



European
Commission

THE 2023 EU JUSTICE SCOREBOARD

Quantitative data | 2023

Factsheet / June 2023

This document contains a selection of graphs with quantitative data from the 2023 EU Justice Scoreboard.

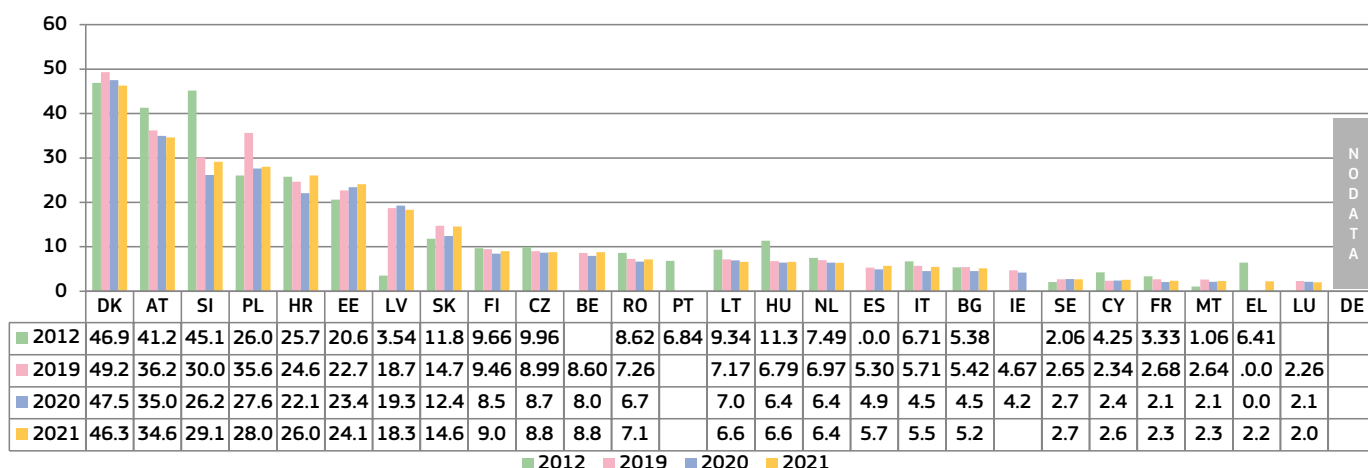


See the complete
2023 EU Justice Scoreboard at:
<https://europa.eu/!tMyvrW>

3.1. Efficiency of justice systems

3.1.1. Developments in caseload

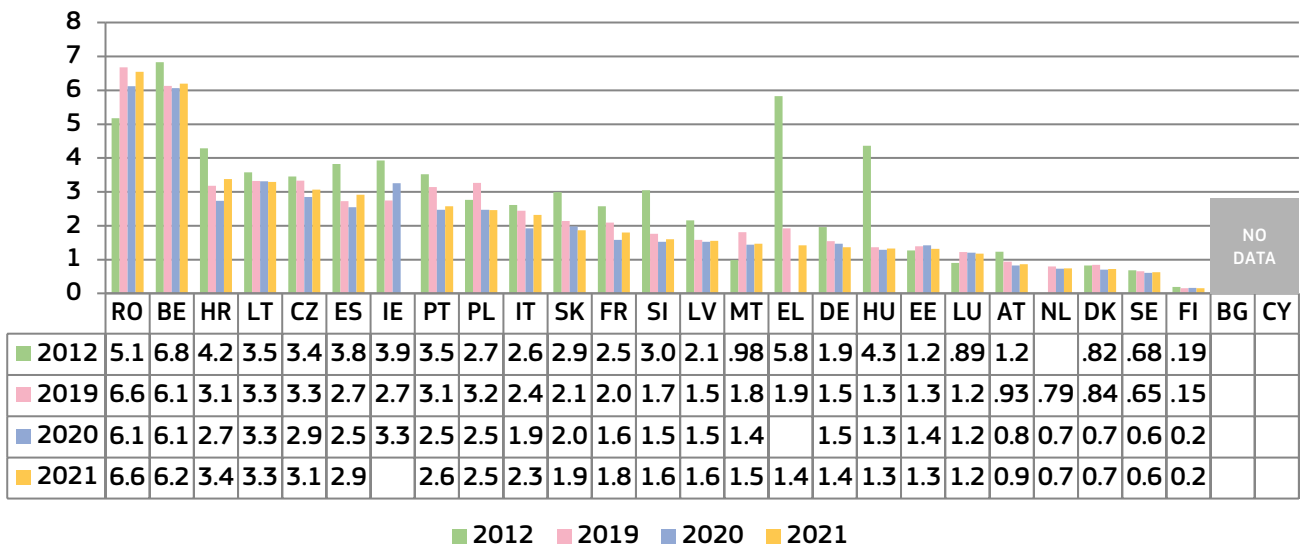
Figure 2 Number of incoming civil, commercial, administrative and other cases in 2012, 2018 – 2021 (*) (1st instance/per 100 inhabitants) (source: CEPEJ study (1))



(*) Under the CEPEJ methodology, this category includes all civil and commercial litigious and non-litigious cases, non-litigious land and business registry cases, other registry cases, other non-litigious cases, administrative law cases and other non-criminal cases

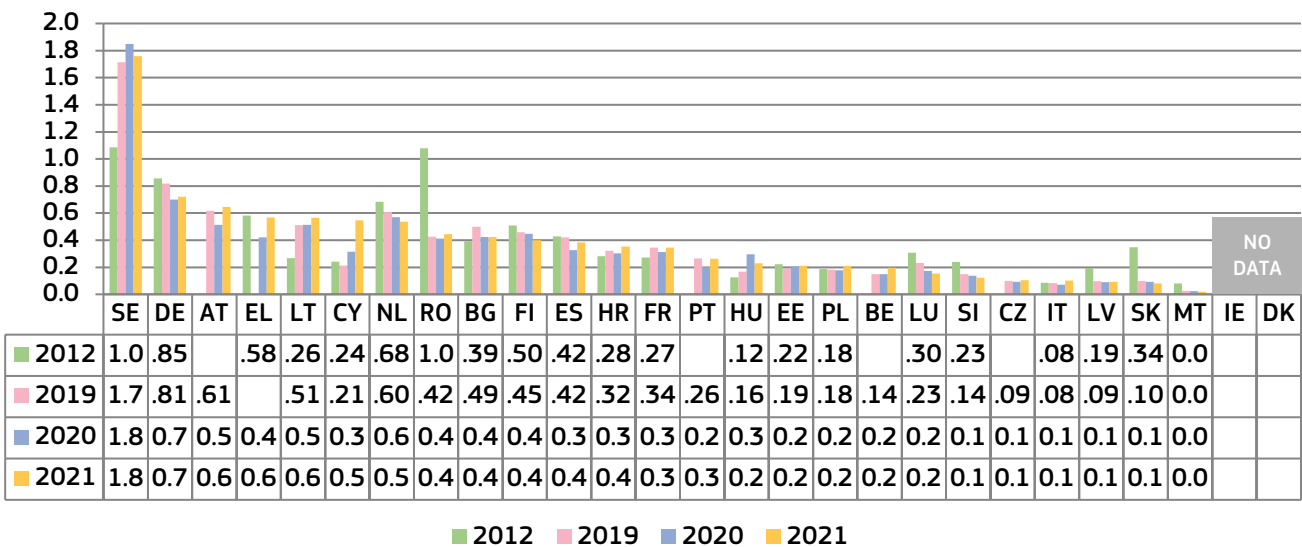
1 2021 study on the functioning of judicial systems in the EU Member States, carried out by the CEPEJ Secretariat for the Commission: https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/justice-and-fundamental-rights/effective-justice/eu-justice-scoreboard_en

Figure 3 Number of incoming civil and commercial litigious cases in 2012, 2019 – 2021 (*) (1st instance/per 100 inhabitants) (source: CEPEJ study)



(*) Under the CEPEJ methodology, litigious civil/commercial cases concern disputes between parties, e.g. disputes about contracts. Non-litigious civil/commercial cases concern uncontested proceedings, e.g. uncontested payment orders. Methodology changes in **EL** and **SK**. Data for **NL** include non-litigious cases.

