
SHAME

EUROPEAN STORIES

*«I am twelve years old, and I am sitting on my
bedroom floor. I can still feel his hands all over me.
Little did I know, the sexual abuse would not stop
there. It would also take place on online platforms - and
therefore, my body would never be left alone.» (Saga)*

All human beings are born free and equal
in dignity and rights.

Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

HILDE VAUTMANS

Child sexual abuse is one of the most heinous crimes of all times and it is a matter of great concern for the whole society. Surveys show that a majority want stricter laws for the internet. Hundreds of thousands of people have signed the Justice Initiative petition, including survivors of sexual violence and child protection groups from across Europe. As representatives of the people, we have understood this signal. We have a mandate to protect the next generation.

Child safety is of utmost importance. The internet is flooded with child sexual abuse images. The image depicting the sexual abuse of a child condemns the child to an endless cycle of re-victimization at every single new view, thus, the abuse lasts as long as we keep the image up on the internet. Europe has become the epicentre for these horrific images, hosting the strong majority of all CSAM in the world. We cannot continue to ignore this fact. Not as a society, not as representatives of this society in the EU.

There is no doubt that we must uphold the protection of privacy on the internet. But: when we talk about stricter laws, we talk about child protection on the internet and then ask ourselves how privacy can be respected. Not the other way round. We always put people at the centre of our policies. Otherwise, our community loses the core of its mission: people should be able to grow up here in safety. In the EU we are doing everything we can to make our world a better place. This principle is an obligation for us all.

Hilde Vautmans

Member of the European Parliament

FERNANDO GRANDE-MARLASKA

There is an urgent need to address the problem of child sexual abuse online, a reality with a profound impact on society that affects the most vulnerable: children.

Child sexual abuse online is a global problem that transcends borders, cultures, and social strata. Behind every statistic, cold and heartbreaking, we find stories of child survivors who have suffered physical, emotional, and psychological harm at the hands of predators who take advantage of the ease with which they can access their victims through the internet.

It is the responsibility of all of us public officials to join forces and resources to combat online child sexual abuse. Together, we can work to protect the youngest members of our society and provide them with a future free from fear, suffering, and trauma. With this conviction, the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the European Union made it a priority to promote prevention and education to build a safer online environment for minors.

We are a bit closer to achieving this objective, with a legislative text currently under discussion, on which we are putting all our efforts. To this end, the Spanish Presidency has proposed alternative wordings which, without renouncing the ultimate objectives pursued by the proposed Regulation, address the various concerns raised by Member States in relation to the possible impact on rights such as the privacy of communications.

The message must be shared and clear: our children are not alone; we are here to protect and support them. It is our obligation.

Fernando Grande-Marlaska

Minister of Interior of Spain

YLVA JOHANSSON

In the last two years something has happened that I didn't see coming. Child sexual abuse survivors found their voice, overcoming shame, trauma and stigma. Survivors have organised in a global and European movement and demand to be heard. As children they had no power, but now as adults, they do have power. Their activism is not sad or angry as you might expect, they are full of energy and hope. Whatever happens their movement is here to stay.

Meetings with child abuse survivors have been among the most inspiring moments of my mandate as Commissioner. I am humbled and grateful that they support my proposal to prevent and fight child sexual abuse. This law is their law, and this moment is their moment.

The time is right. The UK Parliament has just approved the Online Safety Bill, with similar rules to detect child sexual abuse in online messages – also in encrypted environments. The EU can't stay behind and become a safe haven for perpetrators – which will happen when the interim legislation that allows detection expires next year and my proposal is not adopted, forbidding detection of abuse in online messages.

More than 150 experts from tech and civil society recently signed a letter in support. A new Eurobarometer poll shows 96 per cent of Europeans consider detection of child abuse equally or more important than privacy. Only 2 per cent consider privacy more important. And nearly 80 per cent support my proposal.

This is a decisive moment – The European Parliament and Council of the European Union are deciding on the final text of the proposal. I urge you to listen to the silent majority, to listen to the survivors and support my proposal, to protect children from the worst crime you can imagine.

Ylva Johansson

European Commissioner for Home Affairs

MARIJA PEJČINOVIĆ BURIĆ

Sexual violence against children is not only abhorrent, but also the source of deep, profound, and lasting harm. It happens in every country, to children from all backgrounds, and can take place just once, or repeatedly, anywhere from the child's own home or school to their local sports club. Many of these children suffer in silence, afraid of the consequences of telling the truth about what is happening to them or of not being believed.

In 2007, the Council of Europe Convention for the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (also known as «the Lanzarote Convention») was adopted. A total of 48 countries are parties to it, including every Council of Europe member state. The Lanzarote Convention is the most ambitious and comprehensive international legal instrument in its field with a four-pronged strategic approach that prioritises prevention, protection, prosecution, and the promotion of national and international co-operation.

More than 10 years after the Lanzarote Convention entered into force, much has been achieved, including greater awareness raising, the promotion of effective initiatives, such as the Children's Houses' or Barnahus and the adoption of new legislation in many countries. Over the years, the work of the Committee of Parties to the Convention has also enabled the identification of good practices, gaps and trends, including the new threats posed by Information and Communication Technologies.

It is vitally important that organisations across Europe help to continue this kind of progress.

So, I commend the Guido Fluri Foundation, through its «Justice Initiative», for giving a voice and face to survivors of child sexual abuse. This project, first promoted in Switzerland, aims to shine a light on the reality of child sexual abuse with a very important emphasis on individuals' first-hand experiences.

I am glad that the Council of Europe has been able to host the exhibition «Shame – European Stories» at our Strasbourg headquarters and hope that it will act as a spur to further action.

Marija Pejčinović Burić

Secretary General of the Council of Europe



GUIDO FLURI

«Shame – European Stories» – behind every picture, there is an abused child

The people who had their picture taken for the booklet «Shame – European Stories» bear witness. They tell of the sexual abuse they have experienced. Their stories are staggering. So much suffering has been inflicted.

