



**Victim Support**  
Europe

# THE ROLE OF VICTIMS IN THE REHABILITATION PROCESS



Co-funded by  
the European Union

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# Overview:

- Notion of the victim
- The needs of victim in relation to the prison and probation system
- Relationship of the victim with the prison and probation system
- Discussion



# Victim Support Europe (VSE)

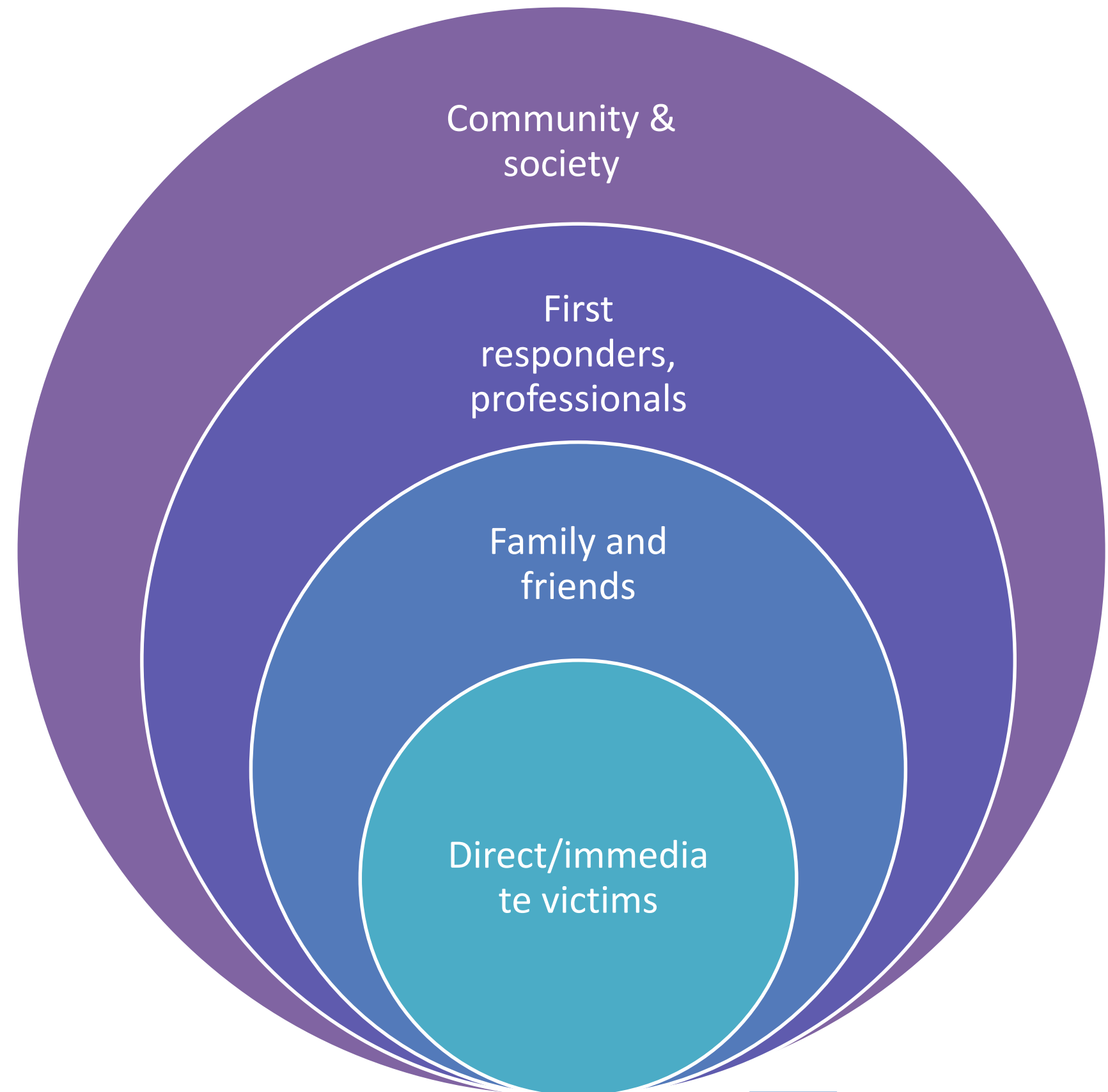
- European network advocating for the rights of victims
- Established in 1990
- 74 member organisations in 38 countries
- Advocating on behalf of all victims of all crimes
- Network members employ more than 10,000 staff members and engage with tens of thousands of volunteers
- Supporting more than 2 million victims every year



