



VICTIM SUPPORT AGENCY

Annual Report 2025



GOVERNMENT OF MALTA
MINISTRY FOR HOME AFFAIRS
AND SECURITY

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Foreword by Minister

Victims of crime and their rights are a top priority for this Government. We have dedicated our endeavours to give victims the protection, support, peace of mind, and dignity they deserve.

The work carried out by the Victim Support Agency during 2025 clearly demonstrates the continued commitment to strengthen the services offered to victims of crime and to spread these services in line with the victims’ needs. During this same year, the Agency continued to expand and enhance its services. In an evolving society, it is imperative to continue to identify how the victims’ needs and their circumstances may require proactive action.

During 2025, more than 1,600 people benefited from the assistance offered by the Agency, through emotional support, legal advice, and specialised services that help victims rebuild their lives following the difficult and traumatic experiences that victimisation brings. One of the most important achievements during this year was the introduction of panic alarm devices for high-risk victims of domestic violence. This initiative is an important step forward in the provision of immediate protection and a sense of security to those facing situations of actual or potential danger. Through this system, immediate intervention by the police to provide the necessary assistance straight away, becomes possible. This initiative shows the Government's determination to continue investing in innovative solutions that strengthen prevention and security. At the same time, the Agency has continued to strengthen collaboration between various public sector entities through the Victim Support Network, which brings together professionals and government institutions to improve the coordination and quality of the services offered.

The national support line 116 006 started operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This has certainly been an important step towards always making the Agency's services accessible for everyone. In addition, the Agency has further improved the accessibility of its services through the development of online systems and tools. Important services consist of specialised support programmes, including victim support groups, court support services, child-care and carer services for victims who have children or dependants to enable them to go and testify in Court, as well as transport services for victims from their residence to Court and back.

These initiatives contribute to a more sensitive and inclusive system that recognises the diversity of the victims' needs and the Agency is committed to support them throughout the whole process.

The recognition obtained by the Agency during this year, including the Quality Mark and the AACC Employee Award as Best Collaborative Entity 2025, attests to the professionalism, dedication, and commitment of the workers. However, the greatest recognition is given by the victims themselves, who are the ones finding comfort and support from the Agency.

The Government remains committed to further strengthen the services offered to victims, by investing in prevention, protection, and collaboration between all relevant entities. Together, we must continue working to ensure that victims do not feel alone but find a system that supports and protects them as they deserve.

I would like to thank the staff at the Victim Support Agency, as well as all the partners involved, for their dedication and professionalism. All those employees who are fulfilling and implementing all this are helping to continue to build a safer society and one that is more sensitive towards the needs of every person.

Dr Glenn Bedingfield

Minister for Home Affairs & Security

Foreword by Permanent Secretary



Since its inception, the Victim Support Agency offered support and services to thousands of service users. Victims who up until now were at a loss where to seek assistance are coming to the Agency, where their voices are being heard and where they are being offered first and immediate response and a plan of action from trauma recovery. During these last months, the Agency strengthened its services while offering additional new services. These include the direct helpline 116 006, the provision of transport and caring services to victims who need to testify in court, the panic alarm device, and the opening of new centres throughout Malta and Gozo. The Agency also strengthened its collaboration with several other entities to ensure a truly holistic, comprehensive, seamless and quality-driven service.

Although the VSA premises are open to the public, our pivotal philosophy is for the services to be community-based and to reach out to the victims ourselves. A unique service being currently offered through the Agency is that all cases reported to the Police are followed and the victims involved are immediately offered assistance, which means that in a matter of a few hours, the victim is ensured access to all necessary information and comprehensive support.

The Agency is making huge leaps, although still in its infancy. However, still more needs to be done to benefit our victims, so that we may truly act as their champion. This can be obtained by continuing to offer a strengthened and widened set of support services.

Ms. Joyce Dimech
Permanent Secretary
Ministry for Home Affairs and Security

CEO Foreword

Leading the Victim Support Agency has provided me with many valuable insights, but perhaps the most important lesson has been the need to view every challenge through the eyes of the victim. If we are truly committed to making a difference in the lives of those affected by crime, we must remain open-minded and responsive to their realities, needs, and experiences.

While a range of services, support lines, organisations, and institutions exist to assist victims, what individuals often require most is a coordinated and accessible system centred around a single point of contact. Victims need immediate access to information, protection, emotional and practical support, and ultimately the reassurance that justice will be pursued and delivered. This is precisely why the role of the Victim Support Agency remains so vital. Our mission is to empower victims of crime and help them regain their wellbeing, dignity, and quality of life through timely, professional, and victim-centred support.

Throughout the year, the Agency has continued to strengthen its commitment to a multi-agency and multidisciplinary approach. This model has enabled us to build stronger partnerships with public entities, non-governmental organisations, and other key stakeholders, ensuring that victims receive comprehensive and coordinated assistance. By fostering collaboration across sectors, we are creating a more effective and responsive support framework that places victims at the centre of our efforts.



