsibilities while sustaining trust and legitimacy.¹² As an example, training programmes or information sessions for law enforcement focused on racist biases involving CSOs could be a concrete action for building trust.

Building trust and partnership

The state security forces in Spain have created the position of 'social partners'. Social partners' main functions include maintaining contact and organising regular meetings with representatives of civil society. This can contribute to police effectiveness by making police work known to groups at risk of hate crime victimisation and by channelling CSOs' views into police work.

For more information, see the [Ministry of the Interior web page on hate crimes](#).

Moreover, ensuring transparency is required for accountability – between partners but also towards individuals and groups at risk of hate crime victimisation. Transparency of partnership agreements and the provision of accessible and timely information on cooperation activities and results would help to mobilise public support and contribute to enhancing trust in law enforcement authorities, and in public institutions more broadly.

Enhancing mutual understanding and trust – an essential step towards sustaining cooperation

Lithuania has a practical guide for law enforcement officers on cooperation with groups vulnerable to hate crime. It presents information on the history, demography and culture of Roma, Jews, Muslims, immigrants, people with disabilities and lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people. The guide aims to enhance knowledge and understanding of the impact of hate crimes on affected groups and thus support better recognition of hate crimes.

The guide emphasises the need to establish and maintain connections with groups at risk of hate crime victimisation, for example by police taking part in celebrations and events important to communities; holding regular meetings and dialogues; and ensuring the efficiency of communication by signing cooperation agreements.

The guide was developed based on input from local police officers, prosecutors and representatives of various groups affected by hate crime.

See also Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2020), [Innovative citizen participation and new democratic institutions – Catching the deliberative wave](#), Paris, OECD. On Open Government Partnership (OGP) participation and cocreation standards, see OGP Steering Committee (2021), ['OGP participation and co-creation standards'](#) and OGP (2018), [OGP participation and co-creation toolkit](#).

¹² Perry, J. (2019), [Connecting on hate crime data in Europe](#), Brussels, CEJI, pp. 69–72.

For more information, see Lithuania, Ministry of the Interior, [‘Recommendations for law enforcement officials on how to cooperate with communities vulnerable to hate crime’](#).

Principle 2: Respect CSOs’ independence and ensure sustainability of cooperation

Many CSOs have trusting relationships with groups they represent and can act as mediators in voicing their concerns and representing their interests. Although cooperation and collaboration are key, there is a need for clear boundaries to guarantee CSOs’ abilities to act independently, advocate different positions, and provide critical input to and assessment of public authorities’ conduct without jeopardising the established cooperation.¹³ Conversely, CSOs should acknowledge and respect the position of public authorities, with whom responsibility and accountability for decision making lies.¹⁴

Promoting an engaged civil society and ensuring “a conducive political and public environment” for CSOs requires i) a regulatory framework that protects and promotes the rights to freedom of association, peaceful assembly and expression; ii) access to participation in policymaking and decision making; iii) a safe space in which to operate; and iv) access to resources.¹⁵

Ensuring CSOs are reliably provided with resources is a prerequisite for the independence they need to deliver effectively on cooperation agreements. This is particularly pertinent as lack of funding is one of the main challenges human rights CSOs face in some parts of the EU, data suggest.¹⁶

One necessary step in ensuring sustainable cooperation is formally recognising and compensating eligible expenses that CSOs incur in delivering on partnership arrangements. Forms of resource provision could range from direct funding or co-funding of relevant activities to including budgetary provisions targeted at CSOs for specific actions and providing for administrative services and infrastructure funding.

Furthermore, funding for CSOs is often project based, evidence suggests. That jeopardises the continuity and sustainability of practices and structures. Favouring multiannual and core funding over short-term project funding would allow for a more sustainable basis for the work of CSOs and for long-term planning.¹⁷

The potential role of EU funding opportunities in ensuring sustainability of cooperation

The EU’s 2021–2027 multiannual financial framework provides several funding opportunities that CSOs can access to fund specific initiatives, establish institutional cooperation with relevant actors and increase their own capacities.

The main instruments – implemented through direct management by the European Commission – are the [Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme \(CERV\)](#) (budget of € 1.55 billion, making it the biggest intra-EU human rights fund to date) and the [Justice Programme](#) (budget of € 0.30 billion). These form the Justice, Rights and Values Fund, which aims to promote, strengthen and defend justice, rights and EU values. The fund beneficiaries include CSOs, equality bodies, public administrations, judicial networks and universities. Under CERV, specific funding calls to promote equality and to fight against racism, xenophobia and discrimination, including hate crime and hate speech, are expected to make around € 22 million available in 2021 and 2022 to support cooperation.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Council of Europe, Committee of Ministers (2017), [Guidelines for civil participation in political decision making](#), principle 4, b and c, 27 September 2017.

¹⁵ FRA (2021), [Protecting civic space in the EU](#), Luxembourg, Publications Office. See also, in particular, Council of Europe (2018), [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2018\)11 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the need to strengthen the protection and promotion of civil society space in Europe](#), 28 November 2018.

