

This country is in a transition process to withdraw from the EU.

## 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](#)

Last update: 21/09/2017

The national language version of this page is maintained by the respective Member State. The translations have been done by the European Commission service. Possible changes introduced in the original by the competent national authority may not be yet reflected in the translations. The European Commission accepts no responsibility or liability whatsoever with regard to any information or data contained or referred to in this document. Please refer to the legal notice to see copyright rules for the Member State responsible for this page.

Member States in charge of the management of national content pages are in the process of updating some of the content on this website in the light of the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union. If the site contains content that does not yet reflect the withdrawal of the United Kingdom, it is unintentional and will be addressed.