



Assisting Victims of Terrorism: Towards a European Standard of Justice

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The fight against terrorism is receiving increased awareness due to recent worldwide large-scale terrorist acts, and only since then has some attention been directed specifically to victims of terrorism. Existing legal instruments of international bodies like the European Union, the Council of Europe and the United Nations concerning victims of terrorism are relatively abstract or include victims of terrorism under the broader heading of victims of crime in general. In addition, policies and legislation relating to victims of crime or victims of terrorism vary widely on the domestic level. Against this background, the European Union commissioned a project that should aim to develop more extensive standards for the aid and assistance of victims of terrorism at the European level. This study provides the basis from which more extensive standards could be derived. The study focuses particularly on developing standards in the field of continuing assistance, access to justice, administration of justice and compensation to victims of terrorism. A novel feature of the approach is that also the possible utility of restorative justice approaches is examined. An important question to address was whether there is a real need to adopt specific standards for victims of terrorism, thereby implying that their needs might differ from victims of ordinary crime.



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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

The large-scale terrorist attacks on 9/11 resulted in more attention being devoted to victims of terrorist acts. Discussions took place on how their needs could be best accommodated. The Madrid bombings in March 2004 gave further impetus to this process. This development is also part of a recent trend towards general victim of crime policies that branch out into specialized policies devised to meet the needs of particular groups of victims such as victims of trafficking, victims of sexual violence and abuse or victims of traffic accidents. However, although a movement of national and international solidarity relating to addressing the needs of victims of terrorism has developed, political consensus is still fragile.

This book provides a thorough analysis of the specific needs of victims of terrorism (using both legal and psycho-social studies), compared to victims of other forms of crime. The study combines different disciplines, enabling to combine the different perspectives leading to synergy in the analysis of the legal and psycho-social needs of victims of terrorism. Furthermore the appropriateness of restorative justice practices in the context of terrorism is included and provides challenging new insights.

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