¹⁶ Over 400 CSOs contributed to an online consultation by FRA, and 60 % reported difficulties in finding funding for their work. FRA (2021), [Protecting civic space in the EU](#), Luxembourg, Publications Office.

¹⁷ FRA (2017), [Challenges facing civil society organisations working on human rights in the EU](#), Luxembourg, Publications Office, Chapter 3.2; and OSCE ODIHR (2020), [The state of support structures and specialist services for hate crime victims – Baseline report](#), Warsaw, ODIHR, p. 26.

Other relevant EU programmes include:

- [Horizon Europe](#) is the EU's key funding programme for research and innovation.
- [Creative Europe](#) invests in actions that reinforce cultural diversity and respond to the needs and challenges of the cultural and creative sectors.
- [Erasmus+](#) offers opportunities for individuals and organisations to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe.
- The EU [Internal Security Fund](#) supports actions in line with the European Security Agenda.
- The [Cohesion policy funds](#) contributes to strengthening economic, social and territorial cohesion in the EU.
- The [Technical Support Instrument \(TSI\)](#) is the EU programme that provides tailor-made technical expertise to EU Member States to design and implement reform.

For more information, see European Commission, '[EU funding programmes](#)', and European Commission, '[CERV funding and tender portal](#)'.

Ensuring sustainability – embedding project outputs into governmental policies

In Croatia, CSOs and public institutions, including the police academy and the Supreme Court, jointly developed practical recommendations on cooperation between police, judicial bodies and CSOs. The recommendations fed into the updated protocol for procedure in cases of hate crime of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, embedding CSOs' vital role in a strategic governmental document.

For more information, see Croatian Law Centre, [Project "IRIS – Improving the fight against intolerance through research, development of recommendations and training](#); and Government of the Republic of Croatia, Office for Human Rights and the Rights of National Minorities, [Protocol for procedure in cases of hate crime](#).

Engaging CSOs and providing funding to tackle racism and hate crime

During 2021–2024, the German government is expected to provide over € 1 billion to fund 89 specific measures against racism, right-wing extremism and antisemitism. It consulted CSOs, including representatives of migrants' organisations, on the measures, to ensure an inclusive and evidence-based approach.

The funding aims to step up hate crime prevention measures and strengthen cooperation between CSOs and security and judicial authorities.

For more information, see Federal Government of Germany, '[Themen im Bundeskabinett – Ergebnisse](#)'.

Principle 3: Ensure broad representation and inclusive participation

Cooperation should be broad and ensure representation of and engagement with all relevant civil society actors. It should also strive for the inclusion of all groups affected by hate crime, but also the inclusion of CSOs dealing with different aspects of victim support (such as those providing legal aid, psychosocial support etc). Law enforcement authorities should recognise and cater for different experiences across groups, such as ethnic and religious minorities; migrants and their descendants; asylum seekers and refugees; people with disabilities; and lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex (LGBTI) people. Gender, age and disability should be taken into account when determining potential obstacles to participation, and necessary steps should be taken to overcome any barriers to meaningful participation.¹⁸

¹⁸ See Council of Europe, Committee of Ministers (2017), [Guidelines for civil participation in political decision making](#), principle 4, g, 27 September 2017.

Accounting for children and young people belonging to minority groups and LGBTI youth in police work

The Finnish strategy on preventive police work specifically addresses children and young people belonging to minority groups and LGBTI youth. The strategy responds to the high under-reporting rates of victims of violence and bullying among youth by prioritising enhancing police capacity to identify and prevent bullying and violence and by encouraging reporting of hate crimes to the police. The strategy sets out specific measures to enhance trust and confidence in the police.

For more information, see Finland, Ministry of the Interior, [Finland's strategy on preventive police work 2019–2023](#).

Moreover, law enforcement authorities should ensure “non-discrimination and inclusiveness so that all voices, including those of the less privileged and most vulnerable, can be heard and taken into account”.¹⁹ Not all groups at risk of hate crime victimisation have the same level of organisation and representation; therefore, some might not have the ability to respond easily to calls for partnership.

To ensure broad and representative participation, decision makers and law enforcement authorities could:

- map groups at risk of hate crime victimisation and their representative organisations, including hate crime victim specialist support providers;
- consider trends in hate crime victimisation and reflect developments in their outreach;
- ensure they reach out to under-represented groups;
- reach out to women and men equally when establishing contacts, and recognise intersectional experiences;
- take into account all aspects of accessibility for people with disabilities.

Promoting participation in and access to justice for people with disabilities

In Spain, the role of ‘facilitator’ was created to assist people with intellectual disabilities in judicial proceedings. The facilitator informs and accompanies the victim with intellectual disabilities and their family throughout the police and judicial proceedings, and advises the police and prosecution services. University courses offer specific training to become a facilitator.

For more information, see Spain, Ministry of the Interior, [Guide to working with people with developmental disability who are victims of hate crime](#).