Figure 4 Number of incoming administrative cases in 2012, 2019 – 2021 (*) (1st instance/per 100 inhabitants) (source: CEPEJ study)

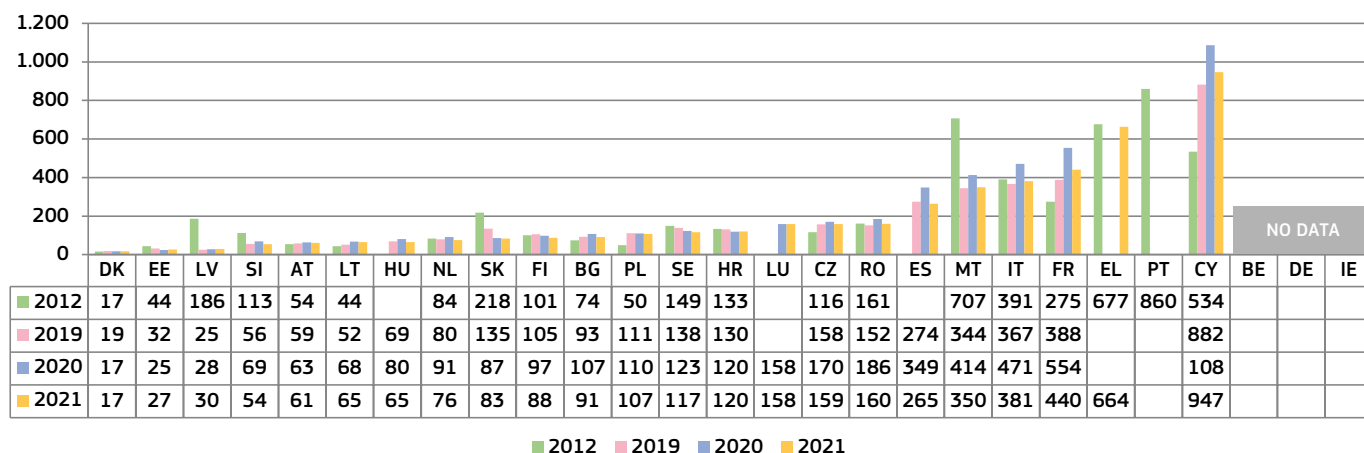


(*) Under the CEPEJ methodology, administrative law cases concern disputes between individuals and local, regional or national authorities. **DK** and **IE** do not record administrative cases separately. Removal from judicial procedure of some administrative procedures occurred in **RO** in 2018. Methodology changes in **EL**, **SK** and **SE**. In **SE**, migration cases have been included under administrative cases (retroactively applied for 2017).

3.1.2. General data on efficiency

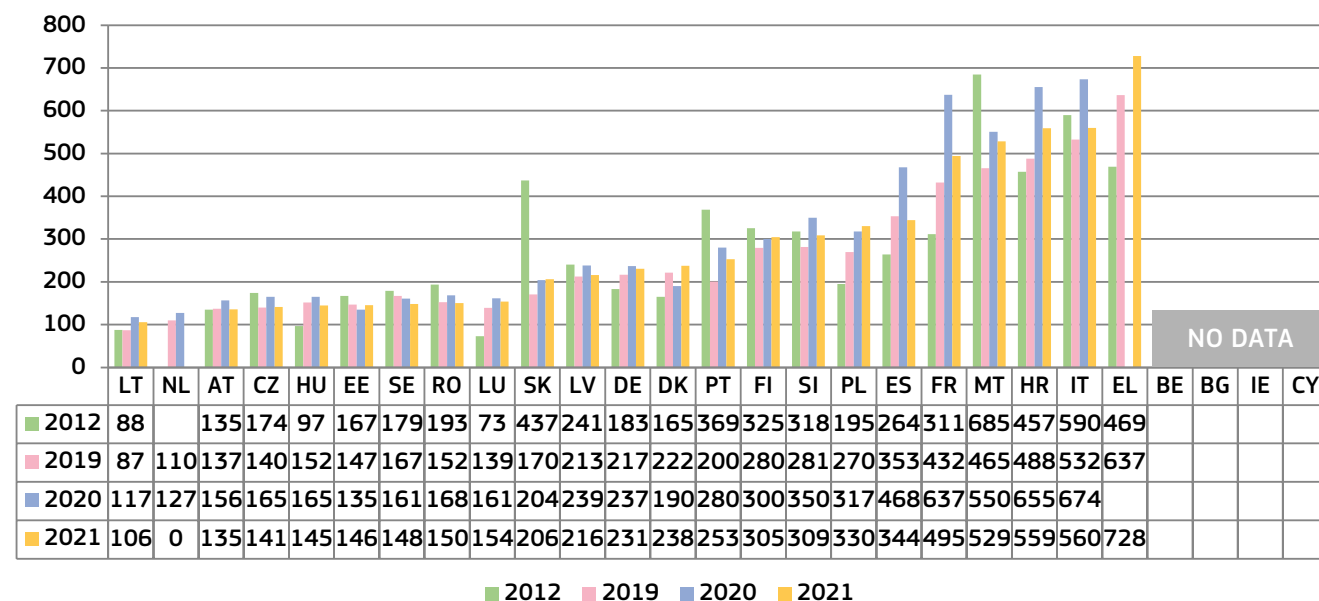
– Estimated length of proceedings –

Figure 5 Estimated time needed to resolve civil, commercial, administrative and other cases in 2012, 2019 – 2021 (*) (1st instance/in days) (source: CEPEJ study)



