

WORKSHOP

-

5TH WORLD  
CONGRESS ON  
PROBATION  
AND PAROLE

-

OTTAWA 2022



Tamara Küpper  
Hans Dominicus



# JUDICIAL VICTIM ASSISTANCE IN THE FLEMISH PROBATION SERVICE

1. THE PROBATION SERVICE IN BELGIUM / FLANDERS
2. WHAT IS JUDICIAL VICTIM SUPPORT BY THE PROBATION SERVICE ?
3. EXAMPLES AND EXPERIENCES
4. CONCLUSIONS

# I. THE PROBATION SERVICE IN BELGIUM / FLANDERS

# I. THE PROBATION SERVICE IN BELGIUM / FLANDERS



**1888** : first law on 'conditional release' from prison

**1964** : first law on 'probation'

**1994** : first laws on 'mediation', 'community service' and 'offender training programs'

**1998** : introduction of "judicial victim support" in the code of criminal procedure

**2002** : new law on community sentence as autonomus sanction (work punishment)

**2006** : total reform of the conditional release legislation

**2014** : new laws on probation and electronic monitoring as autonomus sanctions

...

# I. THE PROBATION SERVICE IN BELGIUM / FLANDERS

1996



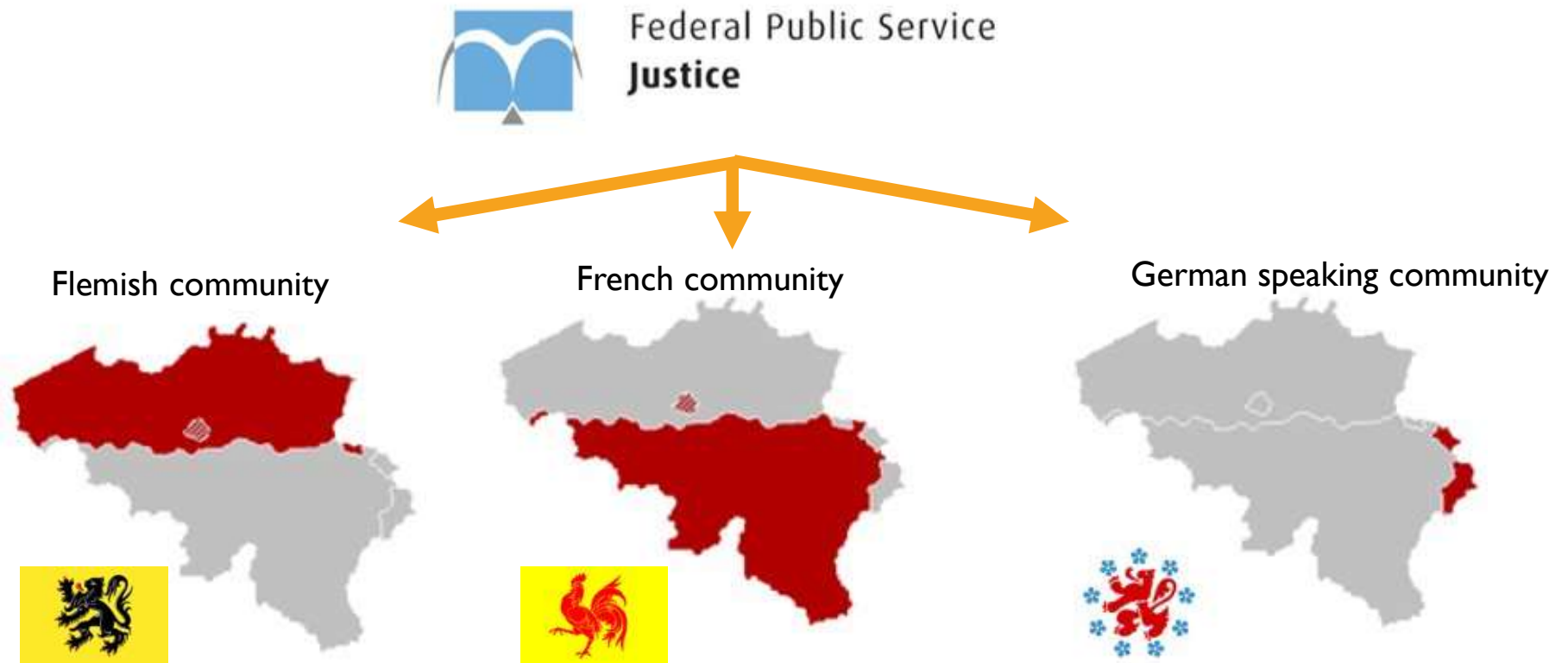
