



European
Commission

The 2015 EU Justice SCOREBOARD

Factsheet

The EU Justice Scoreboard is a regular information tool that contributes to the European Semester process by providing data on the quality, independence and efficiency of justice systems in all EU Member States. It is part of an open dialogue with Member States helping them achieve more effective justice systems.

The Scoreboard provides information on the functioning of civil, commercial and administrative justice systems since they play a key role in creating an investment-friendly environment, restoring confidence, providing greater regulatory predictability and sustainable growth.

The 2015 EU Justice Scoreboard seeks to identify possible trends in the functioning of justice systems. A cautious approach is required as the situation varies significantly depending on the respective Member State and indicator. Poor performance as identified for some Member States always requires a deeper analysis of the underlying reasons.

The key findings of the 2015 EU Justice Scoreboard highlight the three priority areas that need to be addressed.

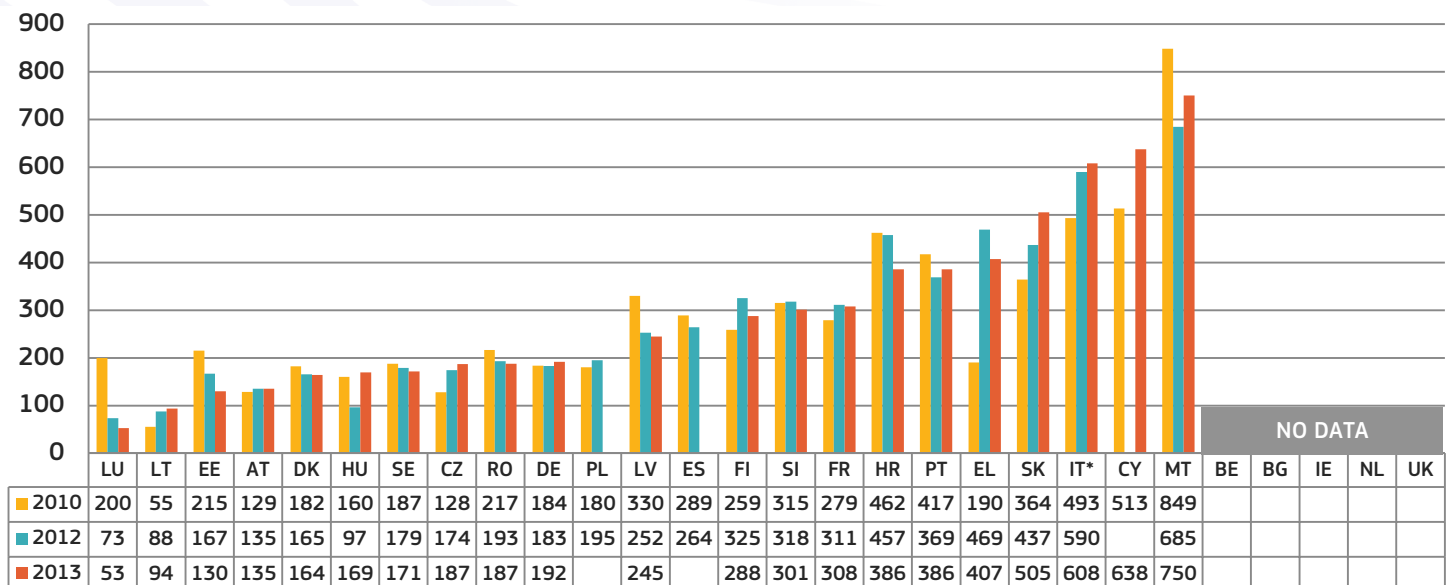
For more graphs with quantitative data: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/effective-justice/files/justice_scoreboard_2015_selected_graphs_en.pdf

1. Efficiency of justice systems

In general for those Members for which data is available, and considering all efficiency indicators, some improvements in the efficiency of justice systems can be observed. However, reaping the full benefits of structural reforms takes time and reforms should be continued with commitment and determination.

Time needed to resolve litigious civil and commercial cases (First instance/in days)

(source: CEPEJ study)¹



¹ Comparisons should be undertaken with care, as some Member States reported changes in the methodology for data collection or categorisation (CZ, EE, IT, CY, LV, HU, SI) or made caveats on completeness of data that may not cover all Länder or all courts (DE, LU). NL provided a measured disposition time, but it is not calculated by CEPEJ.