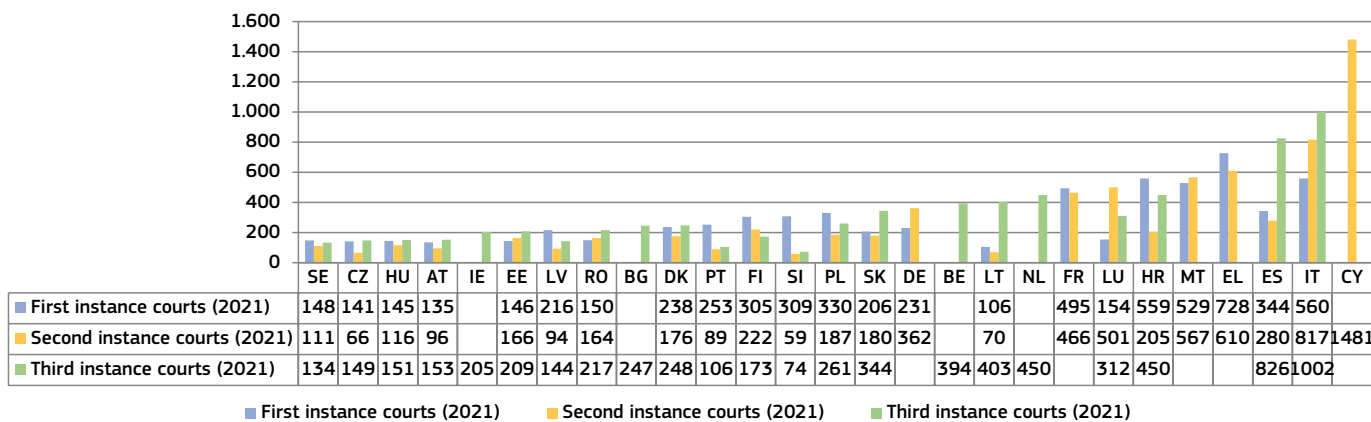
(*) Under the CEPEJ methodology, this category includes all civil and commercial litigious and non-litigious cases, non-litigious land and business registry cases, other registry cases, other non-litigious cases, administrative law cases and other non-criminal cases. Methodology changes in **SK**. Pending cases include all instances in **CZ** and, until 2016, in **SK**. **LV**: the sharp decrease is due to court system reform, error checks and data clean-ups of the information system.

Figure 6 Estimated time needed to resolve litigious civil and commercial cases at first instance in 2012, 2019 – 2021 (*) (1st instance/in days) (source: CEPEJ study)



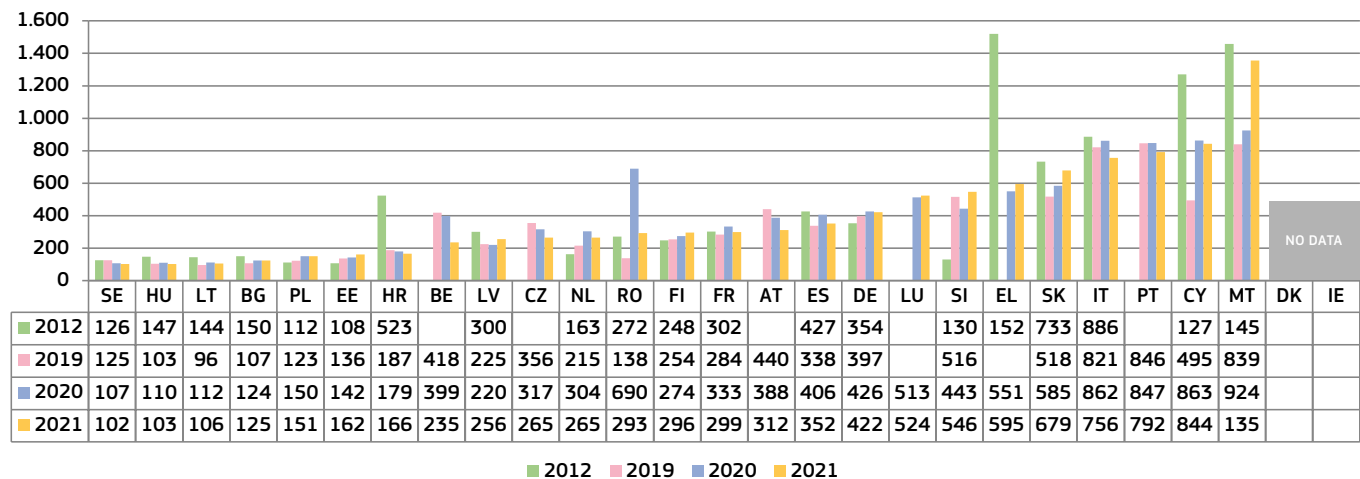
(*) Under the CEPEJ methodology, litigious civil/commercial cases concern disputes between parties, e.g. disputes about contracts. Non-litigious civil/commercial cases concern uncontested proceedings, e.g. uncontested payment orders. Methodology changes in **EL** and **SK**. Pending cases include all instances in **CZ** and, up to 2016, in **SK**. **IT**: the temporary slowdown of judicial activity due to strict restrictive measures to address the COVID-19 pandemic affected the disposition time. Data for **NL** include non-litigious cases.

Figure 7 Estimated time needed to resolve litigious civil and commercial cases at all court instances in 2021 (*) (1st, 2nd and 3rd instance/in days) (source: CEPEJ study)



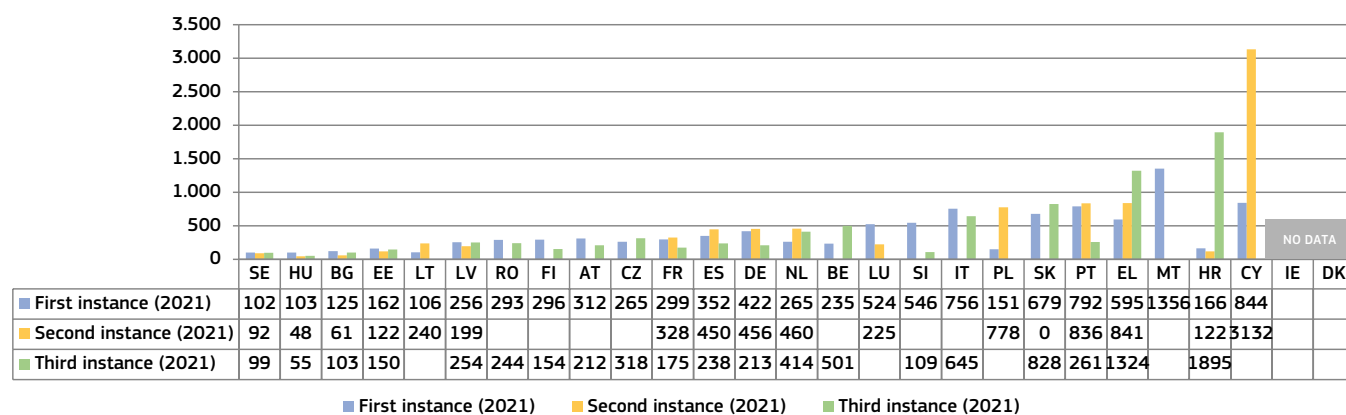
(*) The order is determined by the court instance with the longest proceedings in each Member State. No data are available for first and second instance courts in **BE** and **BG**, for second instance courts in **NL**, for second and third instance courts in **AT** or for third instance courts in **DE** and **HR**. There is no third instance court in **DE** and **MT**. **IT**: The temporary slowdown of judicial activity due to strict restrictive measures to address the COVID-19 pandemic affected the disposition time. Access to a third instance court may be limited in some Member States.

Figure 8 Estimated time needed to resolve administrative cases at first instance in 2012, 2019 – 2021 (*) (1st instance/in days) (source: CEPEJ study)



(*) Administrative law cases concern disputes between individuals and local, regional or national authorities, under the CEPEJ methodology. Methodology changes in **EL** and **SK**. Pending cases include courts of all instances in **CZ** and, until 2016, in **SK**. **DK** and **IE** do not record administrative cases separately. **CY**: in 2018, the number of resolved cases increased because cases were tried together, 2 724 consolidated cases were withdrawn and an administrative court was set up in 2015.

