



2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Supporting Victims of Crime Across Ireland

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CHAIRPERSON'S WELCOME

As Chairperson of the Board of Crime Victims Helpline (CVH), it is my pleasure to introduce our 2025 Annual Report. This report reflects another year of progress for the organisation and demonstrates our continued commitment to supporting victims of crime with compassion, professionalism and integrity.

The successful completion of our 2023–2025 Strategic Plan marks an important milestone for CVH. Through the dedication of our staff, volunteers, Board and partners, we have strengthened our services, enhanced our organisational capacity and laid a strong foundation for the future. With our new Strategic Plan for 2026–2030 now underway, we are well positioned to continue building on that progress.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to sincerely thank our staff and volunteers, whose professionalism, compassion and commitment make a meaningful difference to victims of crime every day. I also wish to acknowledge our CEO, Michele Puckhaber, whose leadership, vision and commitment to continuous improvement have guided the organisation through another successful year.

My thanks also go to my fellow Directors for their expertise, sound judgement and commitment to good governance. Their stewardship helps ensure that CVH remains accountable, financially responsible and focused on delivering the greatest possible benefit to those we serve.

We are deeply grateful to the Department of Justice for its continued funding and partnership, which enables CVH to provide high-quality national services for victims of crime. I also wish to thank the Law Society for its generous fundraising support during 2025.

Strong governance remains central to the work of the Board. CVH continues to comply fully with the Charities Governance Code and the requirements of the Charities Regulator, ensuring that public funds are managed responsibly, transparently and in the best interests of victims of crime.

As we look to the future, the Board remains committed to supporting the long-term sustainability of CVH and to ensuring that victims of crime continue to have access to the information, support and guidance they need.



Clare Cresswell
Chairperson



MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to present the Crime Victims Helpline Annual Report for 2025. This marked the final year of CVH's 2023–2025 Strategic Plan. When the plan was developed, it set out an ambitious but realistic direction for the organisation: to improve the quality and accessibility of our service, increase public awareness, strengthen partnerships, invest in our people and technology, maintain strong governance, and build a more sustainable funding model.

Looking back over the three-year period, I am proud of what CVH has achieved. We extended our opening hours, strengthened our volunteer programme, expanded access through webchat, upgraded our phone system, developed a new Salesforce-based case management system, increased public and media awareness, and deepened our relationships across the criminal justice and victim support sectors. Most importantly, we continued to provide a compassionate, confidential and practical support service for people affected by crime.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to CVH's staff. This is a small team carrying a national remit, and their work requires skill, judgement, emotional intelligence and care. Every day, they listen to people who may be frightened, angry, confused, overwhelmed or unsure where to turn.

*They provide calm, clear information and a safe space
at moments when it can make a real difference.*

I am also deeply grateful to CVH's volunteers. Volunteers have always been central to the identity and work of the Helpline. Their generosity, empathy and commitment allow CVH to extend care and support beyond what would otherwise be possible. Over the lifetime of the Strategic Plan, we strengthened volunteer recruitment, training, supervision and support, and the quality and commitment of our volunteers remained one of CVH's greatest strengths.

I also wish to thank the Board of Directors for their guidance, oversight and commitment to good governance. Throughout 2025, CVH maintained robust governance arrangements, active Board and committee oversight, and compliance with company law, Charities Regulator requirements and Department of Justice grant obligations. That work is not always visible publicly, but it is essential to the trust placed in CVH.

We remain very grateful to the Department of Justice for its continued funding and support. CVH's work depends on public funding, and we are conscious of the responsibility that comes with that.

*At the heart of CVH's work is a simple but important belief:
people affected by crime should not have to navigate the aftermath alone.*

Crime can leave people feeling unsafe, confused, isolated or powerless. A person may need to understand their rights, make sense of the criminal justice process, find a specialist support service, or simply speak to someone who will listen without judgement. CVH cannot undo what has happened, but we can help people feel heard, informed and supported as they take their next steps.

Thank you to everyone who supported CVH in 2025. Most of all, thank you to the people who contacted us. Your experiences matter, and CVH will continue working to ensure that victims of crime in Ireland are supported, informed and empowered.