2. Quality of justice systems

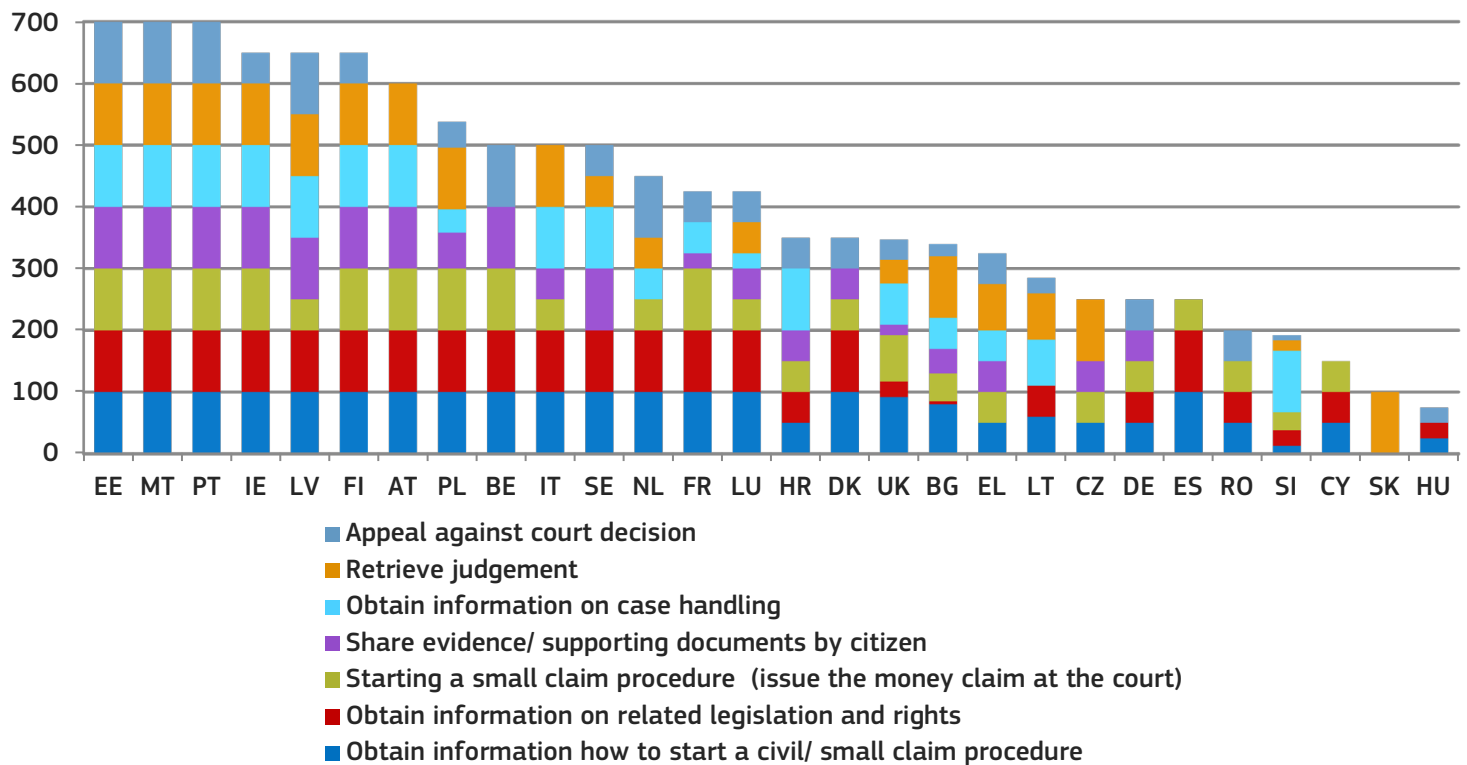
Viewing the efficiency of a justice system in isolation does not reveal the full picture. The 2015 EU Justice Scoreboard pays particular attention to the quality of judicial systems. For example, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) systems are indispensable tools at the disposal of courts and facilitate access to justice.

Online small claim proceedings

Efforts to enhance the use of ICT have continued but there are still shortcomings. There is significant scope for improving online small claims procedures that enable citizens to make better use of their consumer rights.