Those affected come from the most diverse countries in Europe. Their life stories are different, and yet we recognize parallels. It is not only about the abuse of the past; it is also about life afterward. To this day, all of those affected suffer from the experiences of sexual violence.

Survivors want to protect today's children

The survivors from the past want justice in their lifetime, but beyond that, they want the children of today and tomorrow to be protected from abuse – the abuse they suffered. This protection must cover all areas, but especially the Internet, where images of abuse circulate at an alarming rate.

In 2022 there were 32 million global reports of suspected online child sexual exploitation. Needless to say, this needs to change. For this reason, we, child protection groups from all over Europe, demand that the European Union take a world-leading stance and vote in favor of the current EU proposal to better prevent and combat child sexual abuse, so that we can protect all children and have justice for survivors.

Over 500,000 Europeans have signed the petition of Justice Initiative

To show that most of the population wants this increased protection for children on the internet, the Justice Initiative with hubs all over the EU, launched a Europe-wide petition. The signatories of the petition support the Regulation to Prevent and Combat Child Sexual Abuse, proposed by the Commission on 11 May 2022, and call for its swift adoption. The Justice Initiative petition is supported by the Child Safety

ON! campaign, a coalition of over 40 children's rights organizations aiming to raise awareness of the pressing need to protect children online in our ever-changing digital world. Within a few months, over 500,000 signatures were collected – on the streets of Europe as well as online. This enormous support for our petition is a clear signal to politicians.

Act to end Child Sexual Abuse online & support the regulation

The values on which Europe is founded include respect for human dignity, freedom and equality, the rule of law, and respect for human rights. That's why we ask: «Do these values not apply on the Internet, where children's rights are violated brutally every day?»

The voices of survivors of child sexual abuse found in this booklet should move us to action. Behind every image online is the concrete abuse of a child. What the EU decides to do about the sexual abuse images on the internet will have repercussions around the world. This is an opportunity for global child protection.

We call on EU politicians of all countries and parties to support the EU proposal to better protect children online. A clear majority of Europeans are behind you.

Guido Fluri

Initiator of the European «Justice Initiative»

SIMONE PADOVANI

From January to May 2022, I traveled throughout Europe - from Portugal to Romania, from Greece to Norway, accumulating some 25,000 km - to meet victims of abuse and maltreatment and to portray and video interview them.

The stories I heard did not pass me by without leaving a trace. They changed my perception of Europe. In the midst of us live people who have experienced endless suffering but have never known justice.

What I tried to tell and pass on to those who will see this project is, how the lives of the people I met, unfortunately, had a parallel evolutionary line to the natural one. This happens with abuse. When it happens, the person is forcibly confronted with a new lifeline. And there have been many, too many parallel lifelines that I encountered.

This is where the title comes from: «Shame - European Stories». It is a provocation and, at the same time, a recurring word in the experiences of the victims. Often, the victims feel ashamed. Most people don't talk about their experiences or are even ashamed of themselves. Yet, they are the victims. And it is our shame that we neither saw the suffering nor heard the silent cries.

The stories of abuse are stories of survival and stories of living on: besides having suffered inhuman cruelties and living with their consequences every day for life, the people affected can still make small, incredible gestures towards humanity every day, giving them humanity back. They don't ask for anything in return; they do it because they continue to be human.

We need to change things now and take action, with small gestures, by really listening to those around us and those crossing our lives, and taking a stand and asking for solutions from the stakeholders, the governments, and the European Community.

And, luckily, there are already people like that, including Guido Fluri, the initiator of the «Justice Initiative»; Pascal and Vera, with whom I was allowed to realize this photo project, and all the European associations that have given life to this project with heart and soul. I can never thank them enough for showing me all their infinite humanity.

This work is dedicated to all of them, to all these people changing the world with little miracles.

Simone Padovani

International Photoreporter

FRANCE



One day, two people from social services came and took me away. «Taken away» is the proper term because my sister remembers me lying in her arms and clinging to her. I screamed and cried, and I remember her screaming too. But I was ripped away from her arms and they sent me far away. Right now, I cannot remember how often this has happened. But it was these men who touched me in the dormitory.

J'ai presque envie de crier, de hurler. Il faut prendre soin des enfants. Il y a beaucoup d'enfants qui souffrent, beaucoup d'enfants qui sont maltraités, beaucoup d'enfants qui sont abusés. Alors s'il vous plaît, gouvernements, autorités, services sociaux, prenez soin des enfants. C'est aussi votre rôle. C'est aussi le rôle des parents. Les parents doivent avoir une attitude aimante et attentionnée envers leurs enfants. Alors prenez soin d'eux.



Sylvie 54

*Abduction, sexual abuse, maltreatment
Enlèvement, abus sexuels, maltraitances*

My brother and I were adopted together. And the abuse started immediately. It was mainly physical and psychological violence. When I was ten, I made my first suicide attempt because I was unable to live like that. It was too hard.

J'ai la chance de ne pas être complètement détruit psychologiquement et d'avoir pu avoir une réflexion. C'est ce qui m'a permis de survivre. J'ai compris quelle est leur méthode pour faire du mal et maintenant c'est mon but de retourner la situation, de servir la cause, de témoigner, de me battre.



Javier 44

*Abduction, forced adoption, clergy sexual abuse
Enlèvement, adoption forcée, abus sexuels du clergé*

I was a little Franco-japanese girl of 5 years when I was sexually abused by a 39 year old cousin during the hot summer of 1977. These rapes plunged me into a black hole of 32 years. When my memory resurged, I started speaking up relentlessly even if these crimes had already been statute-barred in France.

Ces expériences traumatisantes m'ont ouvert les yeux sur l'ampleur mondiale des abus sexuels sur les enfants. J'ai rejoint d'autres survivants et militants courageux qui s'efforcent de mettre fin à ce fléau. Notre combat consiste à lutter pour la justice, un monde équitable et la paix. Nous n'abandonnerons jamais !