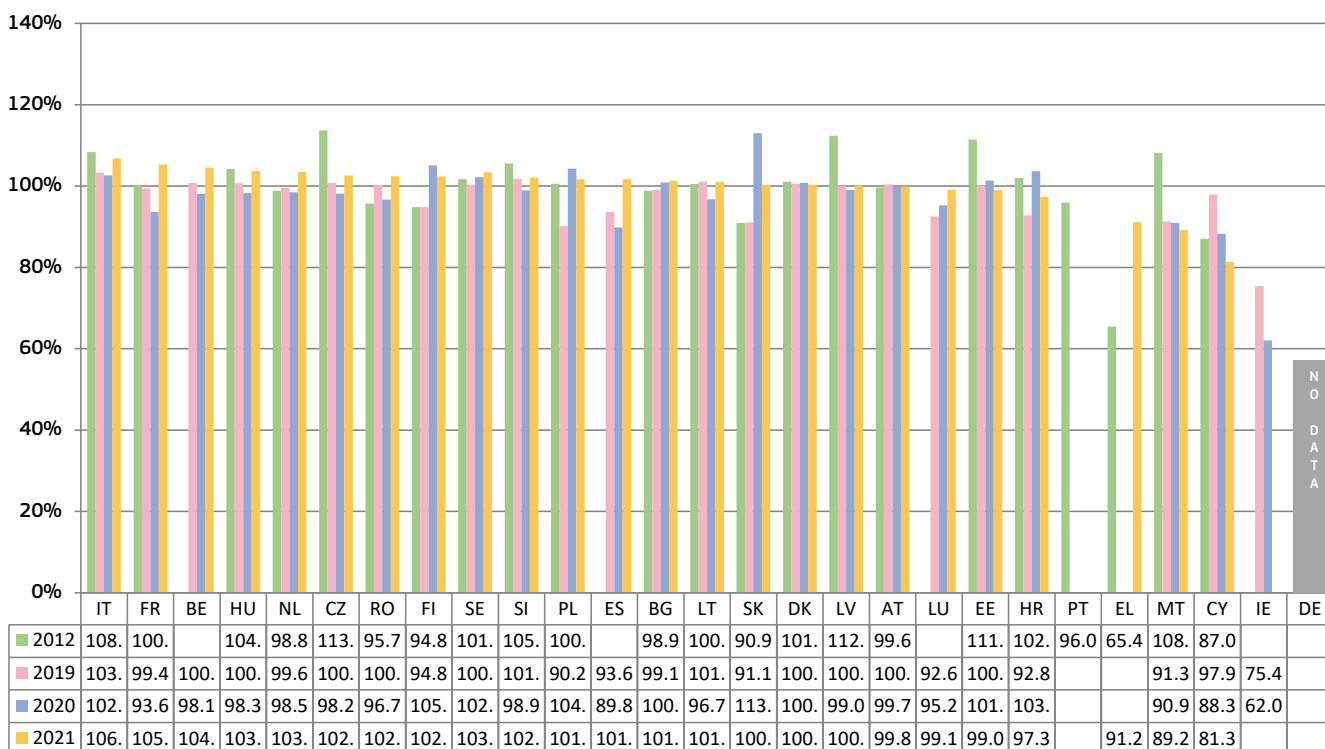
Figure 9 Estimated time needed to resolve administrative cases at all court instances in 2021 (*) (1st and, where applicable, 2nd and 3rd instance/in days) (source: CEPEJ study)



(*) The order is determined by the court instance with the longest proceedings in each Member State. No data available for second instance courts in **BE, CZ, HU, MT, AT, RO, SI, SK** and **FI**, for third instance courts in **CY, LT, LU, MT** and **PL**. The supreme, or other highest court, is the only appeal instance in **CZ, IT, CY, AT, SI** and **FI**. There is no third instance court for these types of cases in **HR, LT, LU** and **MT**. The highest Administrative Court is the first and only instance for certain cases in **BE**. Access to third instance courts may be limited in some Member States. **DK** and **IE** do not record administrative cases separately.

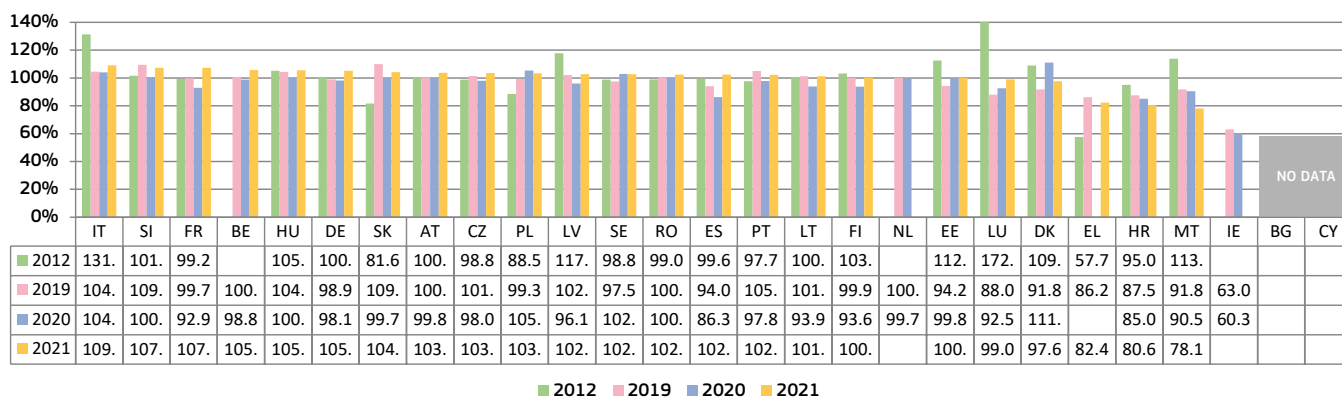
Clearance rate

Figure 10 Rate of resolving civil, commercial, administrative and other cases in 2012, 2019 – 2021 (*) (1st instance/in % — values higher than 100% indicate that more cases are resolved than come in, while values below 100% indicate that fewer cases are resolved than come in) (source: CEPEJ study)



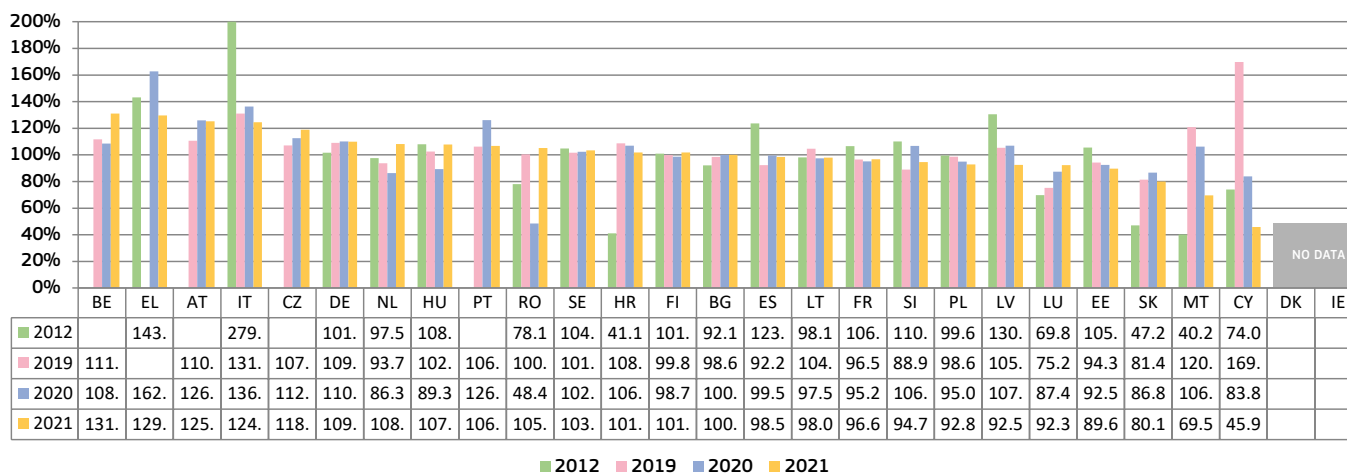
(*) Under the CEPEJ methodology, this category includes all civil and commercial litigious and non-litigious cases, non-litigious land and business registry cases, other registry cases, other non-litigious cases, administrative law cases and other non-criminal cases. Methodology changes in **SK, IE**: the number of resolved cases is expected to be underreported due to the methodology. **IT**: different classification of civil cases introduced in 2013.

