

Technical description

Background information

The victim support service is a state-funded service organized by the Social Insurance Board on the basis of the Victim Support Act (<https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akt/106012023001>). The purpose of the service is to provide appropriate support and assistance to victims of crime, violence, or even crisis. The basic victim support service is provided by victim support workers who are located in all counties across Estonia, mainly in the same building as the police. There are a total of 29 chief victim support specialists at police stations. The service has been in operation since 2005.

Restorative justice services, one of which is a mediation service, are also offered as a victim support service; mediation service for the purposes of the Victim Support Act, a mediation service is a restorative justice service which includes the organization of the mediation proceedings provided in § 203² of the Code of Criminal Procedure and monitoring of compliance with the conditions of the written agreement entered into as a result thereof (§ 27 VSA).

A mediation service is also deemed to include the organization of the mediation proceedings and, where necessary, monitoring of compliance with the conditions of a written agreement entered into as a result of the mediation proceedings, where one of the following conditions occurs:

- 1) a minor has assumed an obligation to use the mediation services on the basis of clause 4 of subsection 1 of § 30 of the Code of Misdemeanour Procedure;
- 2) when criminal proceedings are terminated, the obligation to use mediation services has been applied to a minor with their consent on the basis of clause 5 of subsection 2 of § 201 Code of Criminal Procedure;
- 3) the court has applied mediation services to a minor as a sanction on the grounds of § 87 of the Penal Code;
- 4) no criminal proceedings have been commenced about a minor on the grounds of subsection 1 of § 201 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, or these have been terminated because the unlawful act was committed by a minor who was incapable of guilt on the grounds of their age;
- 5) no criminal proceedings have been commenced about a minor on the grounds of clause 1 of subsection 1 of § 29 of the Code of Misdemeanour Procedure, or these have been terminated because the unlawful act was committed by a minor who was incapable of guilt on the grounds of their age.

A mediation service is also deemed to include the organization of the mediation proceedings and, where necessary, monitoring compliance with the conditions of a written agreement entered into as a result. Victim support workers conduct mediation procedures. A large number of mediation procedures are related to intimate partner violence. Today, the mediation procedure was carried out by one victim support worker. The Social Insurance Board has developed instructional materials for mediating cases of intimate partner violence (see Annex 2, guide to the mediation service in cases of intimate partner violence, and Annex 3, process diagram in cases of intimate partner violence).

The preparation of victim support workers for conducting mediation procedures varies. There is no separate training program and preparation. In part, victim support workers have undergone training based on the principles of restorative justice. In part, guidance is provided on an ongoing basis upon hiring, including practical training while shadowing a senior colleague. The Social Insurance Board has also created a publicly available restorative justice e-training, the completion of which is mandatory for trainees before the training program is procured. The e-training is available here: <https://digiriigiakadeemia.ee/course/view.php?id=114>.

In cases of intimate partner violence, there are different risk factors and factors that the victim support worker must monitor when conducting the mediation procedure. Also, excellent training is needed when solving these cases to ensure the client's psychological safety and voluntariness and prevent re-victimization.

The service being procured is financed by measure 21.4.7.9 of the 2021-2027 Cohesion Policy funds "Services aimed at children and families are of high quality and meet the needs of families" from the funds of the project of the conditions for granting support "Supporting children and families."

The purpose of the service

Creation of a training program for victim support workers, the purpose of which is to ensure adequate preparation for conducting mediations in cases of intimate partner violence based on the practice of restorative justice. The training program consists of two stages; in stage I, the procurement partner prepares a training program for the Contracting Authority (curriculum and training materials based on it). In stage II, the procurement partner conducts the training of trainers based on the prepared curriculum and training material and prepares the trainers for the training of mediators according to the training program.

The target group of the service

Victim support workers and volunteers who conduct or will conduct in the future mediation procedures in cases of intimate partner violence, trainers.

Stage I - creation of the training program (*handover no later than December 20, 2024*)

- preparation of the curriculum.
- introducing changes/corrections in the curriculum, if necessary, according to the Contracting Authority's proposals.
- training materials for training participants.

The structure and plan of the training program (including methods and methodologies) must be chosen to support the growth of awareness and skills in solving cases of intimate partner violence in the most effective way and to prepare those who have completed the training to conduct mediation in practice. The volume of the training program is 3-5 training days (24-40 academic hours, whereas one academic hour = 45 minutes).