# The notion of victim



## Circles of victimisation:



# The notion of the victim:

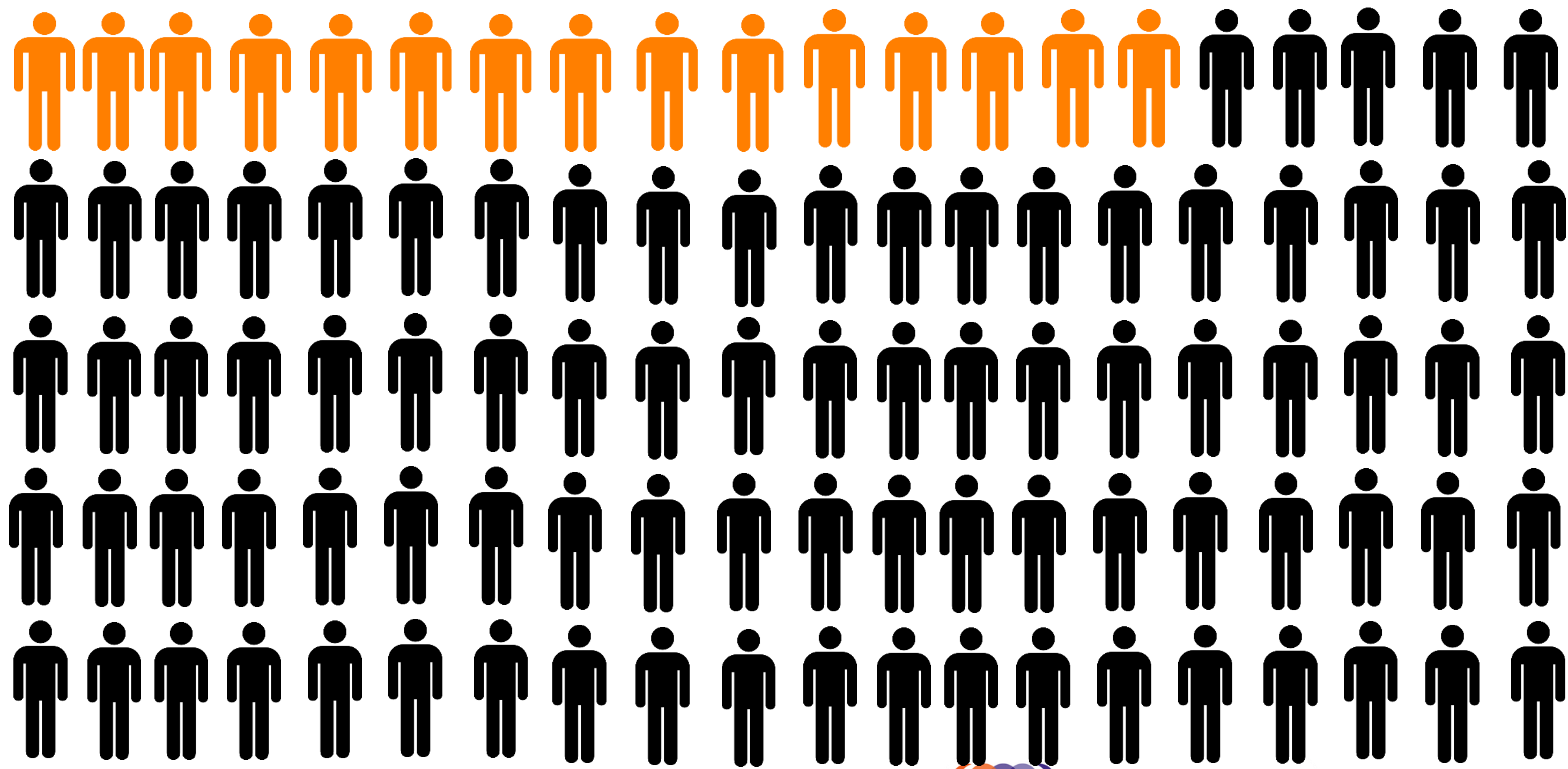
## EU Directive on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime (2012), CoE Recommendation on rights, services and support for victims of crime (2023)