A significant milestone in this regard is our ongoing work towards the development of a new National Strategy for Victims of Crime. This strategy is intended to address the evolving challenges faced by victims within our community and to enhance the support structures available to them. As part of this process, a community needs assessment was conducted, which was enriched through the contributions of specialised working groups comprising representatives from government entities, non-governmental organisations, professionals, and victims themselves. Their insights have been instrumental in shaping a forward-looking vision for victim support in Malta.

As Chief Executive Officer of the Victim Support Agency, I remain committed to further strengthening the Agency's internal capacity, enhancing collaboration with our partners, and driving continuous improvement in the services we provide. Together, we will continue to advance the protection of victims' rights, promote their wellbeing, and ensure that every victim receives the support, respect, and care they deserve.

Mr. Brian Farrugia
Chief Executive Officer

Head of Service's Message



Standing with Victims in Their Most Difficult Moments: A Holistic and Victim-Centered Approach

This year, our Agency continued to strengthen its holistic, victim-centered approach. Every victim's experience is unique, and our response is shaped by this understanding.

Over the years, our services have played a vital role in ensuring that victims are treated with dignity, empathy, and respect. Support during these critical moments is an essential pillar of recovery and access to justice, and no victim should have to navigate their most difficult moments alone.

Victims often come into contact with our services at a time when their sense of control has been deeply disrupted. Immediate and compassionate intervention helps to stabilize individuals both emotionally and practically. Our team works to ensure that victims understand their rights and the processes they may encounter, whether within the justice system or through the practical challenges of day-to-day life.

As Head of Victim Support Services, I am privileged to lead a team whose professionalism, dedication, and compassion remain unwavering. Throughout this year, we have placed particular emphasis on strengthening emotional and group support services. By providing clear communication and emotional reassurance, our work helps reduce the risk of secondary trauma and lays the foundation for long-term healing.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to expanding access to services, improving outreach within communities, and strengthening early-intervention support. The challenges faced by victims continue to evolve, and so too must our response.

Our mission remains steadfast: to stand with victims at their most vulnerable moments.

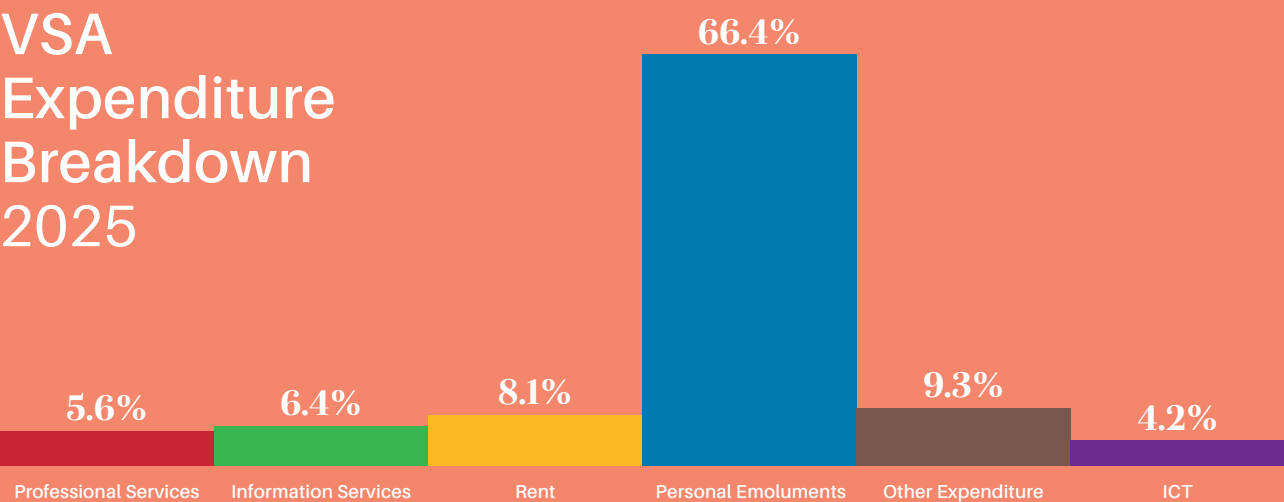
Supt. Sylvana Gafa'
Head of Services

Achievements 2025

Administration

In 2025, the Victims Support Agency strengthened its internal administrative capacity, in preparation for its autonomy, effective as from 1st January 2026. The transition presented key challenges, including aligning legacy processes with autonomous requirements, building staff capacity, integrating HR and payroll functions, ensuring financial reporting readiness, and reshaping logistical and procurement frameworks. Staff wellbeing remained a priority, with targeted support initiatives guiding employees through organisational change. Despite the complexity of the transition, VSA made strong progress in enhancing internal systems, accountability, and operational readiness to ensure both the continuity and the quality of support services provided for victims in 2026.

VSA Expenditure Breakdown 2025



*Other Expenditure includes utilities, materials and supplies, office services, transport, travel, contractual services, training, programmes and initiatives, and repair and upkeep.

