
Coordinator: Croatian Law Centre (HR). Other beneficiaries: Association for Nonviolent Communication (SI), Centre for Legal Resources (RO), Government Office For Human Rights And Rights Of National Minorities (HR), Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Croatia (HR), Patent Association (HU), and Peace Institute (SI).

RIGHTS OF VICTIMS OF CRIME INFORMATION FOR EU CITIZENS

This leaflet will provide you with answers to the following two questions:

- I. As the citizen of the European Union, what rights do I have if I am a victim of a criminal offence?
- II. As the citizen of the European Union, what should I know if I become a victim of crime in another Member State?



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I. What rights do I have as the citizen of the European Union who is a victim of a criminal offence?

You have the right:

- to be provided with information and support;
 - to participate in criminal proceedings,
 - to protection, and the right to particular protection if you are a victim with specific protection needs.
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1. The right to be provided with information and support includes the following rights:

- right to understand and to be understood,
 - right to receive information from the first contact with a competent authority,
 - right to make a complaint with regards to a criminal offence in a language that you understand, or by receiving the necessary linguistic assistance,
 - right to receive a written acknowledgement of your formal complaint you made to a competent authority, stating the basic element of the criminal offence concerned, in the language you understand (free of charge),
 - right to receive information about your case: any decision not to proceed with or to end an investigation, the time and place of the trial and the nature of the charges against the offender, any final judgment in a trial, and any information enabling you to know about the state of the criminal proceedings (unless in exceptional cases the proper handling of the case may be adversely affected by such notification),
 - right to be notified, at your request, when the person remanded in custody is released from or has escaped detention, and to be informed of any relevant measure issued for your protection,
 - right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings,
 - right to access victim support services,
 - right to support from victim support services.
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2. The right to participate in criminal proceedings includes the following rights:

- right to be heard,
- right to a review of a decision not to prosecute, unless such decision results in an out-of-court settlement according to the law,
- right to safeguards in the context of restorative justice services – the state must take measures to safeguard you from secondary and repeat victimisation, from intimidation and from retaliation,
- right to legal aid, when you have a status of a party in criminal proceedings,
- right to reimbursement of expenses,
- right to the return of property which is seized in the course of criminal proceedings, unless required for the purposes of criminal proceedings,
- right to decision on compensation from the offender in the course of criminal proceedings,
- **if you have a residence in another Member State other than that where the criminal offence was committed, you have a right to make a complaint to the competent authorities of the Member State of residence, if you are unable to do so in the Member State where the criminal offence was committed, or, in the event of a serious offence (as determined by national law of that Member State), if you do not wish to do so.**

3. The right to protection includes the following rights:

- right to protection from secondary and repeat victimisation, from intimidation and from retaliation, including protection against the risk of emotional or psychological harm, and to protection of dignity during questioning and when testifying,
- right to avoid contact with the offender,
- right to protection during criminal investigations,
- right to protection of privacy,
- right to particular protection during criminal proceedings, if you have specific protection needs,
- right to particular protection during criminal proceedings, if you are a child.



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II. As the citizen of the European Union, what should I know if I become a victim of crime in another Member State?

- While national legislation in each Member State varies, the minimum standards on victims' rights described above apply in all Member States.
- When you make a criminal complaint in another Member State (most likely to the police), the authorities have to take measures to help you understand and be understood. To address linguistic barriers, you have the right to make a complaint in a language that you understand, or by receiving the necessary linguistic assistance.

You will be allowed to bring a person of your choice with you when you first make contact with the police. This can be any person you trust, provided that criminal proceedings would not be prejudiced by their presence (for example, the person you bring with you should not be a possible witness). You can also choose someone who can assist you in communicating with authorities.

TIP: If you find yourself in this situation, it is advisable to contact the embassy or consulate of your country. They can assist you with communication and other practical matters.

- You have the right to receive from the competent authorities the information relevant for the exercise of all your rights, including the right to participation in criminal proceedings, the right to protection, and the right to support. If you have any questions, you should ask the authorities and make sure you understand what will happen next.
- If you need any immediate support of victim support services in the Member State where the criminal offense took place, in particular the support related to your participation in the criminal proceedings, the authorities should provide you with information on how to access it.

Once you return home, you have the right to access victim support services in the country of your residence. Victim support services differ in each Member State.