Principle 4: Formalise commitments through institutional agreements

Implementing formalised commitments for cooperation²⁰ can benefit all bodies involved in countering hate crime and contribute to building a framework for ensuring safety, support and justice for victims. Setting up such a structure makes exchanges more sustainable and regular.

Inclusivity and a clear purpose of the cooperation arrangement are key to the success of any form of structural cooperation. It is important to agree on the different aspects of cooperation arrangements and set a clear purpose and working framework. Issues to cover and agree on include defining the thematic scope of partnerships (e.g. harmonising data protection and information-sharing principles and enabling efficient case referrals) and practical aspects (e.g. regularity of meetings and funding sources).

¹⁹ Council of Europe, Committee of Ministers (2017), [Guidelines for civil participation in political decision making](#), principle 4, f, 27 September 2017.

²⁰ See, ex. OSCE ODIHR (2018), [Developing Inter-Agency Co-operation Plans to Address Hate Crime: A Methodology](#).

Structural cooperation and partnerships can be initiated and carried out in different forms, for example by:

- exchanging letters of intent;
- signing a memorandum of understanding;
- setting up committees and working groups;
- participating in advisory or expert bodies;
- appointing specialised officers/community liaison officers/hate crime contacts at regional or local level;
- designating CSO representatives to cooperate with the police.

When reaching out to CSOs to establish partnerships, authorities can launch public calls for expressions of interest, outlining the terms of reference and objectives of partnership agreements. Elements to consider in seeking partnerships include defining criteria for collaboration, for example that partner CSOs have active relationships, that the groups they represent trust them and that they are committed to principles of freedom of expression, equality, non-discrimination and inclusivity.

Institutional cooperation and consultation groups

In Spain, several ministries, the General Council of the Judiciary and the Public Prosecutor's Office have signed an *Institutional cooperation agreement on the fight against racism, xenophobia and LGTBiphobia*. Several CSOs participate as observers of this agreement. The main objective of the agreement is facilitating collaboration between institutions in relevant activities while providing a forum for CSOs to provide relevant input.

In the United Kingdom, the Crown Prosecution Service runs an expert group that helps to provide scrutiny to existing policies and practices. The group provides input, often from live and current cases, on what is working well and where improvements can be made, and enables a better understating of the needs of groups affected by hate crime. Specific members of the group are asked to provide expert input into prosecutor training and guidance as appropriate. Members include community organisations, the voluntary sector, victim advocacy groups, public sector organisations, academics with relevant expertise and other criminal justice partners.

The group generally meets three or four times a year, and is also consulted as part of police-run crisis responses to significant and potentially impactful incidents, for example during the spike of hate crime incidents at the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

For more information, see Spain, Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration, [Institutional cooperation agreement on the fight against racism, xenophobia and LGTBiphobia](#); and United Kingdom, Crown Prosecution Service, ['CPS hate crime newsletter, Issue 26'](#).

Formalising commitments: police liaison officers

In the Dutch police, a network of professionals promoting diversity seeks to increase knowledge of different cultures. The network includes the Jewish Police Network and Pink in Blue, a national police network of self-identified LGBT police officers. Networks also exist for officers with Turkish, Moroccan or Asian backgrounds, and those with disabilities. The networks are part of the national policy 'police for one and all'.

For more information, see the [website of the Jewish Police Network of the Netherlands](#) and the [website of the Pink in Blue network, the Netherlands](#).

Coalition building among CSOs

At its most basic, coalition building is about doing together that which cannot be done alone. Addressing the problems of hate speech, hate crime and intolerance requires the

efforts of many actors and cannot be accomplished in any large measure by just one group acting on its own.*

Many CSOs representing groups at risk of victimisation and working with hate crime victims represent distinct groups. Although such specialisation is needed and reflects the diversity in experiences between different groups, it may result in fragmented support for hate crime victims. Therefore, there are challenges related to the specialisation and scope of CSOs' expertise.**

In other cases, those CSOs that work in the anti-discrimination field are not necessarily fully aware of the complexities of hate crime victims in criminal proceedings or their potential role in initiating and participating in criminal proceedings and the potential support needed.** Effective collaboration between CSOs can build their capacities and increase the impact of their efforts, especially with regard to providing support to hate crime victims. Therefore, CSOs are encouraged to:

- invest in and co-develop peer-to-peer learning on specific activities to combat hate crime, such as means to encourage reporting, guidance on bias indicators, recording and data collection methodologies, and establishing referrals to and from police, health and social authorities and others;
- build up a CSO network that enables the exchange of practice, understanding and expertise between more established and well-resourced CSOs and other CSOs that might lack knowledge of the criminal justice system and relevant hate crime policies and practices;
- designate a contact for engaging with the police to help ensure timely and efficient exchanges in urgent cases;
- invest in coordination and solidarity among CSOs and concrete means of knowledge sharing and dissemination of successes and good practices;
- facilitate a CSO-led expert hub on EU and national fund applications to increase knowledge and share experiences.