Mie 50

*Sexual abuse in the family
Abus sexuels dans la famille*

I was between the ages of 8 and 11 when a great-uncle of mine, who was a missionary, raped me. He presented it to me as a discovery of my body, then as a form of sexual education. What followed was almost 10 years of partial traumatic amnesia. I was 12 years old when two cousins of mine (aged 13 and 15) raped and abused me. They presented their crime as a game. It resulted in 15 years of total traumatic amnesia.

Maintenant, je parle, je me montre, parce que je n'ai plus honte. La honte que je ressentais si fort... Je n'ai plus honte parce que je veux que les enfants soient protégés. Je veux que les victimes sachent qu'elles ne sont pas seules, qu'elles peuvent bénéficier de soins spécifiques pour les traumatismes psychologiques. Je veux aussi que l'amnésie traumatique soit reconnue. Je veux que ceux qui n'ont pas dénoncé ces crimes soient également poursuivis. Je veux une société plus juste.



Arnaud 41

*Clergy sexual abuse and sexual abuse in the family
Abus sexuels du clergé et dans la famille*

I was 10 years old that day. I had been a member of the Scouts St Luc for 2 years already and I loved this group. One day, we received one of those badges, which we proudly brought to our admiring moms to sew on our pullovers. At the end of the meeting, when Father Bernard released us, he asked me to stay a little longer. I remember my friends who came out of the room. Some had a knowing smirk, like they knew what was waiting for me. Others looked at their shoes in discomfort and others seemed jealous of the special attention the Father gave me.

S'il y a plusieurs centaines de victimes en France, il y en a plusieurs millions dans le monde qui sont encore en vie. En matière de « crime de masse », il y a longtemps qu'on n'a pas fait mieux.



François 43
Clergy sexual abuse
Abus sexuels du clergé

The director took me in, started showing me around and said: «this is the laundry room». He asked me to undress and started touching me. I struggled, but he made me understand that it was the law that had put me here and that I was going to stay here anyway until I turned 18.

Représentants du monde et des nations modernes, prenez la défense des enfants et défendez leurs droits depuis leur naissance jusqu'à ce qu'ils soient adultes. Faites en sorte que leurs droits soient respectés. Que tous les pays européens et le monde entier appliquent les chartes, les déclarations et les conventions qui ont été signées. Nous devons arrêter la souffrance des enfants, nous devons arrêter ce carnage. Faites un effort, et donnez de l'amour à vos semblables.



Fawzy 59
Sexual abuse in the orphanage
Abus sexuels en orphelinat

GERMANY



And that's where the first assault happened in the morning. He fondled me, and yes, he took advantage of my weakness at that moment. That is hard for me. It culminated in a six-week holiday camp, away from the big scout camps.

Ces actions se déroulent dans des compartiments différents, séparés les uns des autres. Il y a les familles, il y a les différents groupes de jeunes, et ils veulent tout garder dans ces tiroirs. Et si vous regardez dedans un instant, ils veulent que vous les refermiez rapidement. Essayez de voir les connexions et de rassembler les différents compartiments.



Harald 55
Sexual abuse in scouts
Abus sexuels chez les scouts

This priest ignored any risk of being discovered and chose the most unthinkable places to commit his rapes:

The gallery in the chapel where they all played the organ and the church choir usually sang, the sacristy or the gym. Or the shower room or the photo lab in the school. In every conceivable place he did what he wanted to do.

Mettez les enfants en valeur. Les droits de l'enfant sont des droits humains, inscrivez les droits des enfants dans les lois de tous les pays. Et à vous tous, amis, voisins et concitoyens : Intervenez lorsque vous voyez des violences contre les enfants.



Karl 71

*Clergy sexual abuse
Abus sexuels du clergé*

As a student at a prestigious school, I was sexually abused by two Jesuit priests. They forced me to do what they wanted and told me it was for my own good. They abused my trust and my faith. This shaped my life, my relationships with other people and my relationship with myself. I was ashamed beyond measure. And I kept silent.

Enfin en parler après des décennies de silence a été un acte de libération. Depuis, je veux que toutes les personnes qui ont subi des violences dans leur enfance puissent connaître cette libération. Pour beaucoup de gens, le sujet est inconfortable. Je le comprends.

Mais si nous voulons que les enfants et les jeunes grandissent dans un monde sans violence sexuelle, en tant que société, nous devons apprendre à écouter.



Matthias 59
Clergy sexual abuse
Abus sexuels du clergé

AUSTRIA



My first childhood memories are marked by violence, alcohol and abuse. And the constant moving back and forth between home and children's homes. For me, it was torture to go to a new home or foster family. I returned home happy every time, despite the brutality at home.

Oui, les personnes importantes et puissantes devraient aussi être tenues responsables au même titre que ceux qui ont fait de telles choses aux enfants. Peu importe comment. Aujourd'hui, on dit que les enfants doivent vivre avec ça, et les enfants souffrent à vie. Et en tant qu'adulte, le traumatisme revient encore et encore, surtout aujourd'hui. Vous ne pouvez pas y faire face.



Romana 64

*Sexual, physical and mental abuse in foster institutions
Abus sexuels, maltraitances physiques et psychiques dans des institutions*

She made us masturbate while she was standing in the shower room or sitting on a stool. She (the governess) pulled so hard that it started to bleed.

Il y a des signes avant-coureurs à tout abus ! Et lorsque les gens remarquent ces signes, il est alors garanti qu'une partie des abus peut être évité. Et c'est ce que je souhaite.



Robert 71

*Sexual, physical, and mental abuse in foster institutions
Abus sexuels, maltraitements physiques et psychiques dans des institutions*

SPAIN



One night when I was sleeping, he woke me up. I had crawled out from under the blanket, my trousers were pulled down and my t-shirt was pulled up. I woke up, sat up half asleep and pulled up my trousers and the blanket. I covered myself. But he grabbed me, blinded me with the torch and pulled me back down to the floor. He undressed me again and at that moment my brain shattered.

Ce que je veux vous dire, c'est que l'enfance est le début de notre vie, le début où l'on construit ses valeurs, où l'on met en place son mode de vie, où l'on commence des mauvaises pensées, et où l'on forge sa personnalité. Tout ce que je veux, c'est que personne d'autre ne souffre plus jamais ce que j'ai souffert.



