

European Crime Prevention Award (ECPA)

Annex I – new version 2014

Please complete the template in English in compliance with the ECPA criteria contained in the RoP (Par.2 §3).

General information

1. Please specify your country.

Finland

2. Is this your country's ECPA entry or an additional project?

This is the ECPA entry of Finland.

3. What is the title of the project?

Suvanto-linja / The national help-line (Suvanto-line) for elderly people.

4. Who is responsible for the project? Contact details.

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5. Start date of the project (dd/mm/yyyy)? Is the project still running (Yes/No)?
If not, please provide the end date of the project.

The project started in September 2011 and was finished at the end of 2012. The project is now a regular service provided by Suvanto – For A Safe Old Age Association.

6. Where can we find more information about the project? Please provide links to the project's website or online reports or publications (preferably in English).

At the home page of Suvanto Association: <http://www.suvantory.fi/en/>

7. Please give a **one page** description of the project (**Max. 600 words**)

Suvanto – For A Safe Old Age Association is a non-governmental organisation that strives to arouse public discussion about the abuse of the elderly, help elderly people and those close to them in times of need, and to prevent abuse of the elderly.

The Suvanto help-line is a national help-line for elderly people facing violent or abusive conditions or mistreatment that threatens the person's wellbeing, security or health. People who are close to the elderly can also ask for advice. The provision of specialised support and advice founded on the combination of expertise of elderly people and knowledge of elderly victims/survivors of abuse showcases the innovative nature of the project.

The phone service is open for eight to ten hours a week. The number is free of charge for callers in Finland. The help Suvanto line provides consists of discussion, support, information and possible referral to other relevant services. A person can call the line even when there are not enough words to describe what he/she has gone through. The person answering the phone – either a professional or a trained volunteer – will assist a caller in constructing the problematic situation from an equal basis. No other help-line in Finland has specialized in topics of both ageing and crime or abuse.

The Suvanto help-line project started in September 2011 and finished at the end of 2012. The service has been part of Suvanto's regular service provision ever since and available to the whole of Finland. All calls are anonymous. Professionals and volunteers co-operate in providing the service. Should a caller need further personal support, Suvanto help-line representatives may refer the person to one-on-one counselling or peer support groups organised by the Suvanto Association. These services are available to elderly people living in or nearby the capital area of Finland. Referrals to other types of relevant and suitable services in all parts of Finland are provided as well.

The Suvanto help-line provides legal advice twice a month for two hours at a time. This is an additional part of the service, added after the pilot project of Suvanto line. By calling the Suvanto line during the legal advice hours callers get direct advice from a lawyer experienced in issues of crime and economical abuse. The quality service of the help-line is guaranteed on the basis of professional work, proficient training as well as continuous support for volunteers answering the help line. Counselling supervision is available for all the volunteers and employees working on the line.

The project was built in co-operation with Finnish non-profit organisations offering help and support by phone. The pilot project was funded by the Ministry of Justice and the on-going work is funded by Finland's Slot Machine Association RAY. During the pilot project, co-operation was made with Metropolia University of Applied Sciences. Students went through a training period to become help line representatives. Some of the students wrote their theses on the project.

The project was informative. Confidentiality was very important to the callers who were usually over 65 years old. Most of the calls concerned the primary experiences of mistreatment and violence. People in the immediate circle of the elderly contacted Suvanto too for asking advice on mistreatment and abuse. The elderly callers appreciated the possibility to call Suvanto line without a charge.

I. The project shall focus on prevention and/or reduction of everyday crime and fear of crime within the theme.

8. How does the project contribute to crime prevention and/or to the reduction of crime or the fear of crime? (**Max. 150 words**)

The Suvanto help-line offers expert help and support by means of discussion in situations where an elderly person is being abused, mistreated, faces violence or feels threatened. The Suvanto help-line provides information, guidance and support to prevent the escalation of situations into more severe ones. If required, a tailored safety plan is composed together with the caller. The help-line also provides mental support in crisis situations. The data gathered from the project provides insight into abusive situations and tools for the use of other professionals working in the field.

9. How is the project contributing to raising citizens' awareness of crime prevention? (**Max. 150 words**)

The Suvanto help-line raises awareness about abuse, mistreatment and violence that elderly people face in Finnish society. The help-line makes violence more visible, empowering citizens to recognise and to confront unwanted and abusive situations.

II. The project shall have been evaluated and have achieved most or all of its objectives.¹

10. What was the reason for setting up the project? What problem(s) did it aim to tackle?

¹ For more information on evaluation, see Guidelines on the evaluation of crime prevention initiatives (EUCPN Toolbox No.3): <http://www.eucpn.org/library/results.asp?category=32&pubdate>

The project answered a need for an easily accessible service that has expertise in providing support, advice and guidance on the following phenomena: ageing, violence, abuse and crime. Referral to other relevant services was seen as a need as well. The possibility to call free of charge was defined as important for elderly people.