Coalitions help in pooling resources and expertise and in building cooperation between victim support organizations, advocating for policy changes (CSOs speaking in one voice become a stronger partner for the authorities), bridging differences that might exist among the CSOs and monitoring hate crime, allowing for producing broader and more reliable hate crime data.

* OSCE ODIHR (2018), [Coalition Building for Tolerance and Non-Discrimination: A Practical Guide](#), p. 12.

** FRA (2016), [Ensuring justice for hate crime victims: Professional perspectives](#).

Principle 5: Engage CSOs throughout the design, implementation and evaluation of relevant measures to combat hate crime

Systematic engagement of CSOs in the design, implementation and evaluation of actions to combat hate crime contributes to ensuring evidence-based and victim-centred policies and measures. Involving groups at risk of hate crime victimisation through their representative organisations requires the following actions, among others.

- Engage CSOs in defining relevant activities from the outset, so that practical experiences inform actions.
- Embed a systematic review of the activities' implementation so that the evaluation process includes the perspectives of relevant CSOs and groups affected by hate crime. Make necessary adjustments and redefine goals and measures when evidence suggests a need.
- Create a monitoring framework with the input of CSOs for continuous assessment of the implementation of measures and activities set out in relevant policies and actions.

- Engage with CSOs and coordinate messages when communicating publicly about cases under investigation and prosecution, and disseminating findings of evaluation activities. These can help prevent retaliation and escalation of incidents and support proper communication about police work.

Equally, establishing means of cooperation throughout all phases of planning and evaluation of relevant policies and activities could further enhance CSOs' understanding of criminal justice matters and rights of victims in criminal proceedings. Moreover, it enables CSOs to communicate to the individuals and groups they represent on the rationale behind activities and cooperation arrangements, and thus enhances the legitimacy and effectiveness of authorities' efforts.

Collaboratively created early-warning systems

The OSCE mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina set up the Super Citizens initiative, which enables victims and witnesses to submit anonymous reports to a database. The online map shows the location and number of incidents and thus enables joint identification of hotspots and early identification of hate crime spikes.

For more information, see OSCE, ['Citizens against hate in Bosnia and Herzegovina'](#).

Hate crime scrutiny panels

In the United Kingdom, police can set up 'scrutiny panels' led by an independent facilitator for hate crime cases. The general public, groups affected by hate crime, CSOs, prosecution services, police and other authorities on the panel meet regularly to assess and scrutinise concrete incidents, authorities' responses, including prosecution, and lessons learned. Such panels increase community engagement, enhance trust and support police accountability.

Involving groups affected by hate crime in the practice of restorative justice could be another way to address the impact of hate crimes on individuals and broader society, and to look for what to do to right the wrongs suffered.

For more information, see United Kingdom, Crown Prosecution Service, [A guide to setting up hate crime scrutiny panels](#); and European Forum for Restorative Justice, ['Restorative justice, hate crime and migrant integration'](#).

2.2. Encourage hate crime reporting

Evidence captured in FRA surveys and other research shows high rates of unreported hate crimes across the EU.²¹ When victims do not report incidents to the police or another relevant organisation, they have no access to protection, support and justice, and these crimes cannot be investigated and prosecuted. That results in impunity for perpetrators.

Structured partnerships enable the development of relationships between law enforcement authorities, CSOs and affected groups, sending a signal that builds trust and confidence, thereby potentially encouraging hate crime reporting. Strengthening cooperation with CSOs and community organisations could also benefit authorities by improving understanding of barriers to reporting and supporting the development of measures such as third-party reporting. Lastly, creating conditions for efficient referral mechanisms between police and CSOs that provide specialist support increases victims' access to protection and support. An effective referral system should be based on the analysis of services typically required by hate crime victims and a mapping of existing support organizations and their services, to which hate crime victims can be referred to.

²¹ FRA (2021), [Encouraging hate crime reporting – The role of law enforcement and other authorities](#), Luxembourg, Publications Office.

Principle 6: Enable third-party reporting through CSOs

Providing alternative ways to report hate crime for victims reluctant to come forward – such as third-party reporting – could increase the likelihood that victims will report hate crime. Third-party reporting is the process in which a victim or witness reports a potential hate crime to an authority, organisation, centre or service other than the police. This third party then reports the hate crime to the police. Third-party reporting services or centres are usually run by specialist and community-focused CSOs.²²

Setting up such means of reporting through CSOs could:

- make access to reporting easier for victims;
- enhance a law enforcement authority's understanding of the security needs of groups at risk of hate crime victimisation;
- enable better understanding of the situation, data availability and insight into trends;
- ensure faster information flows;
- allow for coordinated responses and tailored victim support;
- contribute to informed and evidence-based decisions and thus contribute to better responsiveness of the criminal justice system.