Michele Puckhaber
Chief Executive



ABOUT CRIME VICTIMS HELPLINE

Crime Victims Helpline is Ireland's national support service for anyone affected by crime. We provide free, confidential and non-judgemental support to victims, survivors, witnesses, family members, friends and others impacted by crime.

CVH listens with empathy, provides trusted information about victims' rights and the criminal justice process, and guides people to appropriate local and specialist services. We operate the free national EU 116 006 helpline and offer support by phone, text, email, webchat and through our website, crimevictimshelpline.ie.

We do this by:

- providing time and space to talk about what happened;
- answering questions about the criminal justice system;
- informing victims about their rights;
- explaining options for compensation, including the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme;
- signposting people to local and specialist victim support services;
- maintaining online information and resources;
- distributing leaflets and information materials through Garda Victim Service Offices and other channels;
- providing training to organisations working with victims of crime.

ABOUT CRIME VICTIMS HELPLINE

Vision

An Ireland where every victim of crime is supported, informed, and empowered.

Mission

Provide support, information, and guidance to anyone affected by crime in Ireland.

Purpose

Ensure that anyone affected by crime in Ireland has access to compassionate support, trusted information, and a safe space to be heard; explain rights and the criminal-justice process; and guide individuals to appropriate services.

Values

Compassion: We treat every person with empathy and care, creating a safe, supportive space where victims feel heard, respected and reassured.

Respect: We treat every person with dignity, fairness and kindness, recognising and valuing each individual's experiences, identity and background.

Person-centred: We listen, respond to individual needs, and empower people to make informed decisions about the support that is right for them.

Integrity: We are committed to ethical practice, confidentiality and transparency, ensuring victims and partners can trust us.

Excellence: We strive for the highest standards through continuous learning, innovation and improvement, ensuring victims receive the best possible support.

Collaboration: We work in partnership across the criminal justice system and community sector to deliver coordinated, effective support and improve outcomes for victims.

2025 IN REVIEW

2025 was a year of growth, change and achievement for Crime Victims Helpline. As Ireland's national support service for people affected by crime, CVH provided information, emotional support and signposting to 5,902 people through phone, email, text, webchat and post. Behind every contact was someone seeking reassurance, guidance or a safe space to be heard following the impact of crime.

The year marked the successful completion of CVH's 2023–2025 Strategic Plan. Over the three-year period, the organisation strengthened access to support, invested in technology and people, increased public awareness and enhanced its role within the victim support and criminal justice sectors.

Several important service developments were completed during 2025. Opening hours were extended to 7:30pm Monday to Thursday, providing approximately 500 additional service hours annually and making support more accessible to people outside traditional office hours. CVH also successfully transitioned to a new phone system with no disruption to service and completed development of a new Salesforce-based case management system, laying the foundation for improved data security, service delivery and organisational learning.

SERVICE USER FEEDBACK

“Such a fast response and a kind, understanding email.”

“M was very helpful and generous with her time. I appreciate the follow up text too.”

“I will be forever grateful for such an amazing service. Talking to a professional person with a lot of knowledge helped me a lot...I feel I'm healing. Thank You.”

“Respect and my appreciation! Thank you for your kind support!”

2025 IN REVIEW

CVH continued to raise awareness of victims' rights and available supports through public engagement and outreach activities. The organisation participated in the National Ploughing Championships, joined the Dublin Pride Parade as part of The Wheel's We Act initiative, and engaged with media, community organisations and criminal justice partners throughout the year.

The organisation maintained strong governance and financial stewardship throughout the year. CVH received an unqualified audit opinion, net assets increased, and the Board of Directors completed development of Strategic Plan 2026–2030.

As CVH looks to the future, the achievements of 2025 provide a strong foundation for the next phase of development. With improved infrastructure, stronger partnerships, expanded access channels and a clear strategic direction, CVH is well positioned to continue supporting, informing and empowering victims of crime across Ireland.