A typical problem with the help-line service is the limited accessibility to information on how the service has helped the caller in his/her later phases of life. However, the data gathered shows that the callers who participated in the one-on-one services or peer groups organised by the Suvanto Association had experienced positive effects, such as: increased quality of life, feeling of safety and control over one's own life.

Raising awareness about the Suvanto helpline in Finland requires still more attention. In order to do this the economical and labour resources need to be increased. The emphasis of disseminating information will be put on media which best reaches the elderly and the professionals working with them.

11. Was the context analysed **before** the project was initiated? How, and by whom? Which data were used? (**Max. 150 words**)

Prior to setting up the Suvanto help-line the association received about 25-40 calls yearly. The pilot project proved, however, that the service had demand and it answered to the real needs of people. Before the project, the caller was charged for the call. There was no data gathering on the calls.

The statistics collected by the Suvanto Association show that increased awareness of Suvanto line has brought 30 % of yearly increase in calls. Today the callers consist mostly of elderly people. During 2015 Suvanto help-line received 157 calls during the service hours (altogether 261 calls), out of which 101 calls were made by elderly people.

Before the Suvanto help-line project most of the callers seeking information and advice were the people from the immediate circle of elderly people as well as formal carers.

12. What were the objective(s) of the project? Please, if applicable, distinguish between main and secondary objectives. (**Max. 150 words**)

Objectives were: The main objective was to build a good quality help-line service that combines the knowledge in different fields of expertise (the elderly and different forms of violence). Project was built to positively affect the life quality of the elderly as well as to support them in their own life management. There was also a need to raise awareness of the themes of ageing, violence, abuse and mistreatment in Finnish society. Another important objective of the project was to

prevent the escalation of abuse to more severe crimes.

13. Did you build in internal goals to measure the performance of the project? If so, please describe at what stage of the project and how you measured whether the project was moving in the planned direction. (**Max. 150 words**)

The mission of the Suvanto help-line was to combine the expertise of ageing and work against violence to provide specialized help. By establishing the help-line, Suvanto intended to positively affect the quality of life of those who suffer from violence, abuse or mistreatment and help them to gain control over their own lives.

Another objective of the project was to raise general awareness, highlight the importance of preventative work and to prevent more severe crimes.

The help-line was designed to operate on the basis of cooperation with professionals and trained volunteers. Another goal was to collect information on this cooperation and on the effectiveness of the phone service in terms of experienced help and support.

The statistics showed that elderly people started to use the service during the project and that the needs of the callers were mostly met. The long-term effectiveness of the service has been more difficult to measure.

14. Has there been a process evaluation? Who conducted the evaluation (internally or externally?) and what were the main results? (**max. 300 words**) - for more information on process evaluation, see EUCPN Toolbox No.3, p.9-10 & part 2 - section 2A

The process evaluation was done by an external evaluator who has a Master's degree in health care and who is a professional of violence prevention.

The data gathered from the pilot project proved to be successful in supporting existing volunteers in their work and in developing training programmes for future volunteers. The volunteers valued the training important. During the pilot project there were some problems to get people interested in becoming a volunteer. The evaluator suggested the following as possible reasons: too narrow of a scope for dissemination of information and lack of interest in the topics of elderly people as an age group and/or the heavy nature of the topics of the Suvanto help-line (violence, abuse, mistreatment).

The evaluator found out that the objectives of the Suvanto line project phase were adequate in relation to the prior-defined service needs. The quality of the service was guaranteed by the means of volunteer training, psychological supervision and other support provided to the volunteers and professionals.

The easy accessibility of the service is important considering the sensitive nature of the phenomena the service responds to.

An important societal factor impacting the Suvanto help-line is the growing number of the elderly population and the feminization of the oldest age group.

With its unique, combined expertise the Suvanto help-line has become an essential part of the help-line services in Finland.

15. Has there been an outcome or impact evaluation? Who conducted the evaluation (internally or externally?), which data and evaluation method were used and what were the main results? (**Max. 300 words**) - for more information on outcome or impact evaluation, see EUCPN Toolbox No.3, p.7-9 & part 2 - section 2A

The impact of the Suvanto help-line has been somewhat difficult to measure because the callers usually don't call back and tell how their situation has changed. The change in the situations of those callers participating in one-on-one counselling services or peer groups of Suvanto is easier to detect: they have been empowered and the experienced threat of violence has diminished.