Figure 11 Rate of resolving litigious civil and commercial cases in 2012, 2019 – 2021 (*) (1st instance/in %) (source: CEPEJ study)



(*) Methodology changes in **EL** and **SK**. **IE**: the number of resolved cases is expected to be underreported due to the methodology. **IT**: different classification of civil cases introduced in 2013. Data for **NL** include non-litigious cases.

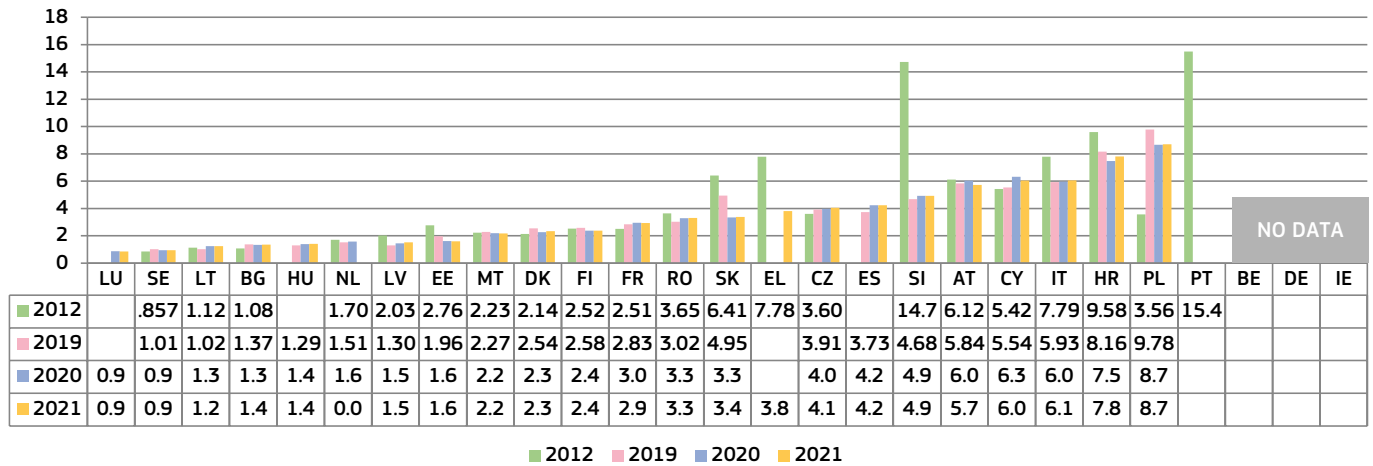
Figure 12 Rate of resolving administrative cases in 2012, 2019 – 2021(*) (1st instance/in %) (source: CEPEJ study)



(*) Past values for some Member States have been reduced for presentation purposes (**CY** in 2018 = 219%; **IT** in 2012=279.8%); Methodology changes in **EL** and **SK**. **DK** and **IE** do not record administrative cases separately. In **CY**, the number of resolved cases has increased because cases were tried together, 2 724 consolidated cases were withdrawn and an administrative court was set up in 2015.

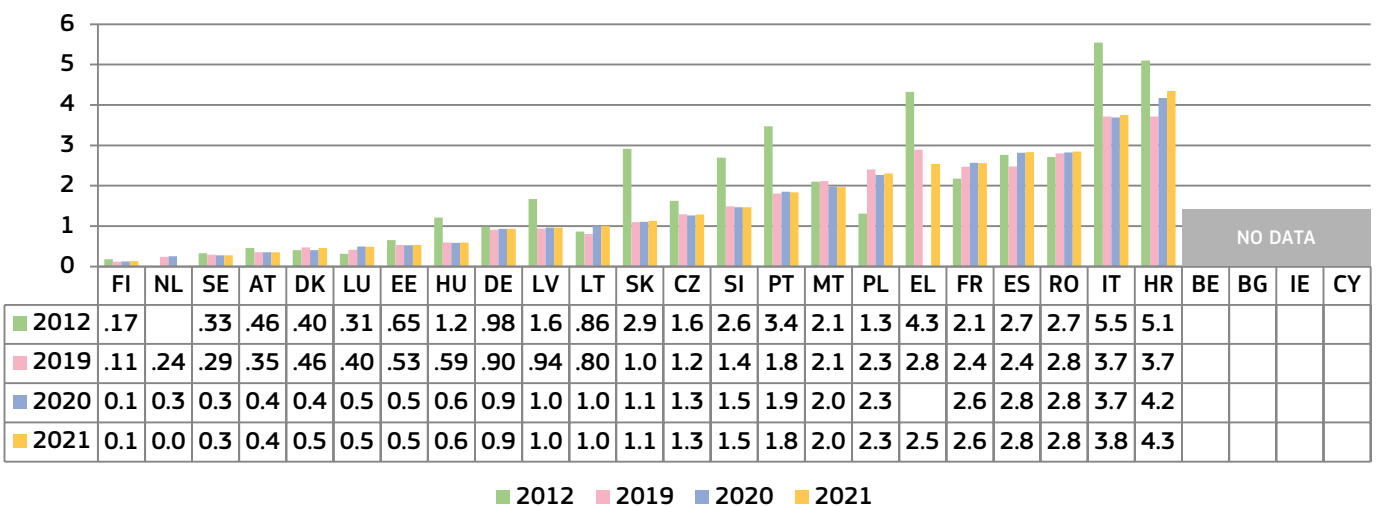
Pending cases

Figure 13 Number of pending civil, commercial and administrative and other cases in 2012, 2019 – 2021 (*) (1st instance/per 100 inhabitants) (source: CEPEJ study)