2025 AT A GLANCE

- Supported 5,902 contacts across Ireland
- Provided 3,268 referrals
- Decreased voicemails by 38%
- Completed new Salesforce case management system
- Delivered the 2023–2025 Strategic Plan
- Developed Strategic Plan 2026–2030

2025 IN NUMBERS

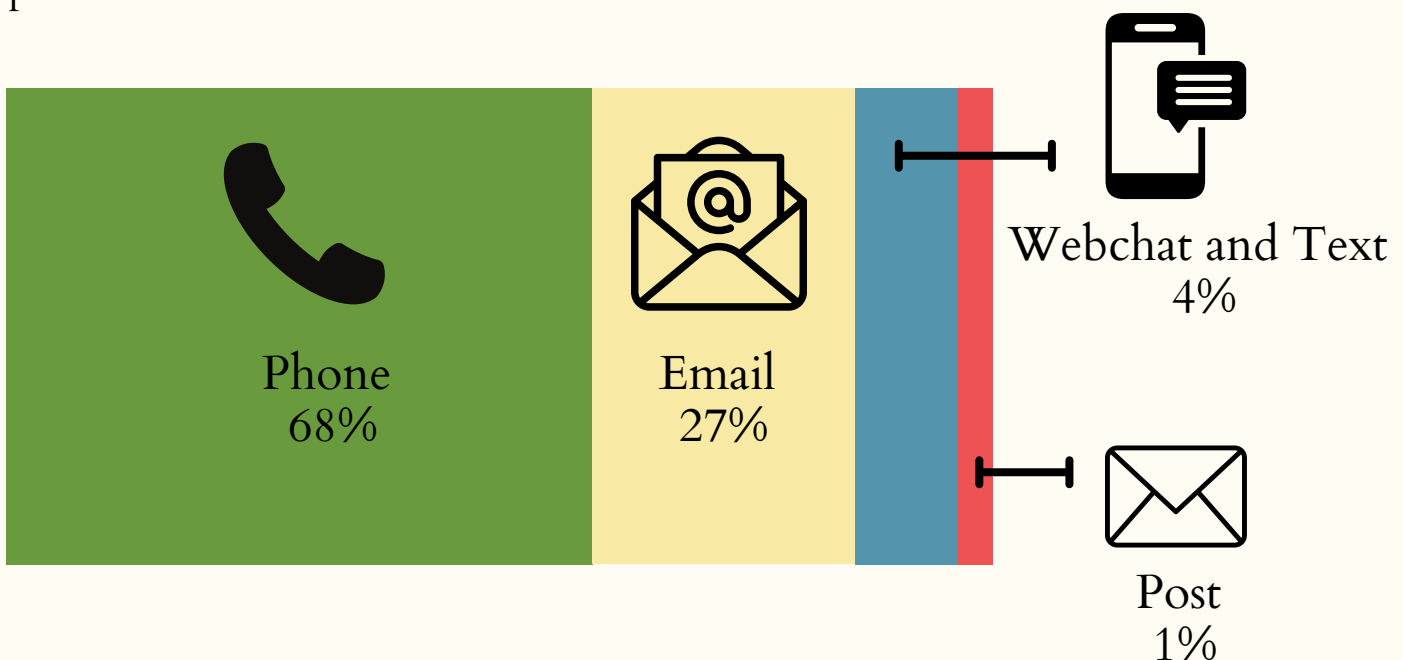
Every statistic in this report represents a person whose life was affected by crime.

In 2025, CVH handled 5,902 contacts across phone, email, text, webchat and post. Each contact represents a person seeking support, information, reassurance or direction at what may have been a very difficult point in their life.

The reduction in total recorded contacts compared with 2024 reflects a change in how text messages are recorded, fewer voicemails due to longer opening hours, and as a result, fewer outgoing calls as more people were reached live.

The decrease in contacts may also reflect the overall decrease in recorded crime across most categories in 2025 as reported by the Central Statistics Office. An exception to this trend is fraud which saw significant increases according to figures released by An Garda Síochána.

As a national service serving all victims of crime, it is important to be available to provide support and information that feels the most comfortable to those in need. As in previous years, the free 116 006 helpline was the most popular way for people to reach CVH, followed by email, text, webchat and post.