The Suvanto help-line project is now a part of the daily service provision of Suvanto. The yearly funding comes from Finland's Slot Machine Association. The elderly as the target group of the project have been reached. Making the Suvanto helpline widely known in Finland still needs further attention. Informing about the service requires economical and labour resources. Elderly people are best reached by conventional ways of communication despite the Internet era.

III. The project shall, as far as possible, be innovative, involving new methods or new approaches.

16. How is the project innovative in its methods and/or approaches? (**Max. 150 words**)

The project combines expertise of ageing, elderly care, violence, abuse and mistreatment. The Suvanto help-line is specialised to combine these different kinds of expertise and support. Professionals and volunteers co-operate to provide the service.

IV. The project shall be based on cooperation between partners, where possible.

18. Which partners or stakeholders were involved in the project and what was their involvement? (**Max. 200 words**)

The partners' main role and task was to inspire the content and guide the operations of the helpline as well as to train the volunteers. The cooperation

network that supported the establishment of the Suvanto help-line service is the following:

Naisten Linja (Womens' Line), Raiskauskriisikeskus Tukinainen (Rape Crisis Centre Tukinainen), Rikosuhripäivystys (Victim Support), Suomen Mielenterveysseuran SOS-kriisipuhelin (The Finnish Association for Mental Health - SOS Crisis Phone), Ensi- ja turvakotien liiton vapaaehtoistyön hanke (A volunteer work project at The Federation of Mother and Child Homes and Shelters) ja Pääkaupunkiseudun puhelinauttajien verkosto (the network of The Capital Area Phone Helpers).

Metropolia ammattikorkeakoulu (Metropolia University of Applied Sciences) and Suvanto helpline had cooperation. Many students were trained to become volunteers of the Suvanto help-line. Some students wrote their theses on the project. After the pilot period also Diakonia ammattikorkeakoulu (Diakonia University of Applied Sciences) has done student cooperation with the Suvanto help line.

V. The project shall be capable of replication in other Member States.

19. How and by whom is the project funded? (**Max. 150 words**)

The funding for the project was received from Ministry of Justice. Nowadays the funding comes from Finland's Slot Machine Association RAY, which finances also the other functions of The Suvanto Association.

20. What were the costs of the project in terms of finances, material and human resources? (**Max. 150 words**)

The project received 22 000 € from the Ministry of Justice for the first pilot period (which took place from September 2011 till December 2012). Now the yearly costs of Suvanto help line range from 40 000 to 50 000 €. The annual budget includes coordination of the telephone helpline, (professional) part-time employee's salary costs, training and coordination of the volunteers' work, psychological supervision for employees and volunteers, helpline telephone charges; equipment, subscription, calling costs and costs from the helpline premises. The amount does not include marketing and dissemination costs.

21. Has a cost-benefit analysis been carried out? If so, describe the analysis, including how and by whom it was carried out and list the main findings of the analysis. (**Max. 150 words**)

No, a cost-benefit analysis has not been carried out.

22. Are there adjustments to be made to the project to ensure a successful replication in another Member State?

It is important to have a help line that does not cost anything to the caller. Before the project a person could not call the Suvanto Association for free. During the project the calling was made free of charge, which raised the amount of callers who are over 65 years old. Now it is easier for elderly people to make the decision of calling and have a long enough discussion without worrying about costs of the call.

23. How is the project relevant for other Member States? Please explain the European dimension of your project.

The amount of the elderly population is growing in Europe. It is important to identify the problems of abuse, mistreatment and violence faced by the elderly people so that these problems can be tackled effectively. This helps to decrease the amount of crimes. The help-line enhances safety for instance by sharing knowledge on different types of violence, helping callers to increase their own safety and supporting victims/survivors of abuse to recover from shattering experiences. The phone-line for the elderly gives access to easily reachable help and can be put into practise everywhere in Europe.

Please provide a short general description of the project (abstract for inclusion in the conference booklet – **max. 150 words**).

The Suvanto help-line is a national weekly phone service for the elderly in situations of violence, abuse and mistreatment that threaten an older person's wellbeing, security or health. The phone line is open two days a week and calling is free of charge.

The help-line combines expertise on ageing, elderly care, abuse, mistreatment and violence. It gives support to victims of crimes and to other people who are in need of specialist information and guidance. Nowadays the Suvanto help-line includes a legal advice service provided by a lawyer.

The help-line was established as a pilot project (9/2011-12/2012), but is now part of Suvanto's service provision. During the pilot project most of the callers were over 65 years old and now they are usually over 75. The callers have experienced mistreatment and violence themselves. Also the people in the immediate circle of the elderly ask for advice. Prior to the help-line project Suvanto received considerably less calls from the elderly.