Benchmarking of small claims procedures online (for each category maximum 100 points, in total maximum 700 points)

(source: study prepared for the European Commission, Directorate-General Communications Networks, Content and Technology)

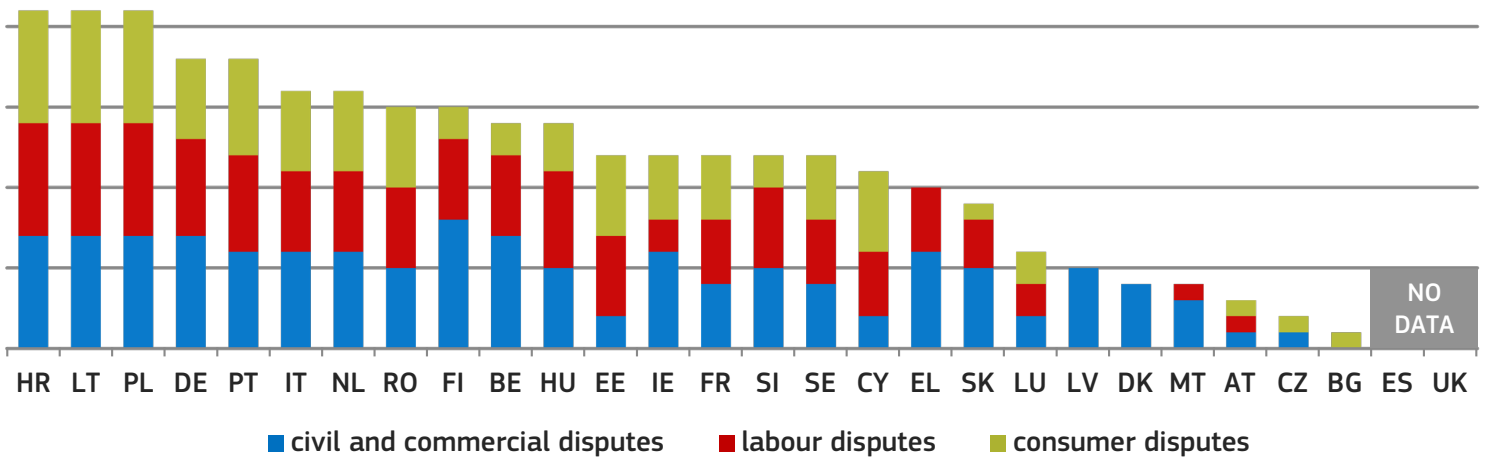


Alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms

Data show significant efforts from most Member States to encourage the use of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms. All Member States which provided data reported public sector promotional activities to increase their use.