2025 IN NUMBERS: REGIONAL COMPARISON

CVH contacts are broadly proportionate to recorded crime by Garda region. Dublin is almost exactly aligned: 41.5% of recorded crime and 42% of CVH contacts. The Southern region is somewhat over-represented in CVH contacts, while the North Western region is under-represented.

Garda Region	Percent of Recorded Crime*	Percent of CVH Contacts
Dublin Metropolitan (Dublin)	41.5%	42%
Eastern (Kildare, Meath, Louth, Laois, Offaly, Westmeath, Wexford, Wicklow)	22%	23%
Southern (Cork, Kerry, Limerick, Clare, Tipperary, Waterford, Kilkenny, Carlow)	20%	22%
North Western (Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Mayo, Roscommon, Longford, Cavan, Monaghan, Galway)	16.5%	13%

*Based on CSO Recorded Crime annualised totals to Q4 2025

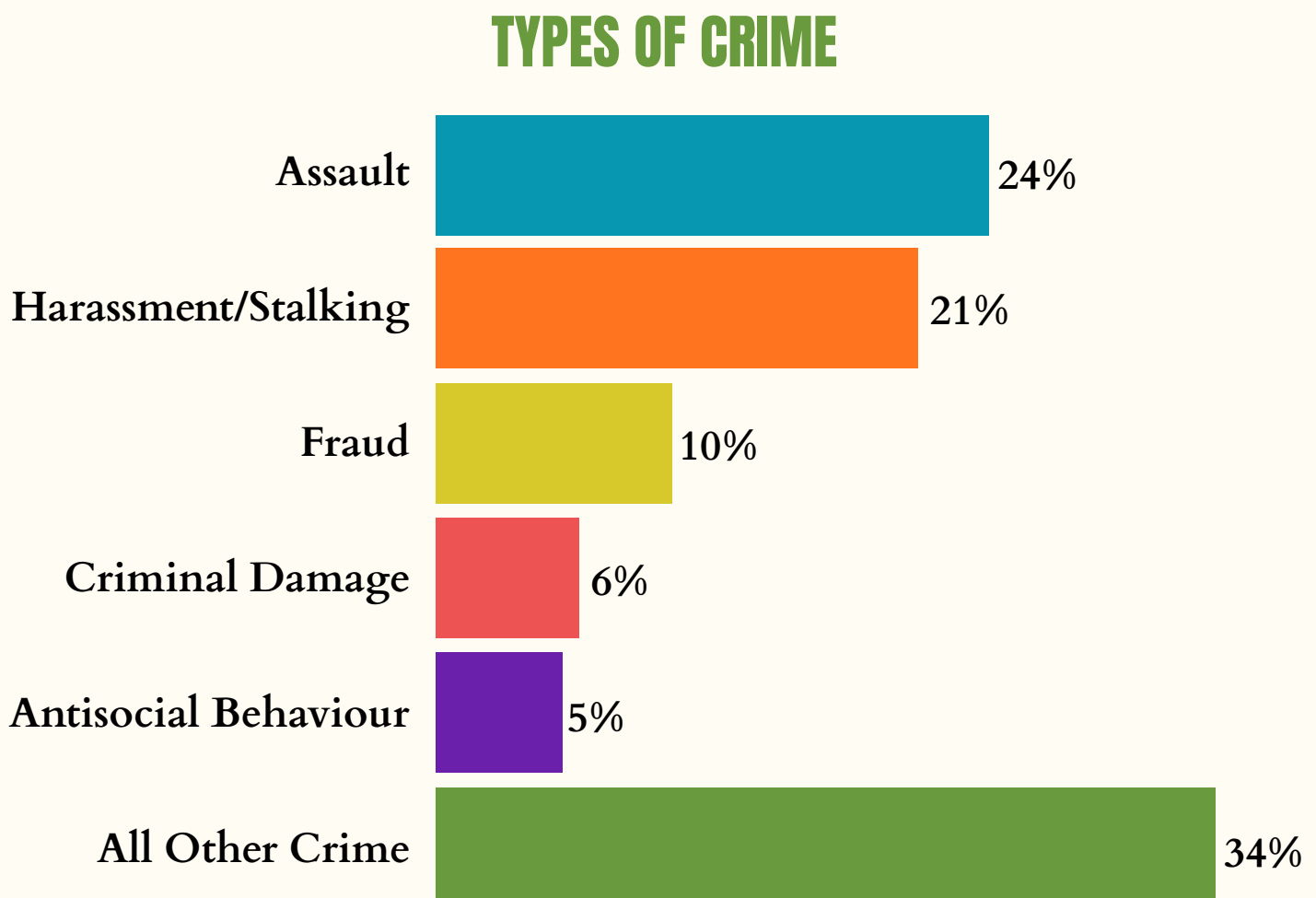
2025 IN NUMBERS:

TYPES OF CRIME

In 2025, people contacted Crime Victims Helpline in relation to a wide range of crime types, reflecting the breadth and complexity of victimisation experienced by people across Ireland.

The most commonly recorded crime type was assault. Harassment and stalking was the second most common. Together, these two categories accounted for 45% of all recorded crime-type entries in 2025.

Once a type of crime is identified, it is then classified as domestic abuse-related or with a hate crime-motivation. In 2025, 164 contacts were domestic abuse related crimes, a slight reduction from 2024. Sixty contacts were recorded as racially motivated hate crimes and 20 as LGBTQ+ hate crimes. Hate-motivated crimes have increased year-on-year over the past ten years.



2025 IN NUMBERS:

TYPES OF CRIME

Assault	682
Harassment/Stalking	593
Fraud	274
Criminal Damage	157
Antisocial Behaviour	139
Rape/Sexual Assault	128
Hacking/Data Protection Breach	91
Burglary	90
Theft	89
Threats to Harm/Kill	88
Extortion (including sextortion)	85
Road Traffic Incident	66
Child Abuse (Historic)	49
Threat to/Sharing of Intimate Images	49
Coercive Control	48
Vehicle Theft	38
Child Abuse (Recent)	38
Homicide/ Attempted homicide	29
Arson	28
Trespassing	24
Violation Safety/Barring Order	22
Robbery	15
Human Trafficking	10
Misuse of Drugs Act Offence	5
Animal Cruelty	2
Abduction	1

2025 IN NUMBERS:

SIGNPOSTING/REFERRALS

In 2025, CVH signposted people to a wide range of statutory, specialist and community-based services. The majority of signposting related to Gardaí, Garda Victim Service Offices and criminal justice processes, reflecting the important role CVH plays in helping victims understand and navigate the justice system.

CVH also connected people with counselling and mental health supports, legal information, fraud and cybercrime supports, domestic abuse and sexual violence services, housing and practical supports, migrant and minority ethnic community organisations, older person and disability advocacy services, and other specialist victim support services.

CATEGORY

Gardaí, criminal justice and statutory victim processes	59%
Counselling, health and crisis supports	13%
Legal, rights and public information	9%
Specialist victim, advocacy and inclusion supports	7%
Fraud, cyber, online and data-related supports	5%
Domestic abuse, sexual violence and stalking supports	4%
Practical, housing and community supports	3%

PUBLIC AWARENESS & OUTREACH

Raising awareness of CVH is essential. People can only use the Helpline if they know it exists, understand what it offers and feel confident that it is a safe place to contact.

One of the major outreach activities of the year was the National Ploughing Championships. From 16–18 September, CVH exhibited in the Government of Ireland Department of Justice marquee. The event provided valuable opportunities to speak with members of the public, distribute materials and connect with colleagues across the justice sector.





In June 2025, Crime Victims Helpline took part in the Dublin Pride Parade as part of The Wheel's We Act initiative, which brings together charities and community organisations to recognise and celebrate the contribution of the non-profit sector in Ireland.

CVH's participation in Pride reflected our commitment to being an inclusive, accessible and welcoming service for anyone affected by crime. Victims of crime come from every community, background and identity, and it is essential that people know they can contact CVH and be met with compassion, respect and without judgement.



