



EUROPEAN **FORUM** FOR RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Connecting People to Restore Just Relations

Restorative justice in GBV cases – the needs of victims

CEP INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE - 16 OCTOBER 2025

EDIT TÖRZS – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Supported by the
European Union

European Forum for Restorative Justice



NGO, network, 450+ members, based in Leuven, Belgium, founded in 2000

Vision: every person in Europe has access to high quality restorative justice services in any time and in any case

Strategic aims:

1. Developing high quality practice
2. Raising awareness on RJ
3. Contributing to policy development

All informed by and connected to research.

Gender-based violence in the EU

Data from 2020-2024

The prevalence of violence: 1 in 3 women experienced physical violence, sexual violence, or threats in their adulthood.

Sexual violence and rape: 1 in 6 women

Violence at home: 1 in 5 women have faced physical or sexual violence from their partner, a relative, or another member of their household.

Sexual harassment at work: 1 in 3 women have been sexually harassed at work.

The non-reporting of violence: only 1 in 5 women have contacted a healthcare or social service provider, and **just 1 in 8 have reported the incident to the police.**



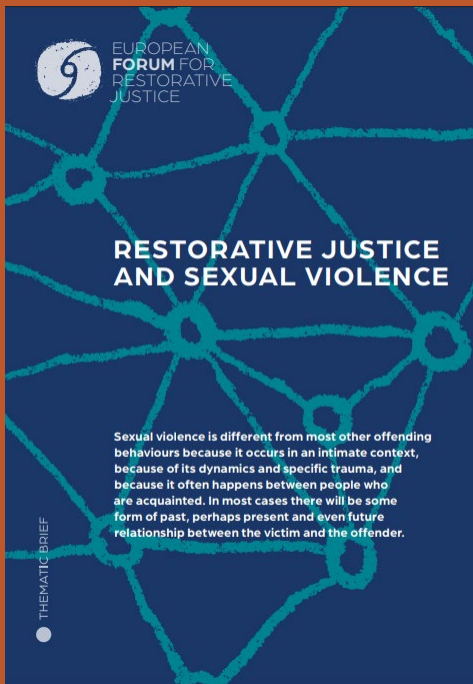
Restorative justice and GBV

Restorative justice:

- focuses on harm
 - creates a safe space for dialogue between people involved
 - aim is common understanding and restoration of the harm
 - voluntary process
- > not only victim-offender mediation
- > not only as diversion

GBV:

- RJ is not accessible in many countries
- specific needs of victims
- specific risks, especially in domestic violence



The story of Ailbhe



Introduction

<https://www.euforumrj.org/restorative-justice-and-sexual-violence>



The story of Ailbhe

Reflection

What needs victims may have in such a case?



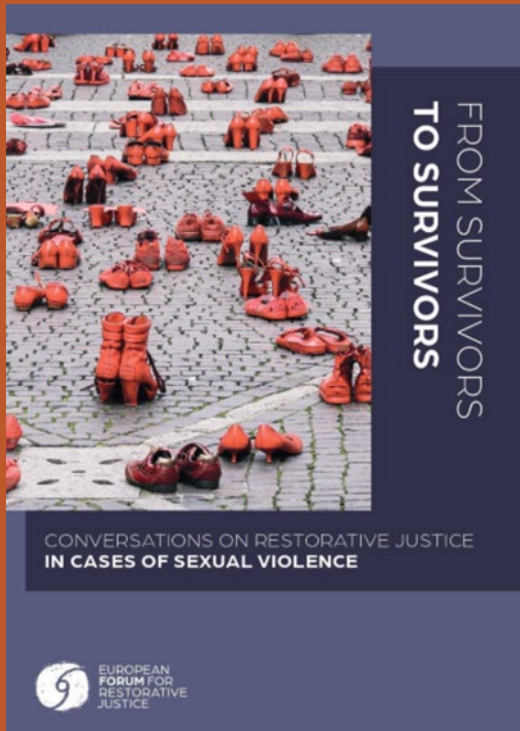
Victims' needs

- each victim is unique
- needs change with time

According to the EC, victims need:

1. recognition and respectful treatment
2. protection from further harm
3. support and assistance
4. access to justice
5. compensation and restoration

+ need for information, meaning, agency and empowerment, improving relationship, seeing accountability, healing, growth, self-improvement, to move forward, identity from victim to survivor



The story of Ailbhe

The justice process

Which needs of the victim were met during the justice process?



The story of Ailbhe



Road to restorative justice



The story of Ailbhe



The restorative meeting and its impact



The story of Ailbhe

Reflection

What needs were met by the restorative process?

How may did it contribute to the reintegration of the offender?



Restorative justice and probation

Restorative justice supports desistance from crime.

Restorative justice can be applied:

- as diversion
- parallel to the criminal justice process (-> outcome may be part of sentence or individual probation plan)
- in prison
 - victim-offender process (direct or surrogate victim)
 - conflicts within prison
 - victim empathy programs
 - to prepare release
- in probation
 - victim-offender processes
 - conflicts/issues with social network
 - to design/review individual probation plan

Restorative justice and probation

Discussion

How can probation services support restorative justice for their clients?

International Restorative Justice Week – 16-22 November 2025

EFRJ 25th anniversary and REstART art festival - 5-9 December, Belgium

EFRJ Winter Academy – 2-6 February 2026, Leuven, Belgium

EFRJ International Conference - 11-13 June 2026, Poznan, Poland

More resources: <https://www.euforumrj.org/restorative-justice-and-sexual-violence>

Sign up to our Newsflash: <https://www.euforumrj.org/news>

Thank you!

www.euforumrj.org

edit.torzs@euforumrj.org



Supported by the
Justice Programme
of the European Union