

Directive (EU) 2017/541 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2017 on combating terrorism and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/475/JHA and amending Council Decision 2005/671/JHA

TITLE V

PROVISIONS ON PROTECTION OF, SUPPORT TO, AND RIGHTS OF VICTIMS OF TERRORISM

Article 24

Assistance and support to victims of terrorism

1 Member States shall ensure that investigations into, or prosecution of, offences covered by this Directive are not dependent on a report or accusation made by a victim of terrorism or other person subjected to the offence, at least if the acts were committed on the territory of the Member State.

2 Member States shall ensure that support services addressing the specific needs of victims of terrorism are in place in accordance with Directive 2012/29/EU and that they are available for victims of terrorism immediately after a terrorist attack and for as long as necessary. Such services shall be provided in addition to, or as an integrated part of, general victim support services, which may call on existing entities providing specialist support.

3 The support services shall have the ability to provide assistance and support to victims of terrorism in accordance with their specific needs. The services shall be confidential, free of charge and easily accessible to all victims of terrorism. They shall include in particular:

- a emotional and psychological support, such as trauma support and counselling;
- b provision of advice and information on any relevant legal, practical or financial matters, including facilitating the exercise of the right to information of victims of terrorism, as laid down in Article 26;
- c assistance with claims regarding compensation for victims of terrorism available under the national law of the Member State concerned.

4 Member States shall ensure that mechanisms or protocols are in place allowing for activation of support services for victims of terrorism within the framework of their national emergency-response infrastructures. Such mechanisms or protocols shall envisage the coordination of relevant authorities, agencies and bodies to be able to provide a comprehensive response to the needs of victims and their family members immediately after a terrorist attack and for as long as necessary, including adequate means facilitating the identification of and communication to victims and their families.

5 Member States shall ensure that adequate medical treatment is provided to victims of terrorism immediately after a terrorist attack and for as long as necessary. Member States shall retain the right to organise the provision of medical treatment to victims of terrorism in accordance with their national healthcare systems.

6 Member States shall ensure that victims of terrorism have access to legal aid in accordance with Article 13 of Directive 2012/29/EU, where they have the status of parties to criminal proceedings. Member States shall ensure that the severity and the circumstances of the

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criminal offence are duly reflected in the conditions and procedural rules under which victims of terrorism have access to legal aid in accordance with national law.

7 This Directive shall apply in addition, and without prejudice, to measures laid down in Directive 2012/29/EU.