Promotion of the use of ADR by the public sector

(source: European Commission²)⁵

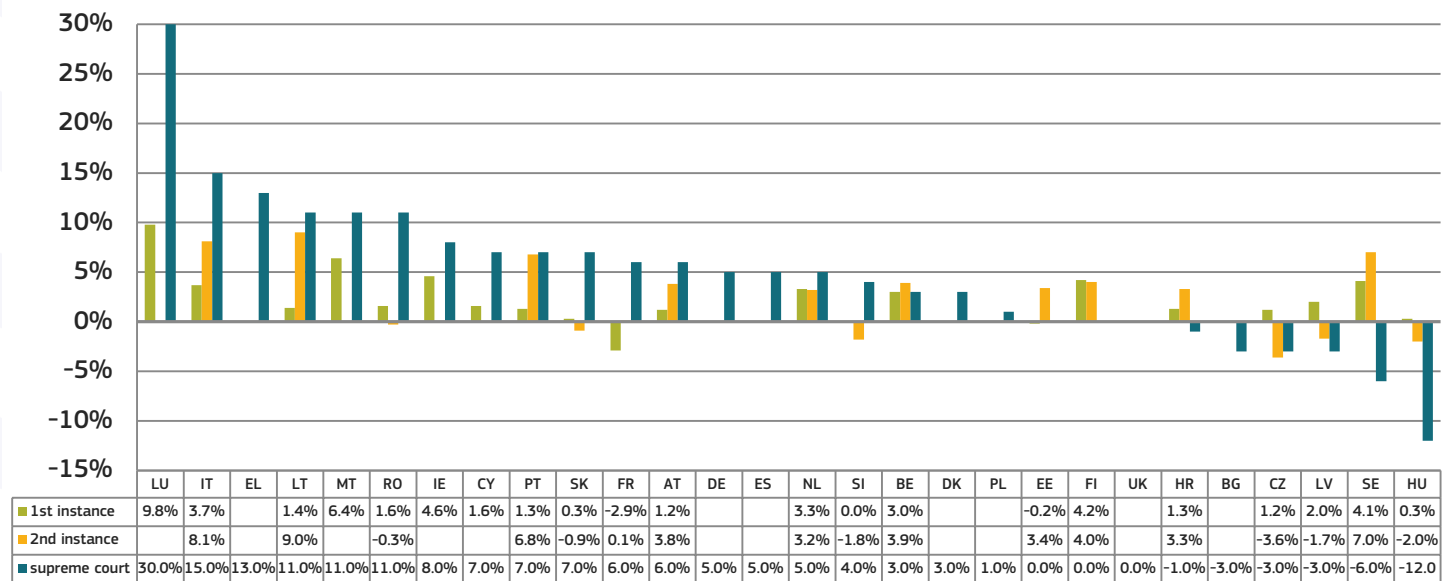


Gender diversity

A more gender diverse body of judges contributes to a better quality of justice systems. Data confirms an inverse relationship: the higher the court, the lower the share of female judges. Trends show a positive movement but most Member States still have some way to go before reaching the gender balance zone of 40-60%.⁴

Change in share of female professional judges between 2010 and 2013 at first and second instance and between 2007 and 2014 in Supreme Courts

(source: European Commission and CEPEJ study)



² Data have been collected in cooperation with the group of contact persons on national justice systems.

³ Aggregated indicator based on the following data: 1) websites providing information on ADR, 2) publicity campaigns in media, 3) brochures to the general public, 4) specific information sessions on ADR are available upon request, 5) specific communication activities organised by courts, 6) publication of evaluations on the use of ADR, 7) publication of statistics on the use of ADR, 8) others. For each promotion tool set out in the questionnaire one point is allocated. For certain Member States additional activities may be undertaken (DE).

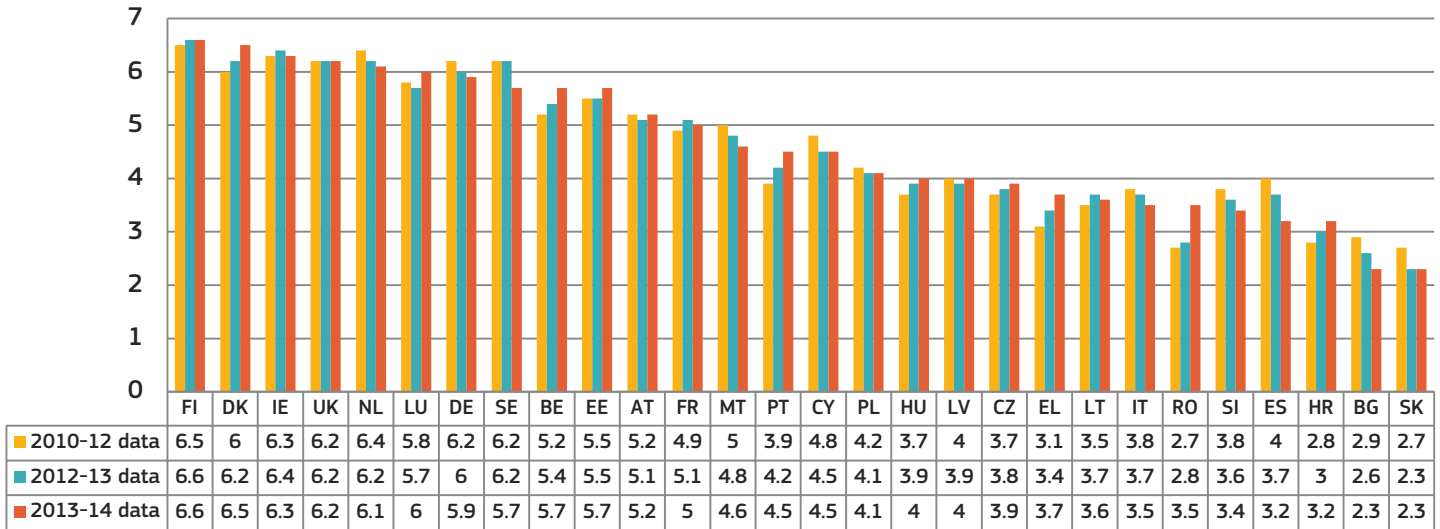
⁴ See Report on Progress on equality between women and men in 2013 (COM(2014) 224 final).

3. Independence of justice systems

The EU Justice Scoreboard presents data on the perceived independence of the justice system as provided by the World Economic Forum.