PARTNERSHIPS & SECTOR ENGAGEMENT

CVH works within a wider victim support and criminal justice system. Strong relationships with partner organisations help ensure that people affected by crime receive appropriate information, referrals and support.

In 2025, CVH continued to engage with partners across the justice and victim support sectors. This included engagement with the Department of Justice, the Probation Service, Victim Support at Court, the National Forensic Mental Health Service Victims' Unit, Accompaniment Support Services for Children, and other organisations.

In February, CVH CEO Michele Puckhaber spoke at the Victim Support Europe BeneVict Project Conference in Brussels, presenting findings from Ireland alongside representatives from other European countries.

In March, CVH met with Victim Support Northern Ireland to learn more about its service model, funding structure and statutory referral arrangements. This provided useful learning for CVH's own strategic planning and future service development.

Later in the year, CVH met with the National Forensic Mental Health Service Victims' Unit and established an informal referral pathway for victims who contact that service.

These relationships support CVH's role as a national helpline, information service and connector within the wider support system.

GOVERNANCE

Crime Victims Helpline is committed to the highest standards of governance, accountability and transparency. The Board of Directors provides strategic leadership and oversight of the organisation, supported by its committees and regular reporting from the Chief Executive Officer.

During 2025, the Board met on six occasions, with the Annual General Meeting taking place on 30 July. Throughout the year, under the leadership of Chairperson Clare Cresswell, Directors oversaw service delivery, financial performance, governance, strategic planning, policy development, staffing, organisational risk and ongoing organisational development.

The Board continued to exercise careful stewardship of the organisation's finances through regular review of financial reports, expenditure against budget and Department of Justice funding arrangements.

The Audit and Risk Committee, chaired by Director Declan Harrington, met three times during the year. Its members included Directors Margaret Clapham, Clare Cresswell and John Kelly, together with CEO Michele Puckhaber. The Committee provided additional scrutiny of financial management, risk and internal controls.

Significant progress was also made in shaping the organisation's future direction. The Strategic Planning Committee, chaired by CEO Michele Puckhaber, met throughout the year to develop the Strategic Plan 2026–2030. Its members included Directors Naomi Coleman, Clare Cresswell and Eoin Heffernan. The Board reviewed and approved the organisation's vision, mission, purpose and strategic objectives prior to publication.

CVH also continued to strengthen its governance framework through ongoing policy review and organisational development. The Governance and Policy Committee, chaired by Director Clare Cresswell, met three times during the year. Its members included Directors Naomi Coleman, Eoin Heffernan and Susan Leahy, together with CEO Michele Puckhaber. The Committee supported the Board in reviewing and approving a range of policies to ensure that the organisation continues to meet best-practice standards in governance and compliance.



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

In 2025, Crime Victims Helpline recorded total income of €220,002 and administrative expenses of €209,760, resulting in a surplus of €10,242 for the year. The Department of Justice grant for 2025 was €217,760.

At 31 December 2025, CVH had net assets of €36,868, compared with €26,626 at the end of 2024. Cash at bank and in hand was €43,603.