A natural person who has suffered harm, including physical, mental, emotional or economic harm, directly caused by a criminal offence

Family members of a person whose death was directly caused by a criminal offence and who have suffered harm as a result of that person's death.

“Family members” means the spouse, the person who is living with the victim in a committed intimate relationship, in a joint household and on a stable and continuous basis, the relatives in the direct line, the siblings and the dependants of the victim.

# The notion of the victim:



## The notion of the victim:

The EU estimates that 15% of EU citizens fall victim of serious crime every year.



## Victims and the prison system (a case study):

### 2015 data

260 million women aged 15 and above

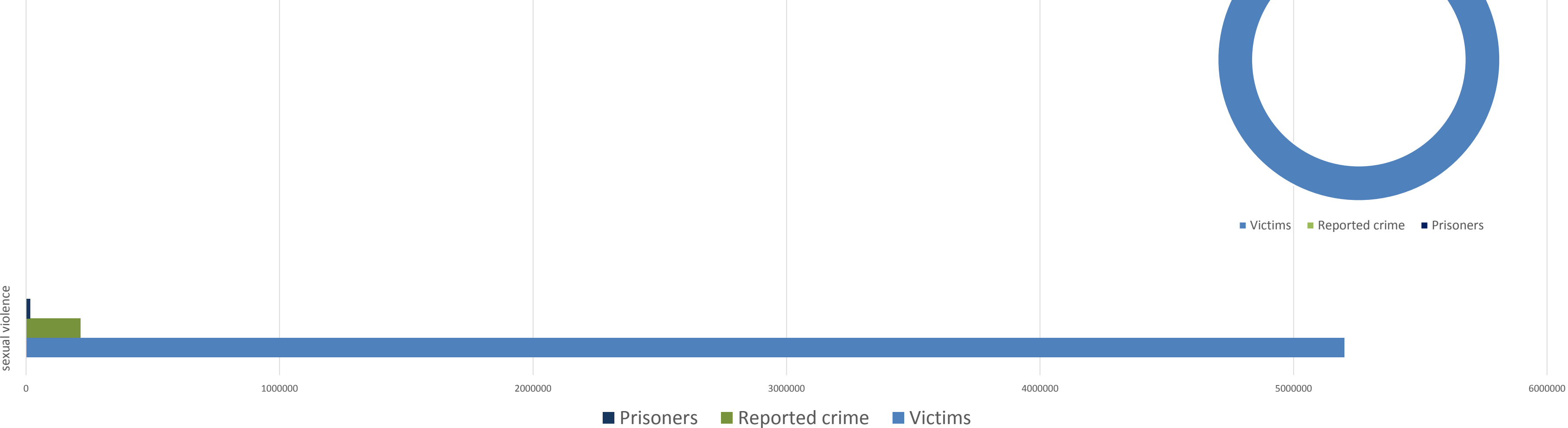
2% of women abused in previous 12 months (FRA) -> 5,2 million