Emiliano 55 †
Clergy sexual abuse
Abus sexuels du clergé

It was raining one day at school, and the priest invited me to his room to dry off. I was a bit of a lonely kid. I did not play football like my twin brother, who was a natural leader. I was a lonelier type of person. And this man knew my life and my situation very well.

He invited me to his room to dry me off, and that is where it all started. He was abusing me for more than a year. Every day.

Je demande au monde d'être perspicace et sensible, d'être attentif, de se rendre compte quand cela arrive à un enfant et de remarquer les signes, de réagir de manière protectrice, et d'éduquer les enfants pour qu'ils se sentent à l'aise et capables de parler de ces questions sans tabous et sans le poids de la religion.



Fernando 61
Clergy sexual abuse
Abus sexuels du clergé

The situation I found myself in, did not let me live, oppressed me and suffocated me. I couldn't talk about it, and he also abused my brothers. The burden became heavier and heavier because I felt guilty and complicit. And on top of that, I had kept silent and thought I had let it happen. I felt responsible for the pedophile's actions and over the years and with the help of therapy, I understood that I had done enough to survive.

De l'âge de 8 à 11 ans, j'ai été abusé sexuellement à d'innombrables reprises par un entraîneur de football. Il est certain que si j'avais pu en parler à quelqu'un dès le début, la souffrance aurait été bien moindre. Pourtant, ce n'est pas ma faute si cela m'est arrivé à moi et à d'autres enfants. Car la faute incombe uniquement et exclusivement à ceux qui commettent les abus et à ceux qui les couvrent. Si vous voyez un enfant en danger, ne vous taisez pas. Donnez-lui une chance de vivre et d'être un enfant.



Pepe 49
Sexual abuse in sports
Abus sexuels dans un cadre sportif

He used to stand up immediately and come and sit next to me. He used to put his hand inside my trousers and start groping me. At 12 years old I was not fully aware of what was happening, but I knew it was not normal and that I did not like it.

Il y a quelque chose d'encore plus blessant que l'abus : la dissimulation et la revictimisation. L'église devrait être responsable de l'atténuation de la douleur causée par ces crimes, surtout en tant que visage de la bonté et du christianisme. Une personne qui prétend porter l'étendard de la bonté ne peut jamais commettre ces crimes et lorsqu'elle le fait, elle devrait être punie plus sévèrement.

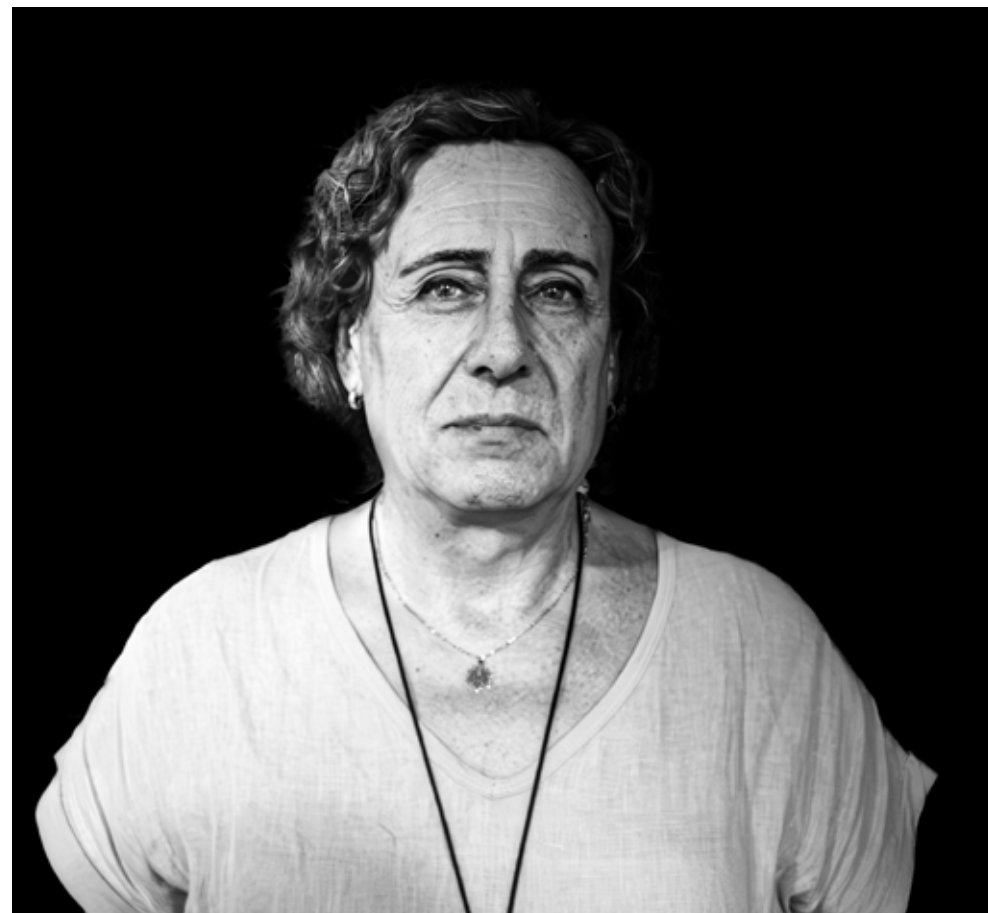


Juan 25
Clergy sexual abuse
Abus sexuels du clergé

What should never have happened indeed occurred.

A priest sexually abused me in his role as an adult, and, furthermore, he shattered the trust and respect that my parents had instilled in me toward my elders, particularly my teachers.

Nous devons lutter sans relâche contre ces personnes dans tous les domaines, mais surtout dans l'église, car elles entraînent des générations d'enfants qui ont perdu une grande partie de leur enfance, de leur spontanéité et de leurs illusions, en portant un tel fardeau dans le silence de leur esprit.



Patricia 66

*Clergy sexual abuse
Abus sexuels du clergé*

He told me that he loved me, that our relationship was special. A poisoned love that destroyed me, without realizing it, inside. Love was not that, it was child sexual abuse, and a girl like me, between the ages of 9 and 11, was not able to assimilate it, destroying me emotionally.

