

Despite positive developments, hurdles to justice remain

In some Member States access to justice faces challenges. Judicial independence continues to cause concerns. Victims' procedural rights need more effective implementation. Gaps in preventing violence against women and domestic violence remain.

Judicial independence continues to cause concerns

- Europeans rank respect for **democracy, human rights** and the **rule of law**



as EU's **primary asset**

- Challenges to judicial independence continue to grow, underlining the need for

effective coordination of efforts in this area in the EU and beyond



- Citizens and companies see **government and political interference** as the main reasons for the lack of independence of courts and judges

Advancing victims' rights

- EU law sets minimum **victims' rights standards** but shortcomings remain

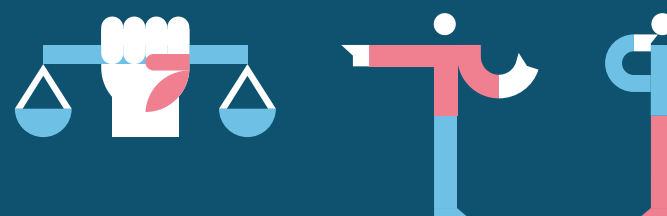
- 2 out of 3** Member States



adopted legislation to strengthen application of the **Victims' Rights Directive**

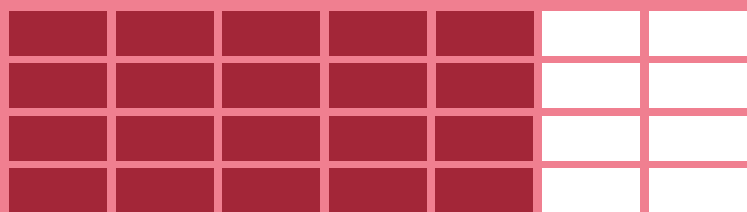
- This includes **more victim-friendly initiatives** such as establishing separate waiting areas or better financial compensation for victims

- Some Member States also introduced or further strengthened victims' rights awareness training for practitioners



Violence against women

- 20** EU Member States



have ratified the Council of Europe's Istanbul Convention to prevent and combat violence against women

- The EU **continued ratifying the convention**
- But, **opposition remains at a political level and from national courts** who are sometimes more lenient in their sentencing