# I. THE PROBATION SERVICE IN BELGIUM

1999



# I. THE PROBATION SERVICE IN BELGIUM / FLANDERS

2014-2015



# I. THE PROBATION SERVICE IN BELGIUM / FLANDERS

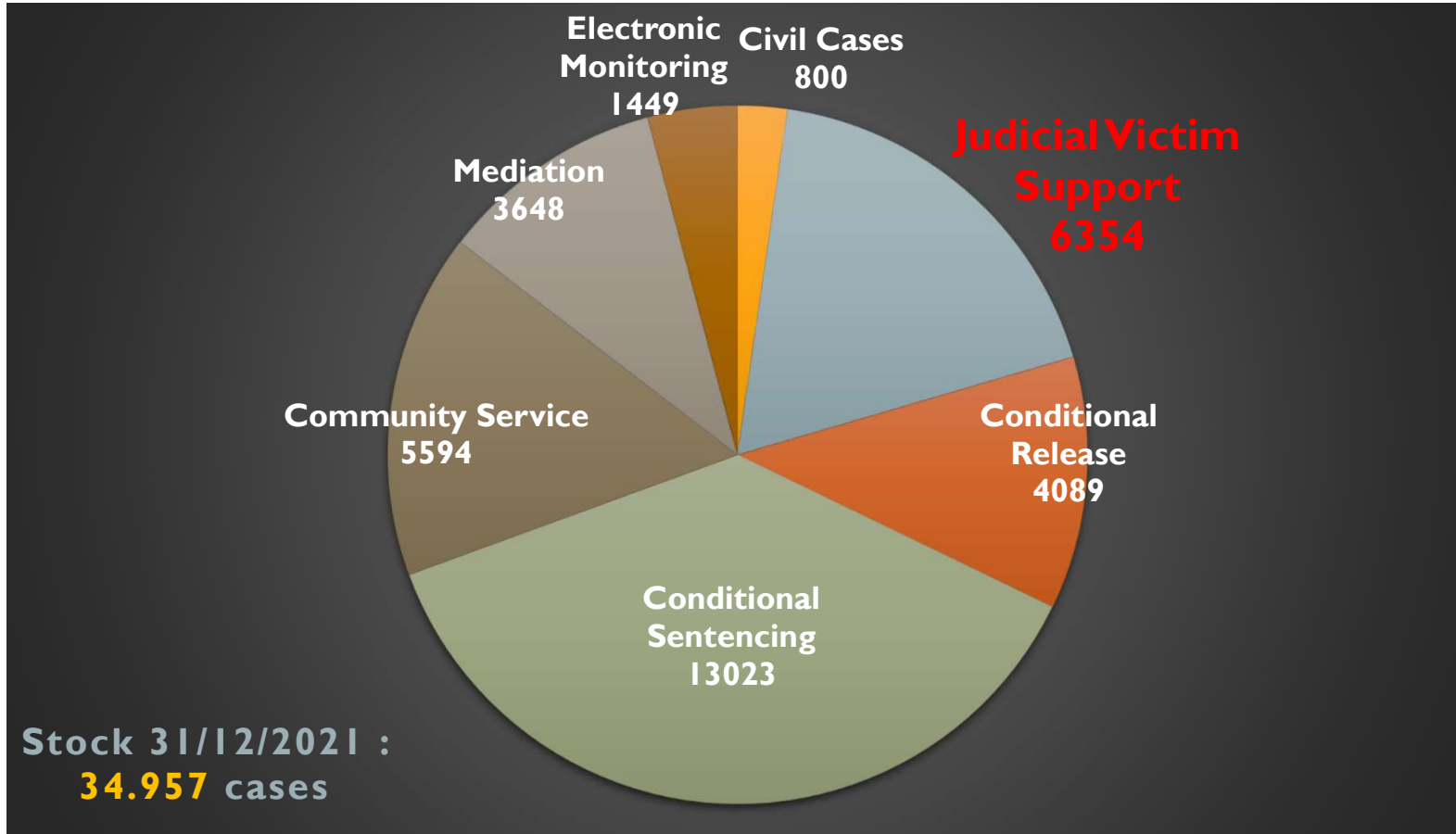
2022

Flemish  
department of  
public health  
and welfare



Flemish  
Justice and  
Enforcement  
Agency

# I. THE FLEMISH PROBATION SERVICE



Staff  
Probation  
Service  
(31/12/2021 - total)  
↓  
**816**  
(735,7 FTE)

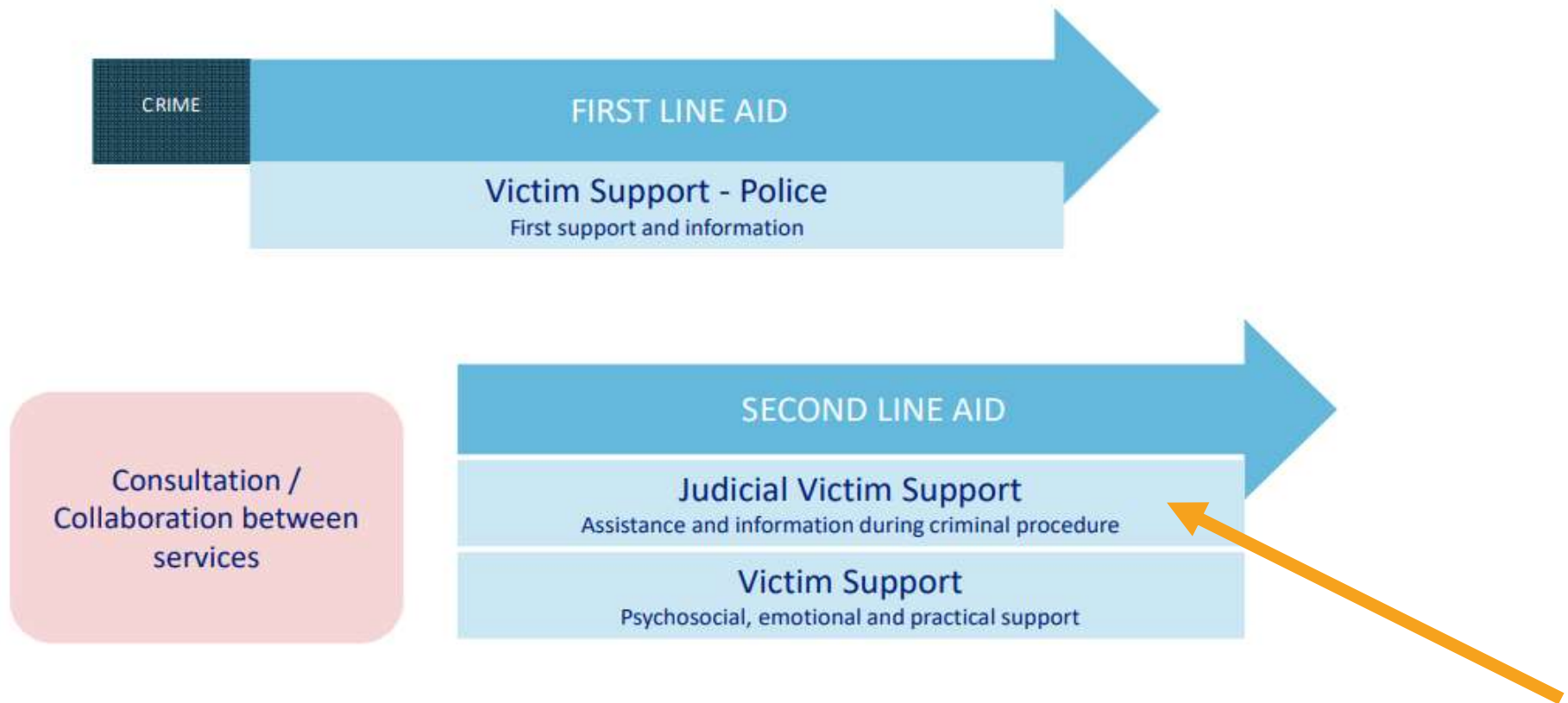
## 2. WHAT IS JUDICIAL VICTIM SUPPORT BY THE PROBATION SERVICE ?