Il est difficile de guérir et de mener une vie épanouie. La guérison ne signifie pas que le mal n'a pas existé, la guérison signifie que ce qui vous a causé de la douleur ne contrôle plus votre vie, mais cela n'enlève pas la responsabilité des auteurs. Aucun enfant ne doit devenir adulte de cette manière, c'est trop dur.



Inma 46
Clergy sexual abuse
Abus sexuels du clergé

I have suffered the misogyny and contempt of the church when I was abused by a friar and when the abuse was used to grant marriage nullity to my husband. The Church should be the opposite: compassionate and welcoming.

L'enfer, c'est les autres, disait Sartre. Plus concrètement, l'enfer, c'est vous, les pédophiles.



Teresa 57
Clergy sexual abuse
Abus sexuels du clergé

At a scout camp, I met an educator who was married and had an adopted son. He and his wife were awarded the title of exemplary foster family in the province of Jaén, and he started treating me very well.

A few years later, he met me in a chat room. He insisted that we meet, got me into his car and raped me.

He sexually assaulted me twice. My life turned upside down and I've never been the same since. For him, there are practically no consequences, for me, on the other hand, the consequences are lifelong.

En Espagne et au sein de l'Union européenne, je demande qu'un cadre juridique soit élaboré pour protéger véritablement toutes les victimes d'infractions sexuelles et garantir leur bien-être. Il faut contraindre les institutions civiles ou ecclésiastiques responsables à assumer leur part de responsabilité, afin qu'elles prennent cette question au sérieux et mettent en place des mesures vigoureuses et des plans de prévention futurs efficaces pour agir et veiller au respect des droits humains.



Guillermo 30

*Sexual abuse in scouts
Abus sexuels chez les scouts*

All were secrets, games and something else that I could not tell, my protector, my tormentor, I have no memory of a childhood without sexual abuse by my biological father. With adolescence, when I revealed myself at the age of 16, the abuses ended and the tortures began, which annulled me as a person and undermined my self-esteem, the psychological abuse was continuous, the family was not my refuge, it was my prison, locked up with a monster in sheep's clothing.

Il faut créer un réseau de protection contre les abus sexuels au sein de la famille, une alerte précoce à l'école et dans le système de santé, un soutien institutionnel pour que les enfants ne soient pas enfermés avec leurs bourreaux, un soutien socio-sanitaire pour les conséquences graves de ces abus à l'adolescence et à l'âge adulte, qui les empêchent de normaliser leur vie et leur travail et, surtout, sensibiliser la société à un drame caché sous le toit de ses maisons.

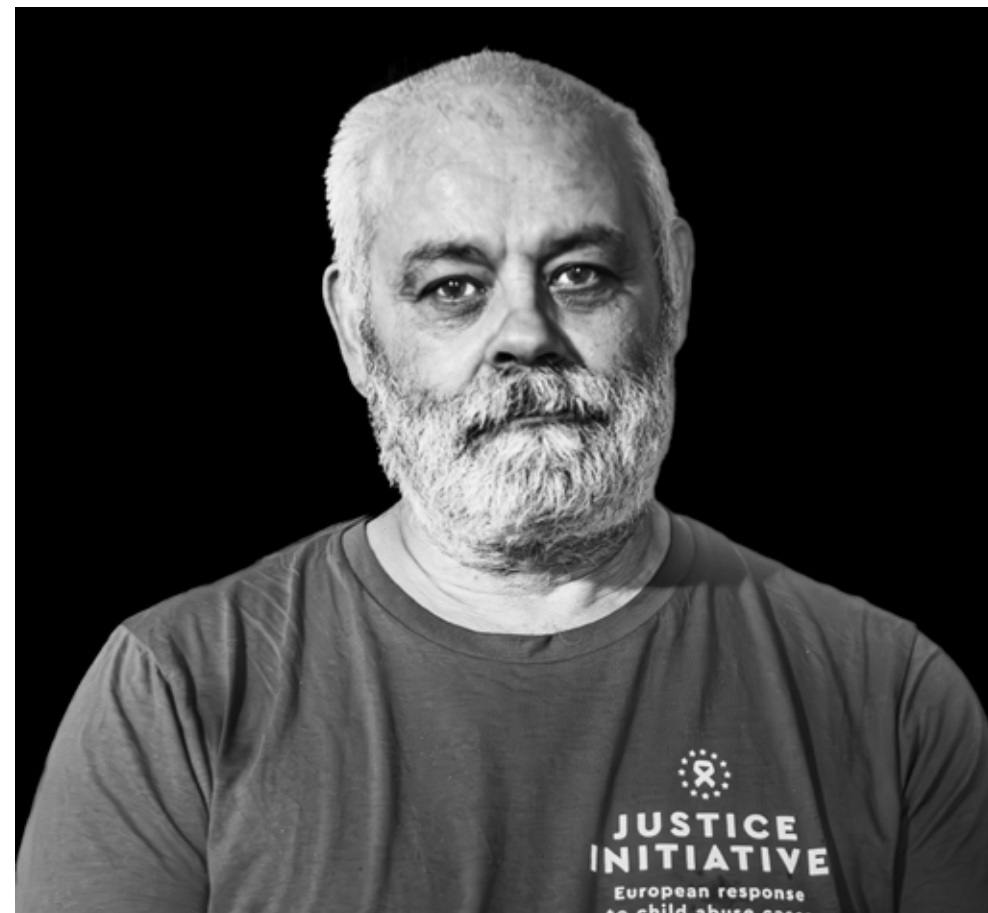


Amor 51

*Sexual abuse in the family
Abus sexuels dans la famille*

«It's that you don't love me.» A phrase that hammered my ears day after day, between groping and kisses with the taste and smoke of tobacco, taking advantage of the safety of the elevator or any moment alone, it was a way to reinforce the manipulation that allowed him to use me as he pleased. Would this be normal? And who could I talk to about these things? Who could I tell?

