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In the field of civil justice, pending procedures and proceedings initiated before the end of the transition period will continue under EU law. The e-Justice Portal, on the basis of a mutual agreement with the UK, will maintain the relevant information related to the United Kingdom until the end of 2024.

[Victims' rights - by country](#)**[England and Wales](#)**

If you have been a **victim of crime**, the law confers certain individual rights to you, before, during and after court proceedings (trial). You can also benefit from various forms of assistance and may be able to claim compensation for the damages caused by the crime.

Criminal proceedings in England and Wales start with an investigation, where the police gather evidence. Once the police have completed their investigation, in less serious cases, the police will decide whether to charge the suspect. Otherwise, the case is passed to the prosecution service. The public prosecutor examines whether or not there is enough evidence against the suspect for a realistic prospect of conviction and whether it is in the public interest to prosecute him or her. If the prosecutor decides that a prosecution should not go ahead, the case will be closed. Otherwise the prosecutor will advise the police of the charging decision, the police will charge the suspect and the case will go to court.

Cases for less serious offences are heard at the Magistrates' Courts, usually by a panel of three lay magistrates and less often by a single professional judge. Cases for more serious crimes (like rape or robbery) are heard at the Crown Courts by a professional judge and a lay jury. The jury is composed of 12 people selected at random from the general public who listen to the evidence presented during the trial and decide if the defendant is guilty of the crime. The judge decides on matters of law during the trial, such as whether the presentation of certain evidence is allowed. At the end of the trial if the jury finds the defendant guilty the judge decides the sentence for the crime according to the law.

Click on the links below to find the information that you need:

[1 - My rights as a victim of crime](#)

[2 - Reporting a crime and my rights during the investigation or trial](#)

[3 - My rights after trial](#)

[4 - Compensation](#)

[5 - My rights to support and assistance](#)

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