215,000 cases recorded -> 4% of all victims

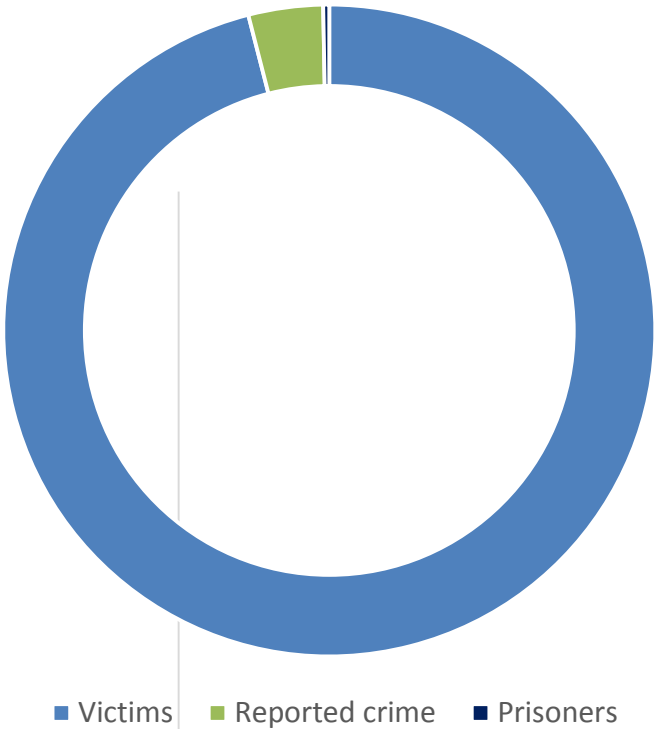
16,500 prisoners for sexual violence -> 0,3% of all cases

# Victims and the prison system:

Incarceration of sex offenders



Conviction rate





## The notion of the victim:

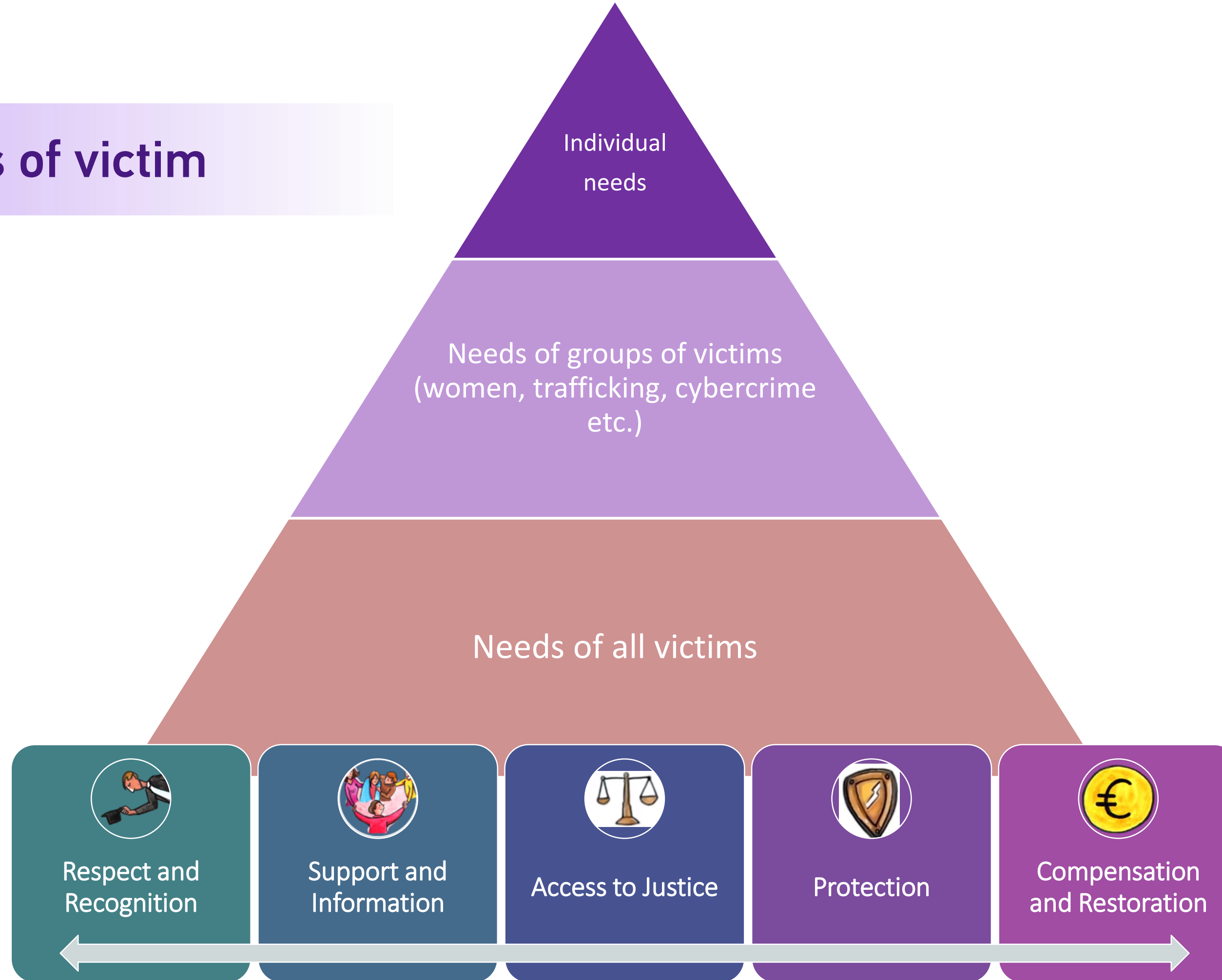
Only a TINY FRACTION of all victims see their offender go to prison.