Aujourd'hui, je vous lance un appel : nous ne devons pas nous arrêter une seconde dans la lutte contre la maltraitance des enfants ! Ils ne peuvent pas se défendre. Nous sommes leur bouclier. Nous devons toujours être vigilants, ne jamais baisser la garde. Et si, par malheur, une agression se produit, faisons tout ce qui est en notre pouvoir, dès le premier instant, pour que les dégâts commencent à être réparés.



Alfonso 56
Clergy sexual abuse
Abus sexuels du clergé

It stole my childhood, adolescence and a large part of my adult life, due to the trauma and after-effects caused by the sexual abuse suffered by my father from the age of 6 to 16.

J'aimerais que mon témoignage inspire d'autres victimes, afin qu'elles ne restent pas silencieuses aussi longtemps que moi. Raconter son histoire libère et aide à guérir les blessures.



Laura 54

*Sexual abuse in the family
Abus sexuels dans la famille*

IRELAND



I had to sleep with a man, their son, who was 21 years older than me; he assaulted me, and sexually abused me. He abused me physically and so did the old man. He actually started grooming me from the time I went there.

Beaucoup d'enfants comme mes frères et moi ont été victimes de divers types d'abus, qu'il s'agisse d'abus physiques, d'abus sexuels, de séparation d'avec leur famille, de manque d'éducation. Il faut d'abord reconnaître chaque enfant qui a été placé dans un foyer, dans une famille d'accueil, dans une pension et dire que ces survivants méritent plus.

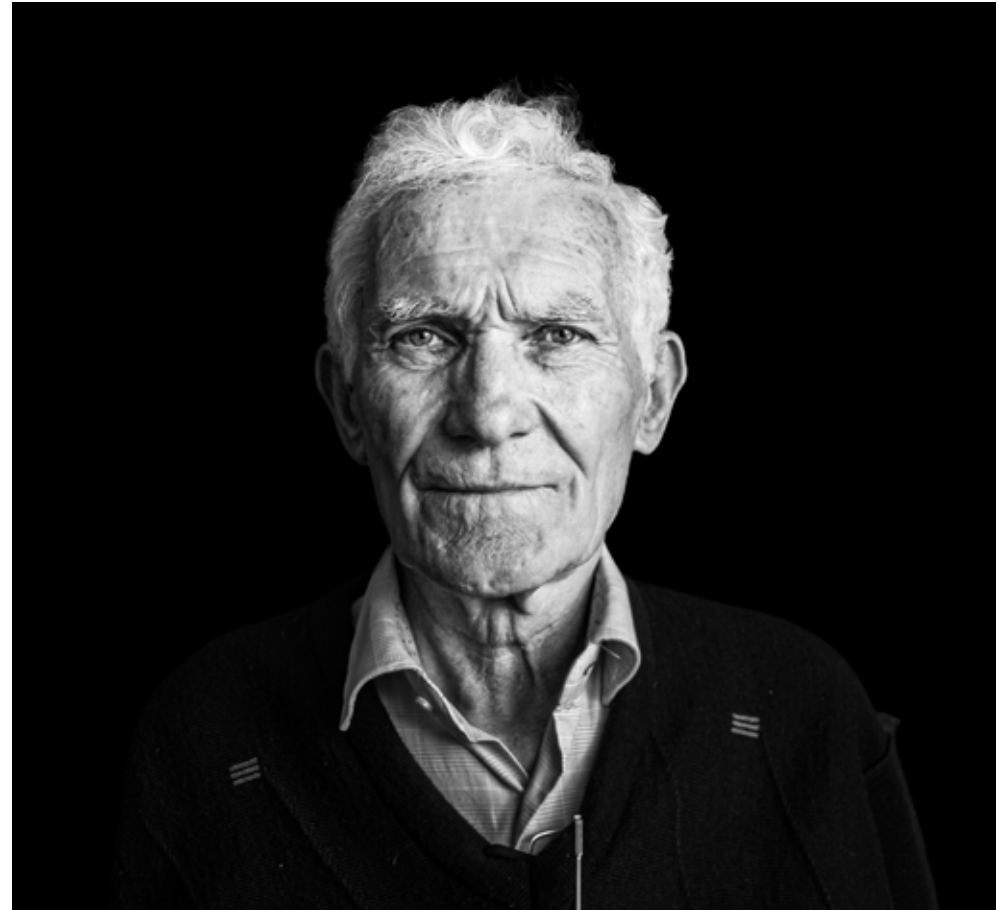


James 72

*Sexual abuse in foster institutions
Abus sexuels dans des institutions d'accueil*

I was taken out for convenience to work on a farm as a laborer. I was beaten several times. He would take his belt off, pull down my pants, put me across his knees, and smack me. The blood came out of my bum.

Nous avons besoin de dignité et de respect. Pour ce qui a été tracé à travers nous.



Peter 79

*Sexual abuse in foster institutions
Abus sexuels dans des institutions d'accueil*

ITALY



I was 13 years old. My mother was very religious. She sent me to church. And one day the priest raped me... That was in 1981. It went on for years. When I was 15, I was devastated. I started taking drugs. I became ill. It took me almost 40 years to understand why my life had taken this path for years. One day, however, I turned my back on death forever, on the desire to kill myself, which I had carried within me for years. I became a survivor and began to rise again.

Les coupables sont les gens: les prêtres qui ont abusé de nous et ceux qui les ont couverts. J'ai souffert, mais maintenant j'ai une mission dans la vie: offrir la transparence. Avons-nous atteint ce point? Demander aux victimes de faire le travail des autres? Vous réalisez à quel point c'est déchirant? C'est l'une des raisons pour lesquelles je vis. Mais la communauté, et le Vatican en particulier, n'ont-ils pas un sentiment diffus de honte?



Francesco 51
Clergy sexual abuse
Abus sexuels du clergé

When I first heard the word «survivors» I did not understand what it meant and asked: «the boys who committed suicide because of the priest were survivors?» Then I realized I was no longer a victim, but a survivor.