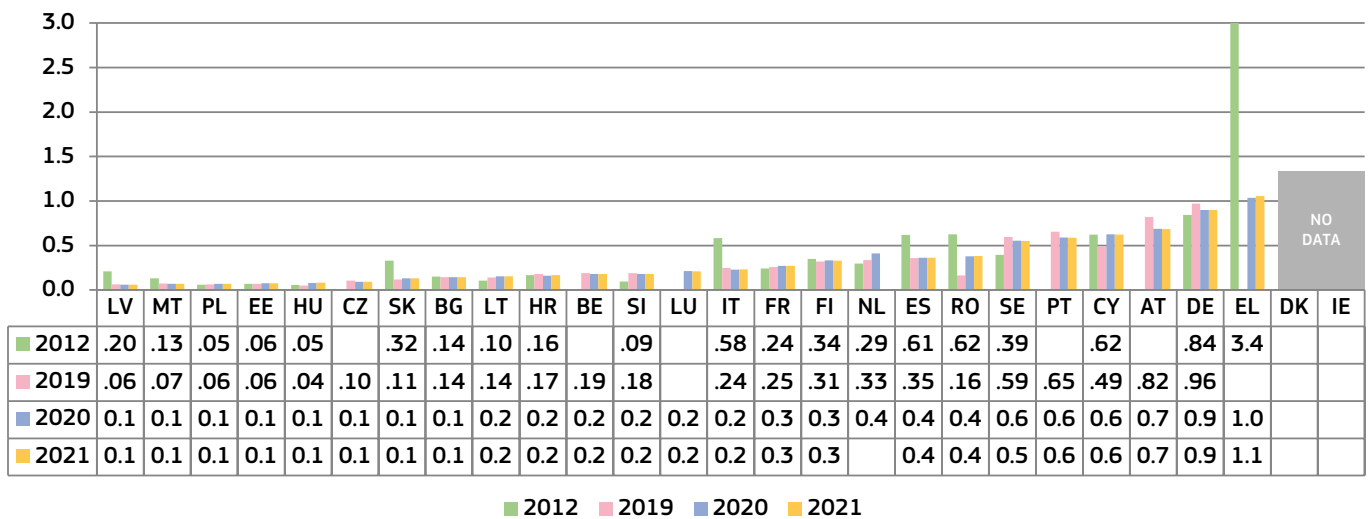
(*) Under the CEPEJ methodology, this category includes all civil and commercial litigious and non-litigious cases, non-litigious land and business registry cases, other registry cases, other non-litigious cases, administrative law cases and other non-criminal cases. Methodology changes in **SK**. Pending cases include cases before courts of all instances in **CZ** and, until 2016, in **SK**. **IT**: different classification of civil cases introduced in 2013.

Figure 14 Number of pending litigious civil and commercial cases in 2012, 2019 – 2021 (*) (1st instance/per 100 inhabitants) (source: CEPEJ study)



(*) Methodology changes in **EL** and **SK**. Pending cases include cases before courts of all instances in **CZ** and, until 2016, in **SK**. **IT**: different classification of civil cases introduced in 2013. Data for **NL** include non-litigious cases.

Figure 15 Number of pending administrative cases in 2012, 2019 – 2021 (*) (1st instance/per 100 inhabitants) (source: CEPEJ study)

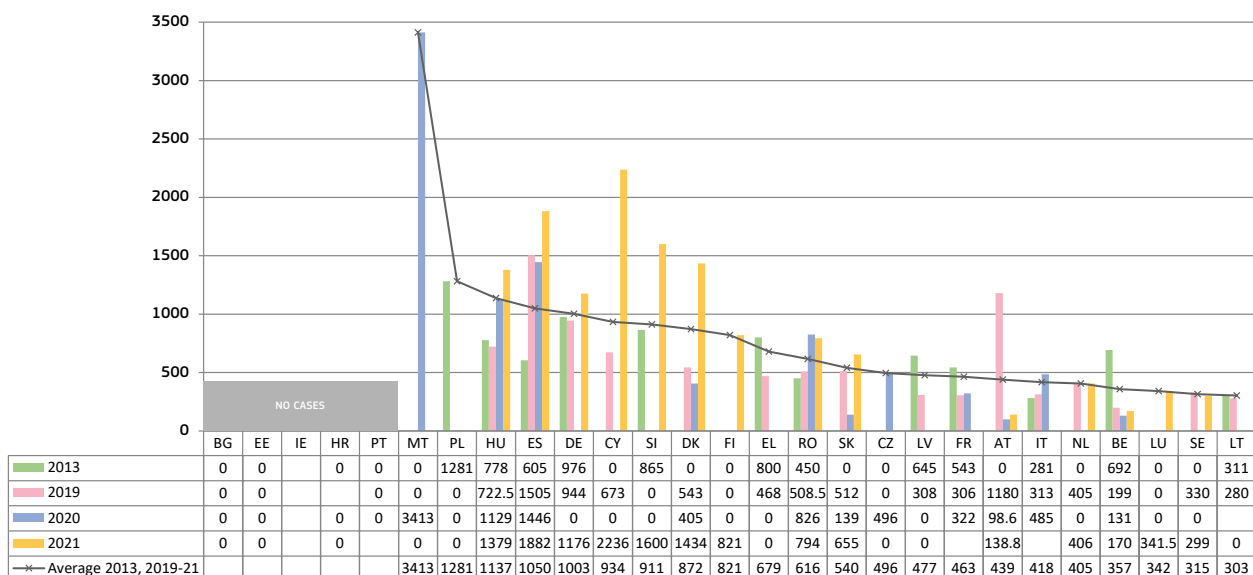


(*) Past values for some Member States have been reduced for presentation purposes (EL in 2012 = 3.5). Methodology changes in EL and SK. Pending cases include cases before courts of all instances in CZ and, until 2016, in SK. DK and IE do not record administrative cases separately.

3.1.3. Efficiency in specific areas of EU law

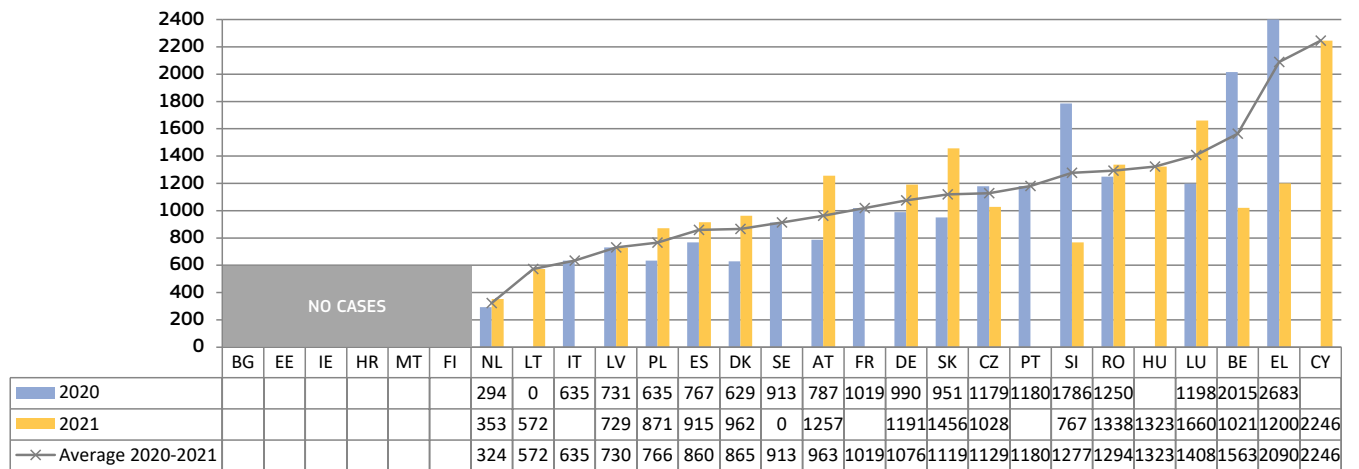
– Competition –

Figure 16 Competition: average length of judicial review in 2013, 2019 – 2021 (*) (1st instance/in days) (source: European Commission with the European Competition Network)



(*) IE and AT: the scenario is not applicable as the authorities do not have powers to take respective decisions. AT: data include cases decided by the Cartel Court involving an infringement of Articles 101 and 102 TFEU, but not based on appeals against the national competition authority. An estimation of length was used for IT. An empty column can indicate that the Member State reported no cases for the year in question. The number of cases is low (below five a year) in many Member States. This can make the annual data dependent on one exceptionally long or short case (e.g. MT were there was only one case).