For third-party reporting centres and services to be effective, the police and these services – including those run by CSOs – should:

- agree on protocols that ensure the police can easily receive and record the incidents the centres and services receive and register;
- ensure confidentiality and data protection safeguards;
- make both the police and the third-party reporting centres and services more aware of the potential benefits of cooperation;
- align definitions and data collection methods, to enhance the impact of data sharing;²³
- ensure personnel are adequately qualified and trained.

Online reporting and support for victims of hate crime

In Germany, the Federal Association of Departments for Research and Information on Antisemitism and its seven regional offices work in close cooperation with federal Jewish organisations as well as local Jewish communities and CSOs. Victims of antisemitism can report incidents anonymously to the police through a [dedicated reporting website](#), over the phone and through social media, or through Jewish community organisations and other CSOs. Furthermore, the Federal Association of Departments for Research and Information on Antisemitism assists victims of antisemitic crimes with their reports to the police and complements official police data.

For more information, see Federal Government Commissioner for Jewish Life in Germany and the Fight against Antisemitism, '[Federal Association of Departments for Research and Information on Antisemitism](#)'.

2.3. Improve recording and data collection

Proper hate crime recording allows authorities to identify victims of hate crime and provide them with effective support, ensure investigation of the bias motive of the crime, identify trends in bias-motivated victimisation and determine where additional resources should be allocated. Effective recording procedures and the data they generate can support the

²² For more on barriers and opportunities regarding reporting of hate crime, see FRA (2021), [Encouraging hate crime reporting – The role of law enforcement and other authorities](#), Luxembourg, Publications Office, Chapter 2.4.

²³ For more on data recording and collection, see FRA (2018), [Hate crime recording and data collection practice across the EU](#), Luxembourg, Publications Office.

further development of police working practices in response to increases in specific or emerging crime types, such as online hate speech.

CSOs often receive and record hate crime incidents that might never reach the police as they do not necessarily meet the criminal threshold. Police can use this information to improve their own preventative activities and recording procedures, provided there is a system for sharing this information and anonymised data safely between police and CSOs.

Cooperation can include jointly developed recording methodologies, including a monitoring definition to register incidents and bias indicators, and developing a joint, data protection-compliant system for anonymised information exchange. Such steps allow for comparability and compatibility of collected data. Regular exchange of police and CSO information is important to ensure that available sources of hate crime information are used for policy and policing purposes.

Involving groups affected by racism in collection and use of equality data based on racial or ethnic origin

Equality data are essential for assessing the situation of ethnic minorities and to effectively address manifestations of racism and structural inequalities. To improve the availability of equality data disaggregated by racial or ethnic origin in the EU, the Subgroup on Equality Data developed a practical guidance note on producing comprehensive, reliable, comparable and regular data at national level.

The note highlights that Member States should consult community representatives of all relevant ethnic minorities and racialised groups, at all levels of research, including during the planning, data collection, data analysis and dissemination of results. For example, groups affected by racism can identify the most appropriate categories for data disaggregation and questions on self-identification for a survey, and can provide insights on the underlying definitions. This will ensure that affected groups are treated as experts on their own reality and help counter unconscious bias.

Furthermore, groups affected by racism may have diverging views about the need to collect such data or may voice objections. The data collectors need to strengthen CSOs' statistical literacy and improve knowledge of how data can benefit a community.

EU Member States are encouraged to use these guidelines to inform the development and effective implementation of antiracism and non-discrimination policies and monitor their outcomes.

For more information, see European Commission (2021), [Guidance note on the collection and use of equality data based on racial or ethnic origin](#); and FRA (2021), [Equality in the EU 20 years on from the initial implementation of the equality directives](#).

Principle 7: Enhance comparability and compatibility of recording methodologies through systematic use of bias indicators

Cooperation on the development of common methods and variables to record hate crime incidents could be established to improve the comparability of recording methodologies used by law enforcement authorities and CSOs. Elements of this cooperation could include police officers and CSOs applying a common monitoring definition and a set of core bias indicators.²⁴ Applying a shared set could include asking victims the same questions, for example on victims' and witnesses' perceptions and the incident location (e.g. a neighbourhood where several bias-motivated incidents took place in a certain period), timing (e.g. during Jewish holidays or a pride march) and context (e.g. if a racial slur was used).

²⁴ Bias indicators are "objective facts, circumstances or patterns connected to a criminal act that, alone or in conjunction with other indicators, suggest that the offender's actions were motivated in whole or in part by bias, prejudice or hostility". See: ODIHR (2014), [Hate crime data collection and monitoring – A practical guide](#), Warsaw, ODIHR, p. 15.

CSOs could support law enforcement authorities in developing, refining and revising the bias indicators, as they often have more knowledge of specific experiences of the groups they represent. Therefore, they could support law enforcement authorities in formulating targeted and factual questions, developing guidance and contributing to joint training sessions for all relevant actors, including station duty officers, call handlers, community patrol officers and investigators. Similarly, the CSOs that possess unique understanding of hate crime victimisation could be approached in individual cases to clarify or explain the meaning of group-specific bias indicators, which may not be immediately clear to intervening or investigating officers.