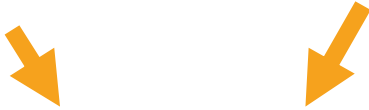
## 2. WHAT IS JUDICIAL VICTIM SUPPORT BY THE PROBATION SERVICE ?

**Legal base : article 3bis preliminary titel of Code of Criminal Procedure**

“Victims of crime and their relatives should be treated carefully and correctly, in specific by providing the necessary information and, in case, putting them in touch with specialized services and in particular with justice assistants.” (= *probation workers*)

## 2. WHAT IS JUDICIAL VICTIM SUPPORT BY THE PROBATION SERVICE ?





## Information

General and specific

## Assistance

Reconstruction  
Consultation criminal file  
Restitution belongings  
Sessions of court

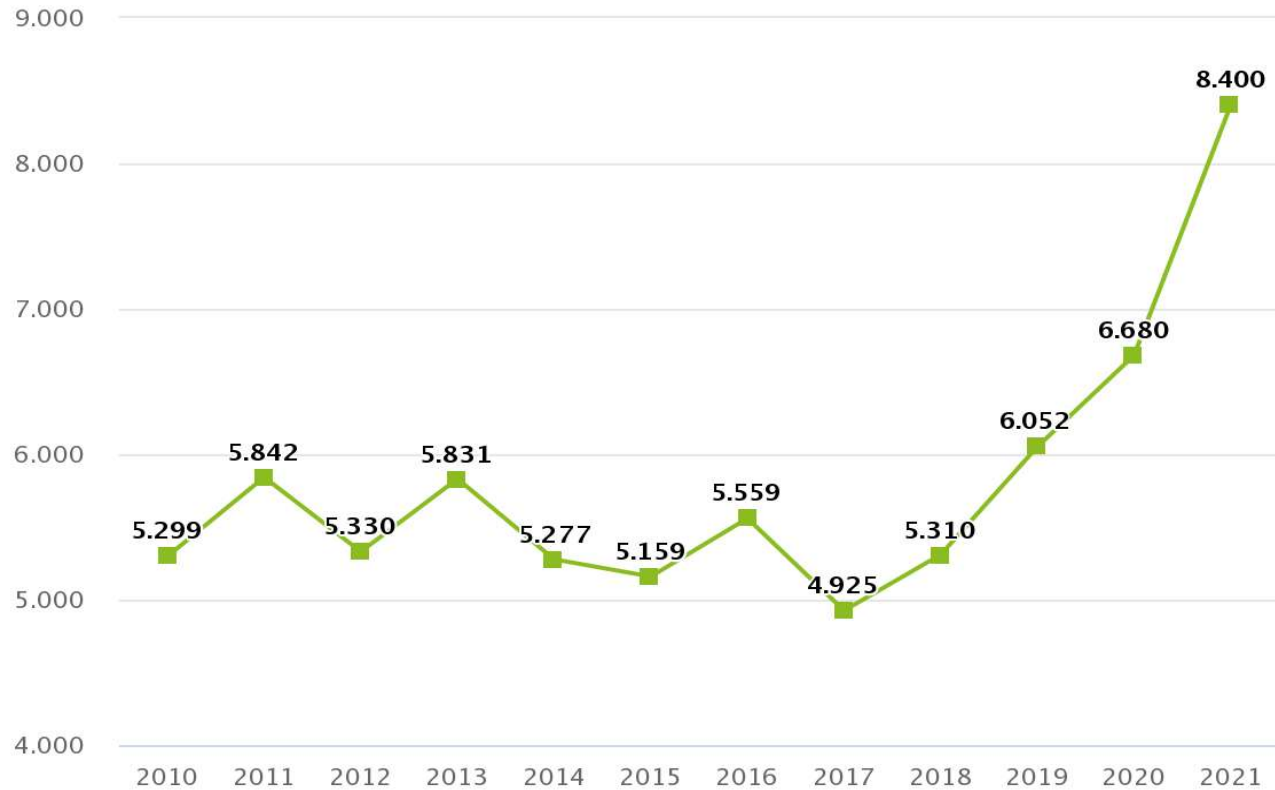
## Referral

Depending on the case

## Structural work

Educating en sensitizing magistrates  
Signal function

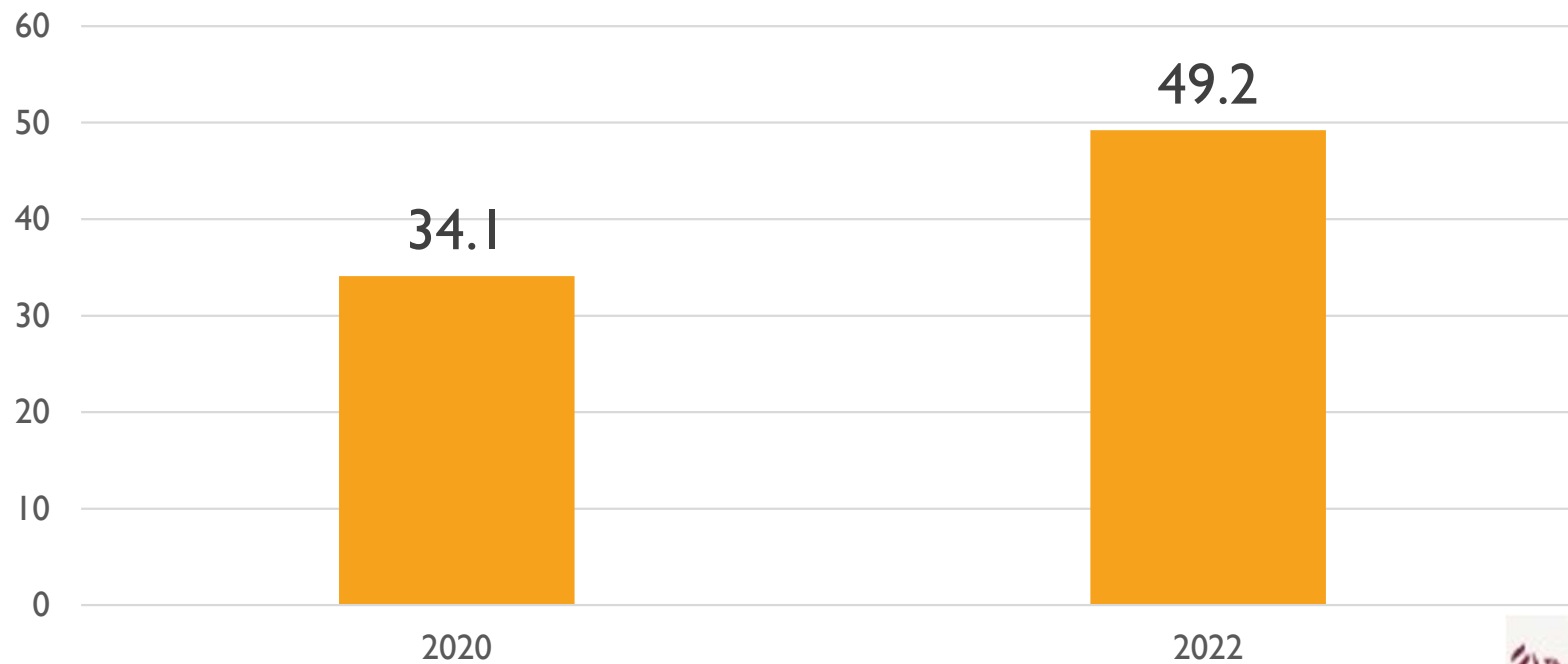
## 2. WHAT IS JUDICIAL VICTIM SUPPORT BY THE PROBATION SERVICE ?



