

logical research. But the experts failed to scrutinise the information they received. Their narrative reproduced claims from alleged traffickers, souteneurs and the like with little effort to understand how such persons knew what they claimed to know, and why they were willing to share it with researchers. It is unlikely that criminals are *more* honest than politicians. Notwithstanding the regimes of Hitler and Mussolini, statements by those engaged in criminal activities should be met with at least the same degree of scepticism as that of politicians and government officials.

Finally, it is easy to see how criminal events can have severe political consequences. Murders, bombings and so on can trigger conflicts between countries, even wars. It is also true that research into criminal activities contributes to such tensions as well. The *Report of the Special Body of Experts* avoided reference to religious, ethnic or racial identity of persons in various countries or regions, except for those referred to as Jews. The report gives the impression of Jewish over-involvement in trafficking, a characterisation that coincided with claims that the National Socialists made about 'international Jewry' as directors of the worldwide white slave trade. In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler said it had been the sight of Jewish prostitutes polluting Vienna that had made him an anti-Semite. In the 1930s, Jewish organisations published material refuting such claims, including those made in the League of Nations survey.

One conclusion that can be reached from this is that research into trans-national crime problems has political and moral implications of significant dimension, and inferences about who is to blame, for what, and how others should respond, are inescapable. Researchers who pursue an understanding of global crime, and their sponsors, are advised to be prepared.

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## PROJECT RE- PORT AVICRI – ATTENTION FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME



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### **Description of the project**

The AViCri (Attention for Victims of Crime) Project is part of the European Daphne II Programme aimed at victims of crime and the prevention of secondary victimization. (This programme is the second phase of the Daphne programme).

The European Council (with the Framework Decision of 15 March 2001) has established victims' needs for contact with workers who are trained to assess the particular situation of a victim, which is characterized by specific requisites, needs and precautions. This is one of the rights accorded to victims.

The organization heading the project was the Faculty of Psychology 2, of the "Sapienza" University of Rome, represented by the Project Leader Prof. Anna Maria Giannini.

The partners in Italy were: Ministry of Interior – Department of Public Security – Central Directorate of Criminal Police, Latium Region, Regional Directorate of Social Services, Italian Inter-University Centre for the Study and Research on the Origins and Development of Pro-social and Anti-social Motivations and the two NGOs "Differenza Donna" and "Telefono Rosa".

The Project is also being carried out in Europe by international partners such as the Ministry of Home Affairs and Sport of Lower Saxony (Germany), Devon and Cornwall Police and the Metropolitan Police of London (UK).

### **The aim of the project**

The main target of the AViCri project was to create a training package both versatile enough to be used among police forces around Europe and sufficiently specific to tackle a subject such as that of the victims of crime. The result, available as a standard training programme, a CD-ROM and a manual on the theory and practice, aims to stimulate personal skills and awareness, and put forward qualified scientific knowledge, hence professionalising work procedures.

## Methods

Two steps – the gathering of quantitative and qualitative data in Italy and Europe on the phenomenon of victimization, and the structuring and provision of a specially designed training package – have allowed AViCri to achieve the desired results within the intended timeframe of two years, and to present these in the best manner and means possible (conventions, magazines, press releases and websites).

As part of the research, questionnaires were devised and put to, respectively: people who have been victims of crime, people who have never been involved in criminal charges, Italian law enforcement officers (the Carabinieri Corps, Italian National Police and Guardia di Finanza Corps) and trainers at European Police Academies. The purpose was to determine how to bring operators in contact with users, in terms of means for approaching victims: how to respond in contact with the user, and the strategies for networking with centres in the area. Semi-structured interviews, over 3,000 questionnaires and a survey on work procedures and training models in 27 European countries have given an overall idea of the structure and network of convergences/divergences, harmony and discrepancies between people and operators, and determined the methods used around Europe for helping victims, the applicable regulatory frameworks and varying awareness of the issue in question.

The research carried out in Italy on such a vast, significant and mixed sample of people, together with research in Europe, offers an impressively broad view of the approach to victims of crime.

**The results of the research** served to devise a standardized work procedure for application in all of Europe.

Various pilot courses were carried out during the development phase at the Italian Interagency College of Advanced Studies for Law Enforcement Officials. These courses were intended for future trainers who will have the task of teaching in several courses based on a standard training package designed according to the information gleaned from the research. The courses, based on the principle of maximum interaction between distinct professionalisms and maximum operability, aim to improve the theoretical knowledge and practical skills required to approach victims of crime, preventing secondary victimization and improving the quality of testimony.

The course programmes, based on the approach of the Italian Police can, on account of their targets, be considered a means in their own right for cultural change. Italy plays an active role in this change, offering – as in the case of the AViCri project – a theoretical-practical framework for victimology based on a range of disciplines spanning criminology and law, psychology, sociology, legal medicine and communication techniques.

On an international level, the Italian courses are the keystone to developing standard training programmes for police forces to be mainstreamed, rooted in the subject of victimology and focusing in particular on women aged 18 to 70 years old.

In brief, the final results of the project are: a standard procedure for assessing the requisites involved in the approach to victims, and a tested training model with a manual and CD-ROM featuring multimedia educational aids to be used in courses targeted to law enforcement officials and operators. This package is **an example of good practice** that can be applied in the various countries of the European Union.