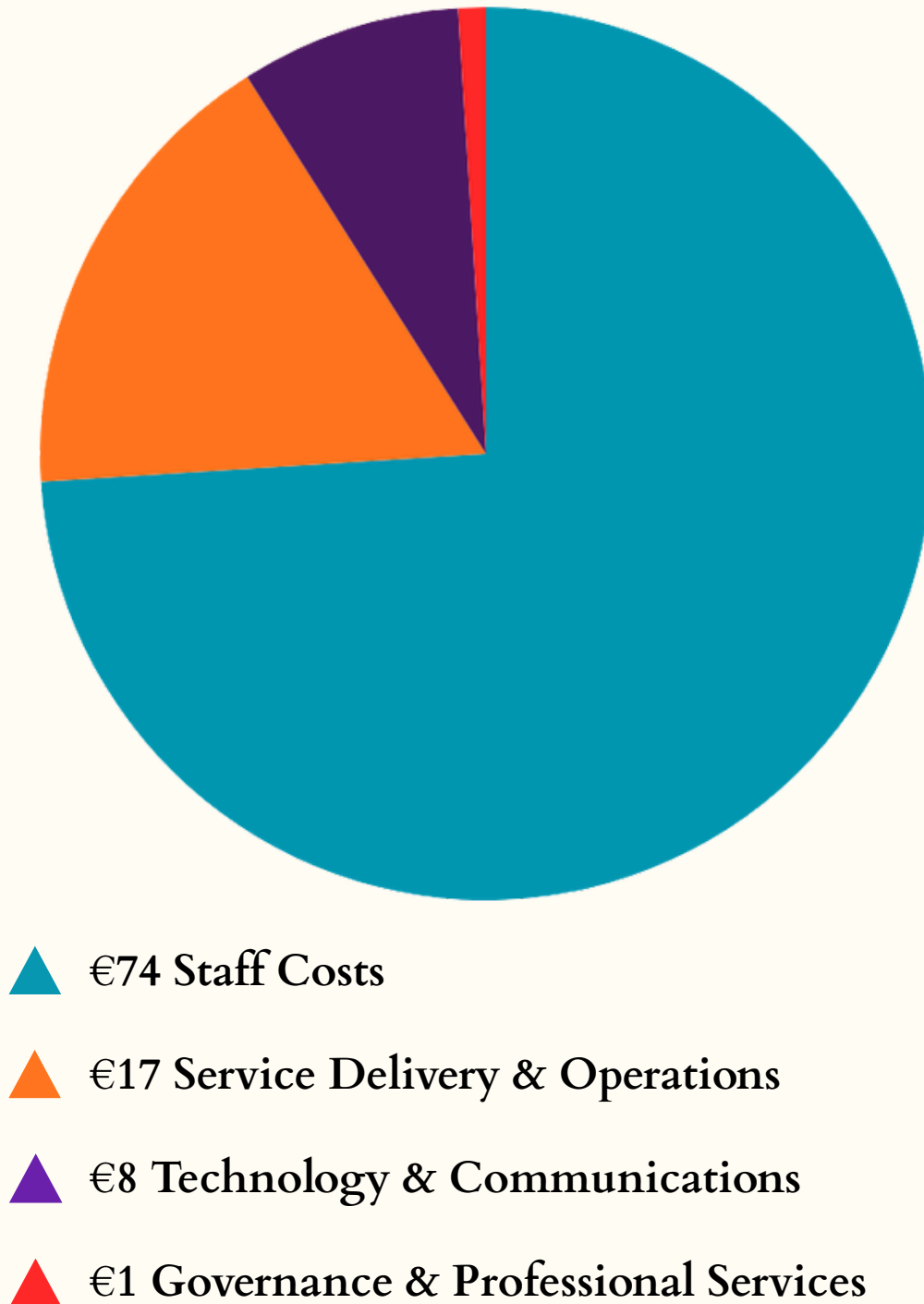
The audit for the year ended 31 December 2025 resulted in an unqualified audit opinion. The auditors reported that the audit did not highlight significant errors with revenue recognition, did not identify management override of controls, did not identify matters relating to related parties, and did not identify events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on CVH's ability to continue as a going concern.

A full audit report is available on the [Crime Victims Helpline website](#).

Expenditure Category	Amount
Staff Costs (includes salaries, employer PRSI and pension contributions)	€154,257
Service Delivery & Operations (includes interpretation and translation services, training, volunteer recognition, public awareness activities and other costs supporting service delivery)	€35,960
Technology & Communications (includes Salesforce CRM, website hosting and maintenance, telephone systems, Microsoft 365 subscriptions and other IT costs)	€16,981
Governance & Professional Services (includes audit fees)	€2,562
Total Expenditure	€209,760

HOW EVERY €100 WAS SPENT

Crime Victims Helpline is committed to the responsible stewardship of public funds. We work to ensure that every euro entrusted to the organisation is used efficiently and effectively to maximise support, information and guidance for people affected by crime.



DELIVERING THE 2023-2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

The end of 2025 marked the successful completion of Crime Victims Helpline's 2023–2025 Strategic Plan.

Over the lifetime of the plan, CVH made substantial progress across each of its strategic objectives.