Judicial Victim Support – evolution 2010-2021

## 2. WHAT IS JUDICIAL VICTIM SUPPORT BY THE PROBATION SERVICE ?

Number of staff - victim support - probation service (FTE)



### 3. CASESTUDY

## TRIAL ON THE BRUSSELS BOMBINGS OF 2016

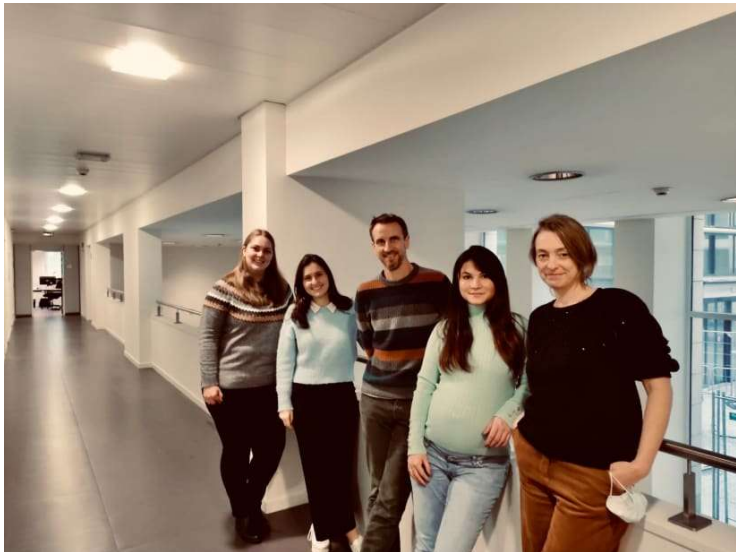
## Brussel bombings (22 March 2016)



## Role of Judicial Victim Support by the Probation Service



## Role of Judicial Victim Support by the Probation Service



Team Victim Support -  
Probation Service Brussels  
+ 20 members of other areas





## Role of Judicial Victim Support by the Probation Service – some examples

- **Supporting the victims and relatives during the discussions** with the law physicians and the Disaster Victim Identification team of the federal police
- Assisting victims with **accessing the criminal file**, including viewing the images and videos from the surveillance cameras
- Assisting victims with the **restitution of personal belongings** and/or confiscated documents
- Organizing **information sessions and guided tours** at the courthouse where the trial will be held



## Role of Judicial Victim Support by the Probation Service – some examples

- **Contacting and re-contacting victims** and relatives at different moments and fases in the proceedings
- Contacts with and **referral to organizations/people** when necessary
- Assistance during several **court sessions**
- Helping victims with the **civil claims**
- ...

## 4. CONCLUSIONS



1. Judicial Victim Support, offered by the Probation Service, has a crucial role in ensuring that victims rights are enforced and respected.
2. Necessity of an inter-agency approach: importance of learning how to work together (information sharing, difference in goals and contexts, ...), and identifying best practices.
3. Importance of sharing good practices, innovative methods and international standards (f.e. Council of Europe, Council of the European Union, United Nations,...)

# QUESTIONS ?

**tamara.kupper@vlaanderen.be**

*(Head of the Strategic Direction - Flanders Probation Division)*

**hans.dominicus@vlaanderen.be**

*(Head of the Flanders Probation Division)*