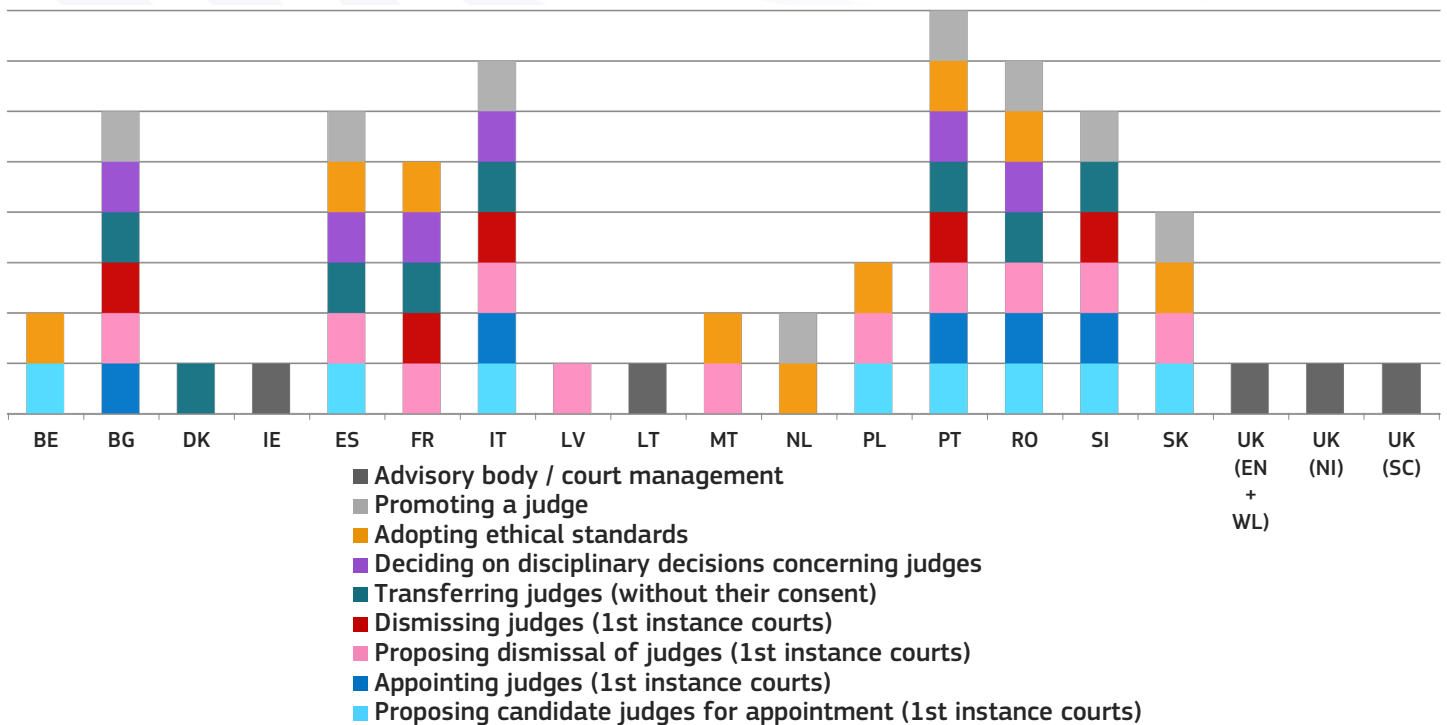
Perceived judicial independence (perception – higher value means better perception)

(source: World Economic Forum)⁵



While perceived independence is important, as it can influence investment decisions, what is more important is that judicial independence is effectively protected in a justice system through legal safeguards (structural independence). The 2015 EU Justice Scoreboard provides updated information on the legal safeguards and expands the comparative view on structural independence. For example, the figure below presents a comparative overview of certain main powers of the Councils for the Judiciary, such as those regarding the appointment and dismissal of judges, the transfer of judges without their consent, disciplinary proceedings concerning judges, adoption of ethical standards and promotion of judges.⁶

Powers of the Councils for the Judiciary⁷



For more information: <http://ec.europa.eu/justice/effective-justice/scoreboard>

⁵ Available at: <http://www.weforum.org/reports/global-competitiveness-report-2013-2014>

⁶ The chart shows information for Member States, which have Councils for the Judiciary that are also members of the European Network of Councils for the Judiciary (ENCJ).

⁷ Based on the ENCJ Guide. The chart presents only certain powers and the Councils for the Judiciary have additional competences. IT: both councils for the judiciary (CSM: civil/criminal judiciary, and CPGA: administrative judiciary). In some countries, the executive has an obligation, either by law or practice, to follow a proposal by the Council for the Judiciary to appoint or dismiss a judge (e.g. ES).