Improving quality and access

CVH extended helpline opening hours, reducing voicemails, missed calls and the need for outbound follow-up contacts. This meant more people could access support at the point of need. CVH also introduced and embedded webchat as an additional access channel, supporting people who may not be able to speak freely by phone or who prefer written communication.

Strengthening people and systems

CVH invested in its staff, volunteers and technology. The volunteer programme was strengthened through improved recruitment, training, supervision and support. CVH also upgraded its phone system and developed a new Salesforce-based case management system, improving the infrastructure needed to support safe, confidential and effective service delivery.

Increasing public awareness

Between 2023 and 2025, CVH increased public awareness through national events, cinema advertising, media engagement and participation in sector forums. Work with Crotty Communications helped professionalise CVH's media strategy, resulting in stronger national and regional coverage and greater recognition of CVH as a credible voice on victims' issues.

Building partnerships and sector leadership

CVH strengthened relationships with national and international partners, including An Garda Síochána, Garda Victim Service Offices, statutory agencies, victim support organisations and European partners. These relationships helped position CVH as a trusted and knowledgeable organisation within the criminal justice and victim support landscape.

Maintaining strong governance

Throughout the strategic period, CVH maintained strong governance, active Board and committee oversight, effective risk management and compliance with relevant legal, regulatory and funding obligations. This provided the stable foundation needed for service improvement and organisational development.

The 2023–2025 Strategic Plan achieved its core intent: to strengthen CVH as a reliable, accessible and well-governed national service for victims of crime. It also generated important learning about the true cost of national service delivery, the need for sustainable staffing, the importance of technology, and the value of evidence-informed planning. This learning now forms the foundation of CVH’s 2026–2030 Strategic Plan and the next stage of the organisation’s development.



LOOKING AHEAD: STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2030

In 2025, CVH developed its Strategic Plan for 2026–2030. The plan sets out a clear vision:

An Ireland where every victim of crime is supported, informed, and empowered.

The mission of CVH is to provide support, information and guidance to anyone affected by crime in Ireland. Its purpose is to ensure that anyone affected by crime has access to compassionate support, trusted information and a safe space to be heard; to explain rights and the criminal justice process; and to guide people to appropriate services.

The plan is built around six strategic goals:

- Enhance service quality and access for victims of crime.
- Increase visibility and understanding of CVH through clear, targeted outreach.
- Strengthen organisational capacity through leadership, governance, professional expertise and staff development.
- Build an inclusive, culturally responsive organisation that reflects and responds to the needs of a changing Ireland.
- Strengthen collaboration with agencies and stakeholders across the criminal justice system and victim support sector.
- Harness data and technology to improve service delivery and advocacy.

The work completed in 2025 provides a strong foundation for this next phase. Extended opening hours, the new phone system, the new case management system, improved data practices, public awareness work and strengthened partnerships all position CVH to continue developing as Ireland's national support service for victims of crime.

OUR PEOPLE

Board of Directors

Clare Cresswell, Chairperson
John Kelly, Company Secretary
Margaret Clapham
Naomi Coleman
Declan Harrington
Eoin Heffernan
Susan Leahy

Staff

Michele Puckhaber
Chief Executive (Full-time)

Hayley Halpin
Service Coordinator (Full-time)

Rebecca Fitzmaurice
Volunteer Coordinator (2025, Part-time)
Victim Support Worker (2026, Full-time)

Marie Murray
Volunteer Coordinator (Part-time)



CHARITY & COMPANY INFORMATION

Crime Victims Helpline is a registered charity.

Charity number: CHY16894

Charities Regulator number: 20061890

Company number: 409235

Registered office: 6–7 Hanover Street East, Dublin 2

Auditors: Strata Financial, Harmony Way, Dublin 2

Financial Institution: Bank of Ireland, O'Connell Street, Dublin 1

Crime Victims Helpline is supported by the
Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration.



An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt,
Gnóthaí Baile agus Imirce
Department of Justice,
Home Affairs and Migration

 **Crime Victims
Helpline.ie**

The logo consists of a stylized human figure in black and green, with the text 'Crime Victims Helpline.ie' to its right.

Freephone 116006