Je ressens un besoin urgent de dire la même chose à tout le monde: si vous êtes confrontés à la violence, vous devez la signaler, et la signaler immédiatement. Et je ne me soucie pas de mes anciens amis, ces garçons de l'oratoire, qui aujourd'hui, lorsqu'ils me croisent dans la rue, changent le bord de la route. Si je n'avais pas fait ce que j'ai fait, d'autres enfants auraient été en aussi grand danger que moi. Nous devons tous prendre nos responsabilités.



Alessandro 24
Clergy sexual abuse
Abus sexuels du clergé

I started being sexually abused by an uncle. There had been an initial attempt at communication in the family, but it had not been taken into consideration, as it often happens in families, partly because of the existing taboo and partly because of the difficulty for the family members to really accept what had happened. Dissociative symptoms arise, and sometimes one thinks one is a ghost living in a body, which is why one even comes to think of suicide, and unfortunately many victims choose this path as an extreme gesture in the hope of putting an end to this sense of devastating anguish. It is a feeling that totally sucks you in.

J'aimerais que chacun contribue à changer cette société, car j'espère que les générations futures pourront vraiment vivre dans un monde meilleur. De tels cas continuent de se perpétuer et restent cachés : souvent, les agresseurs ne sont pas poursuivis, alors qu'ils ont commis un véritable meurtre psychologique.



Irene 32

*Sexual abuse in the family
Abus sexuels dans la famille*

PORTUGAL



He told me that I couldn't tell anyone because he was a priest and I was a girl; that my word against his was nothing. My word was worth nothing. If I told the sisters, the sisters would send me away from the congregation. They wouldn't want someone like me, who wasn't pure and what would I be left with doing nothing? And that caused me to be enormously fearful that all this would be discovered. I was not guilty, of being abused, but it ended with this blackmail.

Je vous dis qu'il s'agit de vies brisées, de personnalités brisées, de rêves brisés. Un monde brisé. Ce sont des enfants qui éprouvaient tant de joie en eux, et après les maltraitances, tout cela a disparu. Le problème, c'est toute la société qui laisse faire, qui se montre indifférente et qui n'en parle pas.



Filipa 43
Clergy sexual abuse
Abus sexuels du clergé

It happened on holiday, at a relative's house. As soon as I was able, I rang home to ask for help, for them to come and pick me up, and they did. When I got home and told them everything that had happened, nobody did anything. Today I know it was out of fear of facing the family and hope that I would forget since I was little. Something you never forget and leaves marks for life.

Les enfants ne mentent pas et ne parlent que de la réalité qu'ils connaissent. Alors quand un enfant vous demande de l'aide, aidez-le ! Ne doutez jamais ! Nous devons agir, protéger les enfants, même ceux qui ne réalisent pas encore qu'ils ont besoin d'aide. La prévention n'est possible qu'avec l'information et l'éducation. L'État a l'obligation d'assurer la sécurité de ces enfants et de les soustraire rapidement et définitivement aux agresseurs, de leur apporter tout type de soutien et de faciliter les plaintes, pour une action rapide et sérieuse de la justice.

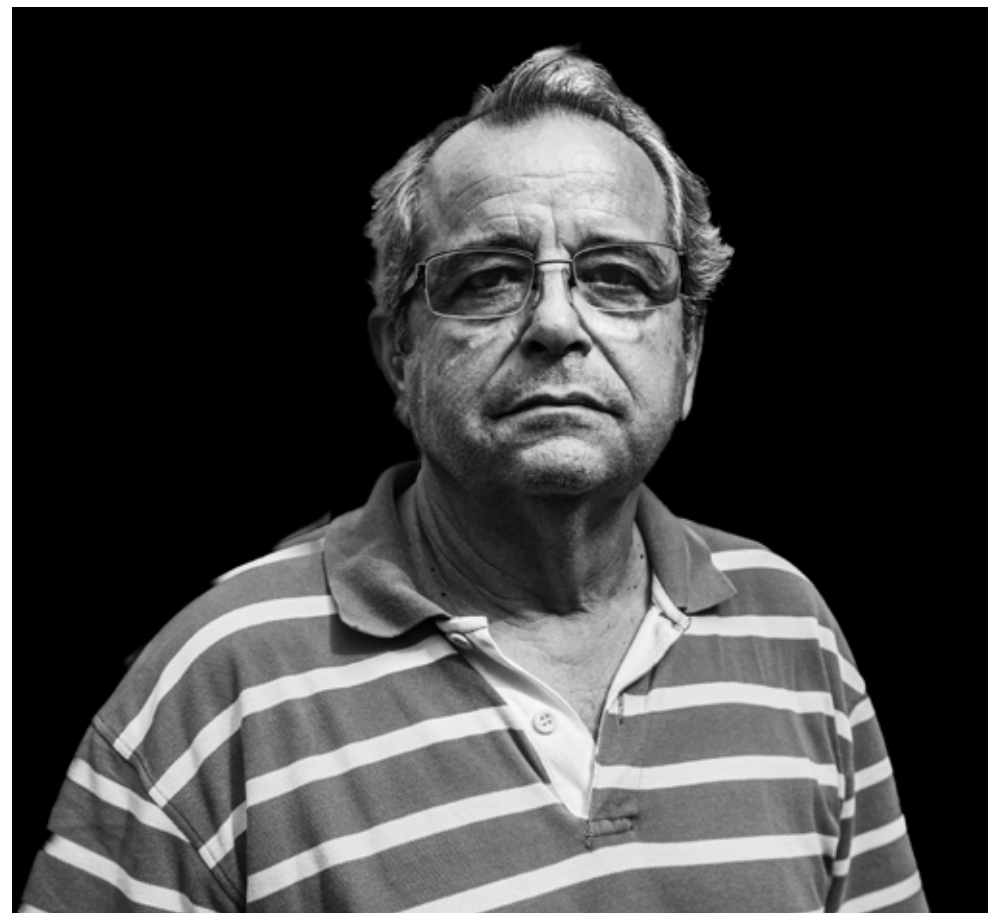


Melania 38

*Sexual abuse in the family
Abus sexuels dans la famille*

Once, the priest took me hitchhiking with him to Porto to visit a benefactress. At night, when the lady said: «I've already found a couch for the boy», he said, «No, that's not necessary; the boy sleeps with me». So that night he took my hand to feel his testicles and to masturbate. This behavior was repeated by him on other occasions at the Refugio da Mãe do Céu.