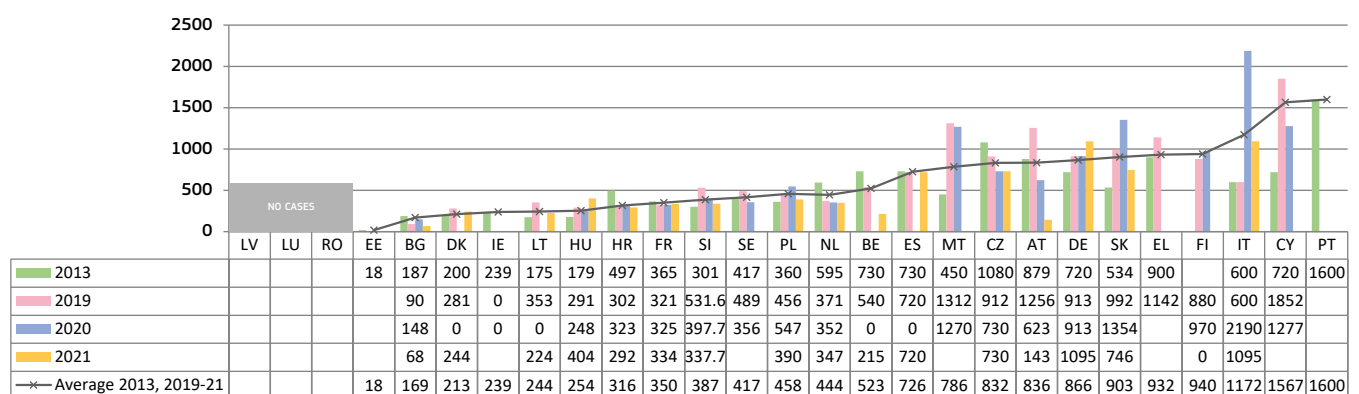
Figure 17 Competition: average length of proceedings before the national competition authorities in 2020 - 2021(*) (in days) (source: European Commission with the European Competition Network)



(*) In 10 Member States the number of cases is limited. It must be taken into account that some Member States count the days for the length of proceedings from different start-ing points. With a few exceptions below, most Member States consider a case open when the investigation is open. In the **NL**, the case is considered open when the Statement of Objection is sent, while in **CZ** and **SK** a case is considered open when the administrative proceedings open. In the latter case, this is an intermediate phase between the opening of the investigation and the sending of the Statement of Objection. There are also a number of factors that may impact the length of proceedings before the national competition authorities. These include the nature and complexity of the case, the time it takes to collect the economic data and the conclusion of the economic analysis, the deadline extensions at the requests of the parties, the repetition of hearings and court actions. The COVID-19 pandemic also had an impact on the length of proceedings.

– Electronic communications –

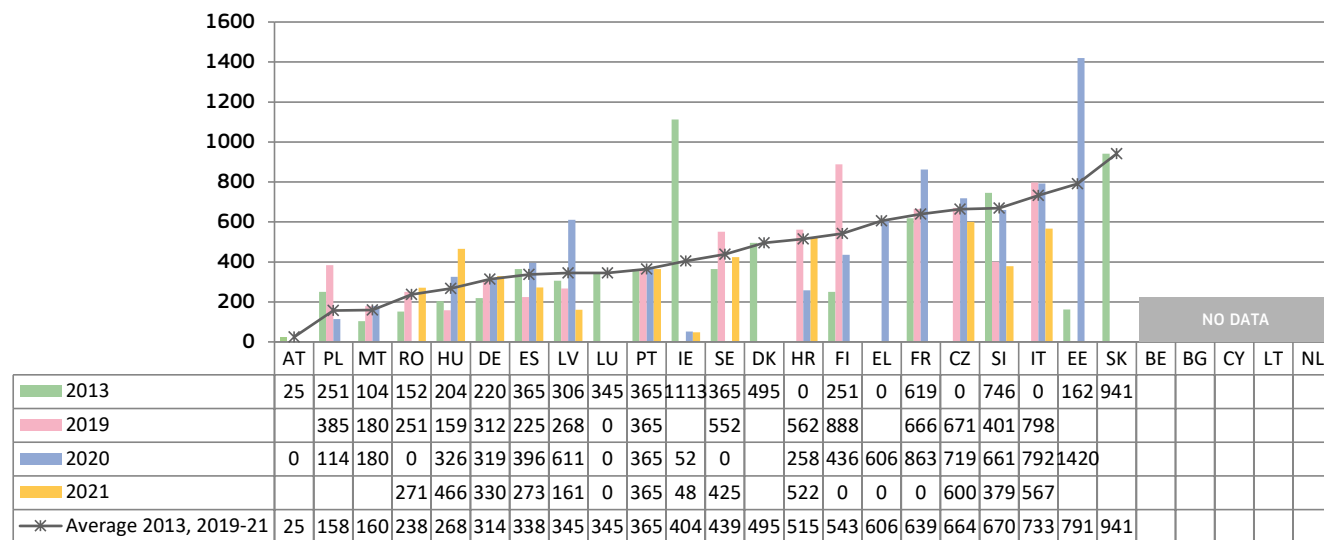
Figure 18 Electronic communications: average length of judicial review in 2013, 2019 – 2021 (*) (1st instance/in days) (source: European Commission with the Communications Committee)



(*) The number of cases varies from one Member State to another. An empty column indicates that the Member State reported no cases for the year (except **PT** for 2019-20, and **RO** no data). In some instances, the limited number of relevant cases (**BG, CY, MT, NL, SK, FI, SE**) can make the annual data dependent on one exceptionally long or short case and result in wide variations from one year to the next. **DK**: quasi-judicial body in charge of 1st instance appeals. **EE**: The average length of judicial review cases in 2013 was 18 days. **ES, AT, and PL**: different courts in charge depending on the subject matter.