Projects and Programmes Implementation

In 2025, the Projects and Initiatives Unit delivered decisive progress in strengthening victim protection, access to support, and service quality. A key national achievement was the launch of the Domestic Violence Panic Alarm Device for high-risk cases, where 86 devices have been issued and actively monitored between July and December 2025, in close coordination with the Malta Police and FSWS Risk Assessors. The unit also played a central role in the operation of the 24/7 National Support Line 116 006, responding to 325 contacts during the year. Alongside this, 5 measures under the VSA Corporate Strategy 2024-2027 were successfully reached during 2025, out of a total of 23 strategic measures. In June 2025, the Quality Label Award was achieved, independently confirming excellence in victim-centred service delivery. These results translate into safer daily realities for victims, whilst reinforcing support that is reliable, responsive, and centred on their right to live without fear.

Achieved 2025

Police Victim Support

During 2025, the Police Victim Support launched a new service, the Support Response Team, aimed at providing immediate, on-site assistance to families of crime victims. The team acts as a vital link between investigators and bereaved families, offering coordinated emotional, psychological and practical support during some of the most traumatic experiences faced by affected families. Alongside this, around 1,300 individuals were provided with ongoing updates in relation to their police reports. This allowed us to ensure that they remained informed throughout the investigative process. Of these individuals, around 1,100 were referred to additional support services to address their broader needs. This is done through partnership with the Victim Support Agency, where victims are provided with a comprehensive range of support services tailored to their individual needs, ensuring a coordinated and holistic approach to assistance. Through the VSA, we have also been able to support individuals who seek guidance and assistance prior to filing a police report, ensuring they receive timely information and appropriate support at every stage of the process. Looking ahead, the Police Victim Support remains committed to delivering further improved services to crime victims and to continuing to strengthen trust and confidence between the police and the community.

Announcements 2025

Emotional Support Unit

The Emotional Support Service of the Victim Support Agency has been strengthened through targeted service enhancements that have increased capacity, reach, and measurable outcomes. Team expansion and structured professional development, delivered through internal and external training, have enhanced the quality and consistency of trauma-informed support across the core therapeutic service and three specialist focus areas: older persons, persons with disabilities, and crisis response. Strategic engagement with community stakeholders through the Outreach Programme, alongside targeted media engagement, have increased service visibility and uptake. Programme delivery has been further expanded through specialised information sessions and structured support and therapeutic groups. A newly introduced metaphor-based therapeutic group complements the existing interventions by enabling participants to reframe experiences of victimisation into narratives of resilience and empowerment, supporting recovery, emotional processing, and improved psychosocial outcomes.

Legal & Policy Unit

The services provided by the Agency's Legal Section constitute one of the Agency's core services. Since the inception of these services, the number of cases has increased substantially, necessitating an increase in human resources.

The Section provides legal guidance and assistance to clients who are referred to the Agency, who approach the Agency directly, or who contact the 116006 helpline. Services are delivered either in person at the Agency's offices in Valletta, Santa Luċija, Qawra and Gozo, or by telephone to facilitate access. All services are provided free of charge and delivered in a highly professional manner. Following the latest legislative amendments, the legal services provided have been extended to include the filing of complaints on behalf of clients, the recovery of confiscated items, and assistance in completing forms for compensation claims. The Agency is currently exploring the possibility of further expanding these services, which will however require additional legal amendments.

The new services introduced in 2025 are:

- The domestic violence panic alarm device;
- Transport services for victims to and from court;
- The provision of child-care services to victims who need to attend court to testify;
- The provision of carers for older or vulnerable persons dependant on victim while victim is attending court to testify;
- Legal services to older persons delivered by a specialised legal professional.

Events



A walk organised to commemorate the European Day for Victims of Crime



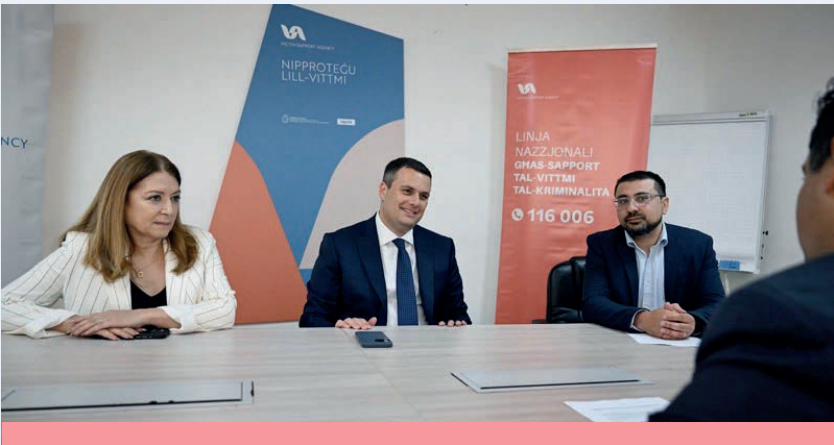
Annual Conference 2025



Annual Conference in Gozo



Quality Mark Achievement



Launch of Childcare/Home Carer service for victims required to attend court sittings

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