La douleur, le souvenir et le traumatisme d'un enfant maltraité ou violé sont imprescriptibles. C'est pourquoi il ne peut pas non plus y avoir de prescription pour les crimes de cette nature. Cette prescription est un trophée pour les abuseurs et les criminels.



António 70
Clergy sexual abuse
Abus sexuels du clergé

I was five, almost six, and my mother sent me to a catholic boarding school run by nuns to protect me from society and the brutal conditions we lived in. I was abused from the age of five to nine by a priest who was in that institution. The first time was in a confessional. He took a dream away from me, that of having a family of my own, which I still don't have, because I am very afraid that the same thing will happen to my children.

La douleur ne prescrit pas ! La prescription, dans le cas d'abus sur des enfants... est le plus grand acte de lâcheté qui existe !



Cristina 52
Clergy sexual abuse
Abus sexuels du clergé

DENMARK



I was exposed to sexual abuse in my childhood in Emdrupvej, where I grew up. It started with my parents not knowing that there was such a person in the village, a friend of theirs. Unfortunately, I do not remember how many times, but it happened many times. I had many suicidal thoughts because of it. I was ashamed and depressed.

Il s'agira d'un processus à vie où je devrai peut-être non seulement consulter des psychologues, mais aussi des psychothérapeutes, faire des traitements corporels et bien plus encore. Parce que cela ne s'est pas seulement manifesté dans ma tête, mais aussi dans mon corps. Je dois aussi réapprendre à connaître mon corps.



Mikael 51
Sexual abuse
Abus sexuels

SWEDEN



The sexual abuse started when I was 12 years old and continued throughout my teenage years. The last time it happened was when I was 20. Now I have nightmares every night and I still find it difficult to deal with the psychological consequences. I often have panic attacks. I used to think it was my fault and I felt ashamed. I felt that it would be my fault if more sexual assaults happened to me.

Ce qui importe maintenant, c'est que vous tous, en tant qu'êtres humains et société civile, devez devenir bien meilleurs pour écouter les enfants. Je tiens également à dire aux responsables politiques de renforcer les lois protégeant les droits des enfants. En outre, nous devons renforcer le travail de détection et d'identification afin de localiser les enfants victimes d'agressions sexuelles.



Saga 23

*Sexual abuse and exploitation
Abus et exploitation sexuels*

FINLAND



When it happened for the first time, he had just been touching me. Then I was once again home alone, watching TV, and when I left the room, he grabbed me by the shoulder and sort of pushed me down in the bed. He grabbed me, ripped my pants off by force and threw me on my stomach. That's the first time he came all the way inside, and raped me there.

Se remettre d'un crime de violence sexuelle prend beaucoup de temps, et il faut beaucoup de temps avant de pouvoir le révéler à qui que ce soit, surtout dans les cas d'inceste au sein de la famille. Nous avons besoin de changements législatifs importants.



Heli 49
Sexual abuse
Abus sexuels

My abusers are both my parents. My mother has told me that even as a small baby I was spanked for crying. So that kind of violence has been present. My earliest memories were related to sexual abuse. My father has admitted that he raped me for the first time when I was around 4-5-years old.

Comment pouvez-vous fermer votre cœur à des enfants si petits et faire quelque chose d'aussi horrible? Vous devriez avoir honte!



Seijamirjami 44

Sexual abuse

Abus sexuels

I stayed at the home of a familiar family quite often, and that's where my trauma of sexual abuse took place. And because I spent quite a few nights there, I was also traumatised by the knowledge that where I stayed, other children were also abused. It is strange how such a small child can feel guilty for not being able to do anything about it.

Tout d'abord, je voudrais m'adresser aux décideurs de l'Église laestadienne. Comment pouvez-vous agir ou plutôt, ne pas agir quand vous savez ce qui est fait à ces petits enfants dans vos églises ? Il y a ceux d'entre vous qui ont les moyens d'intervenir. Et vous ne le faites pas. Nous, les victimes, nous vous avons dit ce qui pouvait être fait pour intervenir, mais non. Rien n'est fait. Et je voudrais également adresser un message similaire à l'Église luthérienne : pourquoi n'intervenez-vous pas dans votre propre communauté, mais aussi par rapport aux abus qui ont lieu dans ces petites communautés religieuses ?



Outi 49
Sexual abuse
Abus sexuels

I was about eight years old when this person came into my life and led me into a world not meant for children. It became our secret and I was also told that I had done something wrong. This developed into a kind of wall of shame within which I spent my childhood and into which I grew. My own idea of what normal development is for a child, for example, became incredibly distorted, and it took me a very long time to learn to understand that.

Les gens doivent voir les enfants, voir leurs inquiétudes et regarder derrière leurs sourires. Il faut entendre l'histoire que personne n'ose raconter. Quant à la sanction, elle devrait au moins exiger que la personne soit présente dans la thérapie de la victime. Cela serait plus proche d'une véritable punition. Mais je ne sais pas comment parvenir à une situation où les délinquants comprennent ce qu'ils ont fait. Car il semble souvent qu'ils ne comprennent pas l'impact de leurs actions. Et ce n'est que par cette compréhension qu'un véritable changement pourrait avoir lieu.



Minna 48
Sexual abuse
Abus sexuels

SLOVENIA



I experienced sexual abuse by my grandfather. Between the ages of five and eight. My family was very close to my grandfather. He was an important part of our lives, but my parents often left me in his care. And that's how it started.

Le plus petit commentaire peut faire la différence. Si nous sommes prêts à écouter les gens et à voir de telles choses, nous pouvons aider beaucoup d'autres personnes. Et en parler ne peut que faire du bien. Cela ne peut jamais faire de mal.



Tjaša 28

*Sexual abuse in the family
Abus sexuels dans la famille*

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