All interested CSOs can cooperate on developing guidance on bias indicators and exchanging on patterns and trends of hate crime victimisation. However, appropriate partners for a structured exchange of methodologies between law enforcement authorities and CSOs would be CSOs that have effective systems in place to record incidents of hate crime.²⁵

Guiding police to record better and to cooperate with CSOs

In Spain, an action protocol for the security forces on hate crimes guides police officers on how to identify and treat hate crimes. The protocol includes indicators to identify hate incidents that must be included in police reports, guidance on victims' treatment, criteria for recording incidents according to the different grounds of discrimination and guidance on managing relations with CSOs and groups affected by hate crime. The protocol recommends, for example, enhancing the effectiveness of policing by organising periodic meetings between CSOs and the police, or by the police appointing a representative to liaise with CSOs regularly.

For more information, see Spain, Ministry of the Interior, [Protocol for action by law enforcement agencies for hate crime and conduct in breach of the legal provisions on discrimination](#).

Principle 8: Share data collection methodologies and set up a system for regular information exchange

Despite many positive developments in improving the collection of hate crime data, police statistics on hate crime still capture only a limited proportion of the actual cases, owing to high levels of under-reporting and misclassification of hate crime cases by police (under-recording). While acknowledging high under-reporting also to CSOs, data and information collected by CSOs that record hate crime incidents are an important source that can improve understanding of the various forms and manifestations of hatred.

CSOs collect information on hate incidents that do not necessarily meet the criminal threshold, and often carry out qualitative research and studies that can provide insight into specific gaps and challenges related to hate crime data. Such information can support police in identifying tailored preventative measures. However, given differences in recording methodologies, and the definitions and concepts they use, the collected statistics are rarely comparable. A system for information exchange can include, for example:

- regular meetings to compare anonymised data, to identify crime trends and assess the effectiveness of existing reporting mechanisms;
- ad hoc meetings at times of specific need due to, for example, increased community tension and incidents;
- co-organising round tables and workshops on specific issues, such as experiences of specific groups at risk of hate crime victimisation;
- co-organising conferences and events for the wider public;
- making use of studies and research undertaken by CSOs on hate crimes.

CSO coalition monitoring racist violence and information exchange with authorities

²⁵ FRA (2018), [Hate crime recording and data collection practice across the EU](#), Luxembourg, Publications Office.

In Greece, the Racist Violence Recording Network brings together 51 CSOs representing various groups affected by racism. Its main activities include recording and data collection on hate crimes, providing support to victims, facilitating contact with relevant authorities and more broadly developing activities to combat racist violence in Greece.

The Greek authorities have recognised the network as a reliable interlocutor. Since 2018, cooperation has been officially framed by the [Agreement on inter-agency co-operation on addressing racist crimes in Greece](#). The agreement aims to build a coordinated approach for national institutions and CSOs to deal with racist crimes and effectively support victims.

For more information, see the [Racist Violence Recording Network website](#).

There might be differences in approaches to hate crime recording: CSOs' approaches to data collection possibly focus on the experiences and perceptions of the victim, whereas the police priority is capturing 'evidence' and 'objective' facts and information about the incident.²⁶ However, CSOs could consider aligning their forms and questionnaires, including bias indicators, and definitions with those used by the police, provided that all relevant bias motivations are covered.

Furthermore, if CSOs are transparent about the data collection methodology they apply, it could enhance the police's confidence in the quality and relevance of the CSOs' data.

Any data-sharing arrangements between CSOs and police must be safeguarded by data protection measures, including the conditions under which processing of such data is allowed, and what safeguards must be in place when collecting them. Mechanisms for setting up regular information and knowledge sharing could be explored, as these could help to secure the consistency needed for effective use of the data for policing and policymaking. Police could draw on CSOs' data to enhance police understanding of local patterns and trends. Likewise, CSOs would be able to enrich their own data collection with anonymised information collected by the police for their advocacy efforts.

Cooperation and data sharing between Jewish communities and authorities

In monitoring antisemitism, the Federation of Jewish Communities in Czechia uses the definition of antisemitism provided by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, as well as other definitions, such as of extremism, disinformation and propaganda, applied by the Ministry of the Interior. The 2016 [Memorandum of cooperation in ensuring the security of Jewish institutions as soft targets](#) guides the regular meetings and sharing of data and information on antisemitic hate crime between the Jewish communities, the Ministry of the Interior, police and local authorities.

For more information, see the [website of the Ministry of the Interior](#).

2.4. Cooperate on supporting the victims of hate crime

The Victims' Rights Directive obliges Member States to ensure specialist support to victims of hate crime. In many Member States, CSOs are the providers of such support. To enhance effectiveness of the service provision, CSOs providers of specialist support should be formally integrated in the national victim support system.

