

Victims and their Criminal Procedure Status in Law Enforcement Practices in Latvia

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The current paper is devoted to the practical aspects of the status of victims in criminal procedure when it comes to crimes that have been committed. The author has tried to offer an illustrative answer to the question of what people who are involved in practical terms in work with victims think about legal regulations and practical implementation of same regarding the victims. The paper includes a concise review of Latvia's criminal procedure norms to the extent required for this discussion, looking at the law as of August 1, 2013. The discussion is focussed on the following issues: 1) public information about the issues related to the involvement of victims in the practical aspects of criminal procedure; 2) the views of more than 100 practical specialists (prosecutors, judges, attorneys, mediators) who were surveyed on the topic of currently important aspects of victims; 3) statistical data related to victims and their involvement in criminal procedure. Some of the data in this paper were obtained and/or utilised in relation to a study that is being conducted by the Centre for European Constitutional Law in partnership with the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, School of Advanced Study, University of London, "Protecting Victims' Rights in the EU: The Theory and Practice of Diversity of Treatment During the Criminal Trial." The study is being financed by the European Commission.

Keywords: Victims in criminal procedure; information about the rights of victims; settlement of cases; compensation; legal aid to victims.