# The needs of victim in relation to the prison and probation system





# The needs of victim



## The needs of victims:

And corresponding rights, based on the Victims' Rights Directive, Istanbul Convention, ECHR etc...



## The needs of victims:



In relation to the offender, victims have a total of **two rights**:

To obtain a **decision on compensation** (Art. 16 of VRD);

To be notified when the person remanded in custody, prosecuted or sentenced for criminal offences concerning them is **released from or has escaped detention** and to be informed of **any relevant measures** issued for their protection in case of release or escape of the offender (Art 6§5 of VRD).

# Relationship of the victim with the prison and probation system





# Victims and the prison system

Two main points of reference:

- The cycle of crime and victimisation
- Violence in the penitentiary system

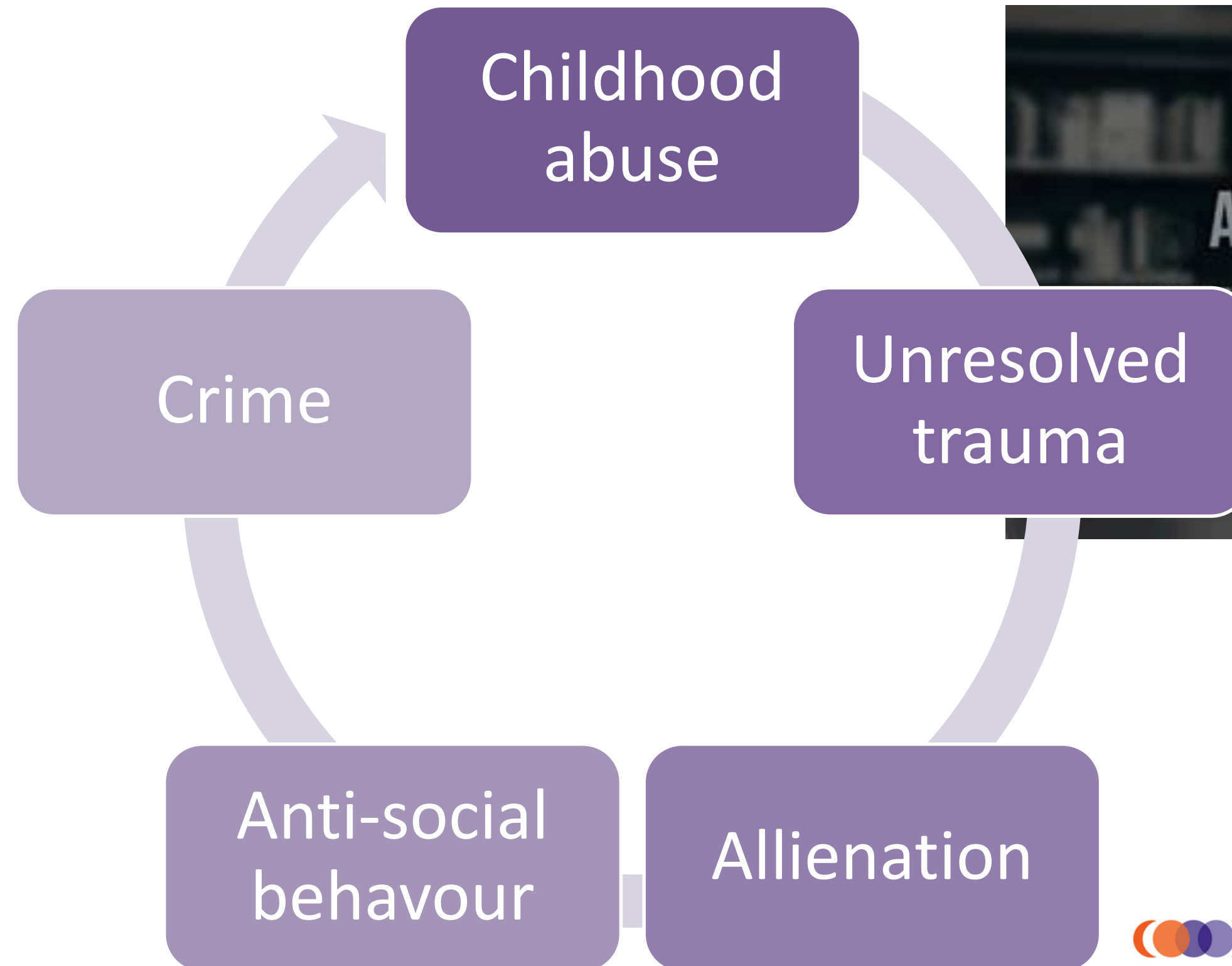
## Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and crime:

ACEs, including early childhood victimisation, are indicated to be related to a wide range of antisocial behaviours including:

- preadolescent delinquent behaviour (*Hambrick, Rubens, Brawner, & Taussig, 2017*)
- violent delinquent behaviour (*Fox, Perez, Cass, Baglivio, & Epps, 2015*),
- juvenile arrest (*Fagan & Novak, 2017*),
- juvenile offending trajectories (*Baglivio, Wolff, Piquero, & Epps, 2015*),
- juvenile recidivism (*Wolff & Baglivio, 2016; Wolff, Baglivio, & Piquero, 2017*),
- life-course offending (*Craig, Piquero, Farrington, & Ttofi, 2017*)
- future victimisation (*Ports, Ford, & Merrick, 2016; Widom, Czaja, & Dutton, 2008*)



## From victim to offender:



## Victimisation in places of detention:

Higher incidence of crimes in prison

- 20 violent assaults per 100 prisoners in England and Wales in 2020
- 212 per 1,000 female inmates in the US victims of sexual violence in 2006
- Many studies indicate that male facilities have higher rate of sexual violence
- Female inmates are more often victimised by staff, male inmates by other inmates
- Violence against ethnic minorities in prisons and LGBTI+ disproportionately high



# Concluding remarks





## Some concluding remarks:

Only a fraction of victims has contact with prison and probation system

A disproportionate number of prisoners has experience of victimisation – either in drivers for their criminal behaviour or through victimisation in relation to their incarceration

There is limited data of the availability of victim support to persons deprived of liberty

## Some conclusions:

Only a very few victims have contact with the prison and probation system

A large proportion of prisoners have experience of victimisation – either in the drivers of their criminal behaviour or in their experience of deprivation of liberty





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Europe

# THANK YOU!

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