Accessing the support is premised on reporting the incident. When a victim reports to the police or a CSO, the victim has the right for a risk and needs assessment, according to the Victims' Rights Directive. To identify victim's needs and protection and support it is important that authorities and CSOs jointly develop and implement methodology for individual needs assessment and set up effective communication channels.

Based on the needs identified through the assessment and based on the awareness of the specialist support providers available in the area, the police can then effectively refer the victim for assistance. A referral mechanism should be implemented based on mutual

²⁶ Perry, J. (2020), [Facing all the facts – Connecting on hate crime data in Italy](#), Brussels, CEJI, p. 17.

understanding and ideally a formal agreement between police and CSOs. Referral procedures should be standardised and embedded within national hate crime guidelines.

Principle 9: Formally integrate CSO providers of specialist support in the victim support systems

The Victims' Rights Directive obliges Member States to ensure specialist support to victims of crimes, including victims of hate crimes. In many Member states, the authorities rely on CSOs to undertake these activities. Such CSO specialist support providers can be organisations working specifically with victims of hate crime; organisations supporting specific groups at risk of victimisation, or general service providers which employ specifically trained staff or volunteers to also cater to the victims of hate crime.

Effective functioning of such a relationship, which implies de facto that CSOs become part of national victim support systems, requires:

- an ongoing mapping of available CSO providers,
- robust and structural collaboration mechanism, and
- sustainable funding for the CSOs.

It is important that national authorities achieve a full picture of available services, including specialist services for victims of hate crime. Such a mapping process can be implemented centrally or on a local level, with the ultimate goal to ensure that those who refer victims of hate crime to specialist support – police officers, general victim support body or CSOs – can access this important resource.

Where CSOs are expected to support victims of hate crime, it is a good practice for the national authorities to agree with them on basic principles and standards of the service they will provide.²⁷ Only organisations meeting such standards (often educational requirements for the CSO staff) can be registered or accredited, which makes them eligible to receive government funding. These quality standards should be developed jointly and in consultation with the CSOs.

While there are different models governing this integration (from no formal relationship – to funding of services on a project basis – to multi-year funding on the basis of accreditation), CSOs require some predictability in order to plan their work ahead of time and have the means to ensure they can maintain a professional support up to standards. For that, guarantees of funding, and some formal agreement with the competent authorities, is usually needed.

Principle 10: Jointly develop and implement a methodology for individual needs assessment and set up communication channels

Victims can first report to the police or to a CSO. On first contact, a risk and needs assessment are required, in line with the Victims' Rights Directive. The victim that starts their 'journey' with the police is then (after the initial risk/needs assessment) likely to be referred to a specialist CSO service provider, and *vice versa*, the victim that first reported the incident to the CSO can later (after the initial needs assessment conducted by that organisation) decide to report the crime formally to the police.

Furthermore, the needs of the victim may change and evolve during a criminal justice process. Therefore, their needs should be assessed at various stages. The main idea however remains the same – to identify the up-to-date needs and protection and support required by the victim.

This demonstrates the need for a "common language", for example, regarding victim needs, the impact of hate crime, the term hate crime, etc., and the ability to communicate about the conclusions of the needs assessment across the system. Such "common language" and communication are best achieved if the same methodology is employed by any actor conducting the needs assessment, or, at a minimum, different actors are

²⁷ See: OSCE ODIHR (2021), [Model Quality Standards for Hate Crime Victim Support](#), Warsaw, ODIHR.

informed of the methodologies of the others, to be able to understand the outcomes of such assessments. The methodology for conducting a needs assessment of hate crime victims should thus be either shared with, or developed jointly by the police and CSOs (often the CSOs working with the victims have more experience with conducting such assessments and can help the authorities by sharing that experience).²⁸

When developing the approach to the needs assessment of hate crime victims, it is indispensable that it is based on a thorough understanding of hate crime victimisation and informed by real experiences of the victims of hate crime. CSOs can often bring this experience to such work.

Principle 11: Establish effective victim referral mechanism

Based on the needs identified through the assessment and based on the awareness of the specialist support providers available in their area, the police can most appropriately refer the victim for assistance. There are different approaches to referrals (opt-in, opt-out, victim-led, support organisation-led). Whichever referral mechanism is in place, it should be implemented based on mutual understanding and ideally a formal agreement between the police and the CSO.²⁹ Furthermore, standardised referral procedures should be the basis of national hate crime guidelines and all structures for cooperation.

When national reporting systems support third-party reporting, and there is a standardised referral system, access to protection and support for victims can be facilitated. This could mean CSOs providing information to victims about available support, conducting individual needs assessments or undertaking specialist assessments after general assessments conducted by the police.³⁰ Effective referral mechanisms require:

- safeguards regarding confidentiality, privacy and data protection, based on informed decisions of victims, including the right not to use support
- knowledge of local specialised victim support services, based on a regularly updated list of specialist support providers
- training of police officers and CSO personnel
- procedures in place, securing timeliness of the referrals, and ensuring that information provided to victims is comprehensive and understandable; and
- tools to monitor implementation and evaluate effectiveness.