The training program must consider the values and principles of restorative justice and apply them to resolving more straightforward cases (community conflicts, school conflicts). The training program must also take into account the dynamics and theory of intimate partner

violence and the risks of re-victimization. The procurement partner undertakes to comply with the requirements for notification and disclosure of grants and to refer to the funding source of the program, including when notifying the public, to comply with the requirements outlined in Regulation No. 54 of the Government of the Republic of May 12, 2022 "Notifying the public about the provision of funds from Cohesion and Internal Security Policy funds for the period 2021-2027".

The curriculum is coordinated with the Contracting Authority before creating the training materials. The Contracting Authority has the right to ask for explanations regarding the selected topics and methods, to give guidelines regarding the curriculum, training process, and training materials, as well as the content and organization of the training. The Contracting Authority will provide feedback on the curriculum within ten working days at the latest. The curriculum and training materials must be delivered to the Contracting Authority digitally. All rights related to the curriculum and materials are transferred to the Contracting Authority.

The curriculum must provide the learner with knowledge and skills about the principles and processes of intimate partner violence cases. The curriculum must meet the following criteria:

- it must contain clear and specific learning objectives that define what learners must know and be able to do after completing the training;
- it must describe how learning outcomes are assessed and measured, ensuring that learners achieve the necessary knowledge and skills;
- it must include diverse and essentially practical, active teaching methods (at least 60%);
- it must take into account contemporary adult education principles and methodologies;
- it must include a detailed description of the learning process, including the schedule and learning materials;
- It must contain high-quality teaching materials that are evidence-based and based on the latest scientific, legal, and practical information.

Stage II - piloting the training program by training the trainers *(must be completed no later than 30.05.2025).*

Piloting the training program consists of conducting training for the procurement target group. The Contracting Authority will put together the training group for trainers, which has a maximum group size of 20 people. The Contracting Authority ensures and organizes the training premises and other technical arrangements, which do not entail costs for the procurement partner. The training dates will be agreed upon with the procurement partner by January 20, 2025, at the latest. The training for trainers must be completed by 30.05.2025 at the latest.

Requirements for the training:

- the volume of the training program is 3-5 training days (24-40 academic hours, whereas one academic hour = 45 minutes).
- the training must be conducted in two non-consecutive study sessions.
- the training will be conducted as contact training. In exceptional circumstances and with the Contracting Authority's consent, during the validity of the particular situation or restrictions established by the Government of the Republic, it is possible to organize training in the form of contact training as online training;

- The Contracting Authority provides information about the training and the initial registration for the training, and confirmations about participation in the training days are collected by the Contracting Authority.
- the content conveyed on different training days must form a whole.
- to ensure that the participants acquire the learning outcomes outlined in the curriculum;
- trainings are conducted on premises organized by the Contracting Authority.
- training takes place in Estonian or English.
- creating the mandate must be guided by the public notification rules for using the ESF period 2021-2027 Cohesion funds. The curriculum, the materials, and the agenda at the training place are properly referenced to the sponsor (the Contracting Authority will share the detailed reference information with the procurement partner after signing the contract);
- the conditions for completing the training and the documents to be issued are regulated by the procurement partner in cooperation with the Contracting Authority.

When preparing the curriculum and conducting training, the procurement partner must prefer environmentally friendly solutions, for example:

- to conduct work meetings and other meetings via the web, if possible, in particular, to reduce the carbon footprint resulting from the excessive use of transport;
- to avoid printing out unnecessary documents and, if possible, prefer materials in digital form;
- The materials transmitted by the procurement partner in digital form must be stored and transmitted in an optimal volume to avoid unnecessarily large data files and thus reduce digital pollution.
- After the contract is executed, redundant digital materials, such as draft files, work documents that are not necessary for storage, etc., should be deleted since unnecessary file storage on IT servers has a debilitating effect on the environment and increases digital pollution.

Requirements for the Procurement Partner

The procurement partner must ensure the number of team members in such a way that it can create the training curriculum and training materials and organize and conduct the training under the goals and content stated in the technical description. The procurement partner will be involved in the creation of training specialists with appropriate sectoral education, work experience, and experience in training and creating content for the course, according to the topics (e.g., preparation of curriculum and materials, organization of training, conducting the training).

- Experience in restorative justice practices for at least 5 years.
- Experience as a restorative justice practice trainer - at least three trainings in the last 2 years.
- Experience in creating training related to restorative justice.
- Previous experience creating theoretical materials (manual, article, instruction, etc.) - at least two materials created in the last 3 years.

- Previous experience practicing restorative justice practices in intimate partner violence cases.