Enabling referrals between authorities, police and CSOs

In Belgium, the government of the Brussels-Capital Region set up a project to encourage reporting and enhance referrals of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, and intersex (LGBTQI) hate crimes by supporting victims to share and register their stories with local CSOs. The CSOs then refer victims to the police, social services and other government bodies to file formal complaints.

In Italy, the Observatory for Security Against Acts of Discrimination (OSCAD) – a multiagency body formed by the Italian national police and the Carabinieri – and Gay Help Line – a victim support service to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and related communities (LGBT+) people – have established structured cooperation to gather data on homophobic and transphobic violence. In addition to systematic referrals between OSCAD and Gay Help Line, these bodies have also jointly developed training sessions for volunteer staff of the helpline.

²⁸ See: OSCE ODIHR (2021), [Model Guidance on Individual Needs Assessments of Hate Crime Victims](#), Warsaw, ODIHR.

²⁹ See: OSCE ODIHR (2021) [Compendium: Practices on Structural Frameworks for Individual Needs Assessment \(INA\) of Hate Crime Victims and Referrals](#), Warsaw, ODIHR.

³⁰ See, OSCE ODIHR (2021), [Model Guidance on Individual Needs Assessments of Hate Crime Victims](#). [Model Guidance on Individual Needs Assessments of Hate Crime Victims](#), Warsaw, ODIHR; OSCE ODIHR (2020), [Hate crime victims in the criminal justice system – A practical guide](#), Warsaw, ODIHR.

In Spain, an interactive map on the Ministry of the Interior's website provides details of CSOs and associations at provincial level to assist victims of hate crimes. State police forces have information about the map so that they can refer victims to support services.

For more information, see the websites of [Brussels Prevention and Security](#) and [Rainbow House Brussels](#) (Belgium), [OSCAD](#) and [Gay Help Line](#) (Italy), and [the National Office for the Fight Against Hate Crimes](#) (Spain).

2.5. Establish cooperation on hate crime training

Specialised hate crime training is key for national and local law enforcement and criminal justice authorities to develop the necessary skills for the identification, recording, investigation, prosecution and sanctioning of hate crimes, and for ensuring a fair and adequate treatment of victims. Developing effective training programmes may need the support and expert advice of specialised CSOs who often bring important insight on the perspective of victims and of groups at risk of victimisations as well as help to fine-tune the training content and find skilled trainers.

Principle 12: Encourage exchange and collaboration in training activities aimed at constant improvement in understanding and responding to hate crimes

It is essential to encourage the collaboration and participation of CSOs in police training and awareness-raising, as part of the workshops and courses held in the police forces. CSOs have first-hand knowledge on trends and urgencies in hate crime.

CSOs can be involved in the early organisational stages of the training process, by being consulted or specifically hired for supporting the development of the training's structure, content and agenda. CSOs can play an active role in the delivery of the trainings as trainers and/or co-facilitators.

CSOs can be instrumental in promoting awareness and empathy among members of law enforcement agencies, in particular in relation to the sensitive and respectful treatment of hate crime victims, deepening the understanding of the impacts of hate crime and increasing knowledge of the specific needs of victims of hate crimes. These elements are of critical importance to protect against re-victimization within the criminal justice system.

CSOs can facilitate contacts with victims of hate crimes who can participate in the trainings as presenters/testimonials.

CSOs can play a key role in developing and delivering training courses and resources on specific bias motivations by offering specialist intelligence and knowledge about the specificities of bias indicators affecting particular groups and on local hate crime patterns and trends.

Further, strengthening cooperation with CSOs in the area of training can result in more effective skills of public authorities to effectively engage with groups at risk of victimisation and increase their awareness of reporting mechanisms as well their trust in public authorities.

CSOs can also support law enforcement and criminal justice agencies in conducting training needs assessment for their target learners as well as the evaluation of the trainings delivered.

It is important to establish these learning processes not only at the national level but also at local level. It is also recommended that this cooperation is formalised through structural agreements between different police institutions and CSOs to ensure that training is provided on a regular basis as part of a continuous training programme.

Ensuring that perspectives of victims and groups at risk of hate crime are included in hate crime trainings

In the framework of its Garda Diversity & Integration Strategy 2019-2021, An Garda Síochána (Ireland's National Police Service) developed an online course on hate crime for all Garda personnel. A call for tender open to CSOs made possible a structured cooperation with civil society organisations in developing the online learning. Facing Facts Online supported the online learning development process. The Irish Network Against Racism (INAR) partnered with Facing Facts and An Garda Síochána in the training development project, playing a fundamental role in ensuring that victims and communities perspectives were included in the training content. Facing Facts Online supported An Garda Síochána in conducting a training needs assessment prior to the development of the online course.

For more information, see: [An Garda Síochána Diversity and Integration Strategy 2019-2021](#), and [Facing Facts Online](#).