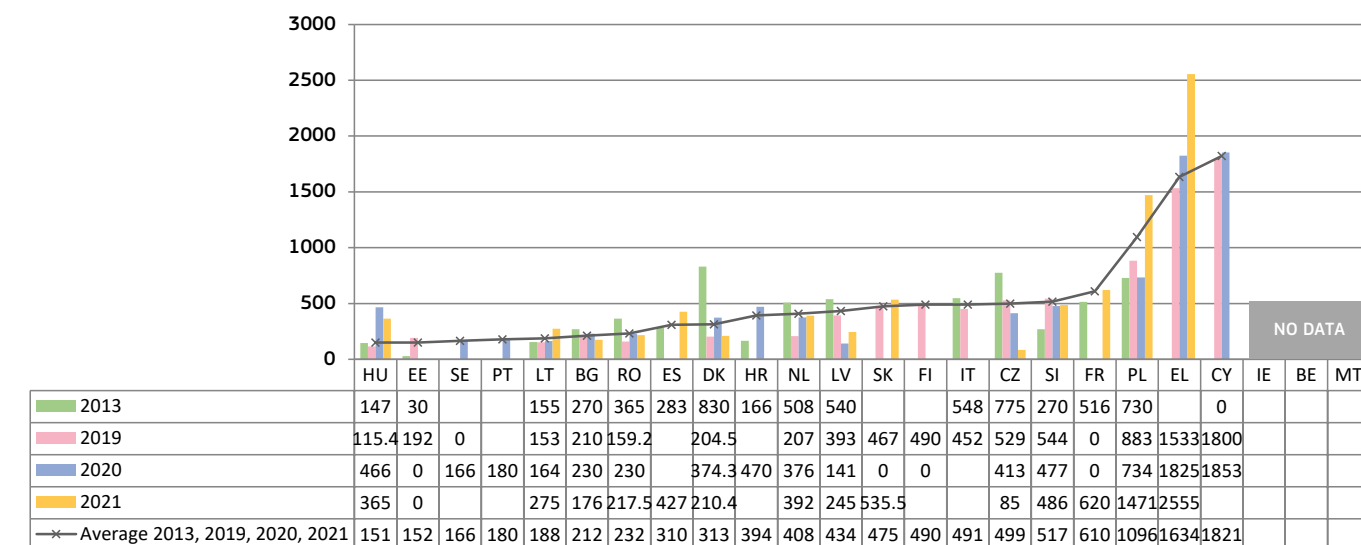
– EU trademark –

Figure 19 EU trademark: average length of EU trademark infringement cases in 2013, 2019 – 2021 (*) (1st instance/ in days) (source: European Commission with the European Observatory on infringements of intellectual property rights)



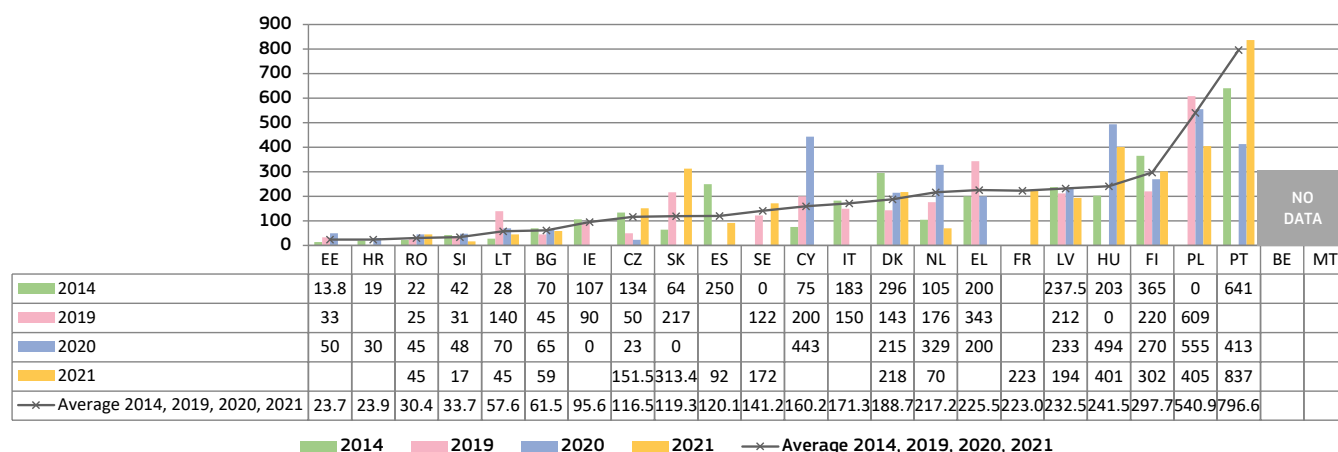
(*) **FR, IT, LT, LU:** a sample of cases used for data for certain years. **DK:** data from all trademark cases (not only EU) in Commercial and Maritime High Courts; for 2018 and 2019, no data on average length due to changes in data collection system. **EL:** data based on weighted average length from two courts. **ES:** cases concerning other EU IP titles are included in the calculation of average length.

Figure 20 Consumer protection: average length of judicial review in 2013, 2019 – 2021 (*) (1st instance/in days) (source: European Commission with the Consumer Protection Cooperation Network)



(*) **DE, LU, AT:** scenario is not applicable as consumer authorities are not empowered to decide on infringements of relevant consumer rules. The number of relevant cases for 2020 is low (fewer than five) in **IE** and **FI**. An estimate of average length was provided by **EL** and **RO** for certain years.

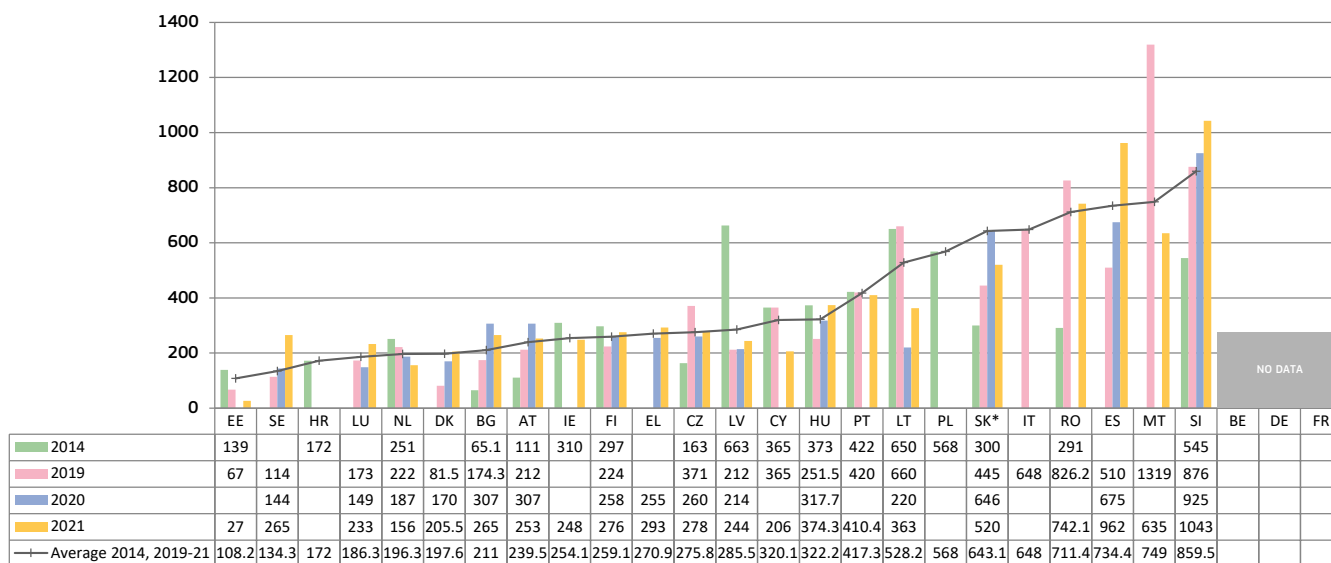
Figure 21 Consumer protection: average length of administrative decisions by consumer protection authorities in 2014, 2019 – 2021 (*) (1st instance/in days) (source: European Commission with the Consumer Protection Cooperation Network)



(*) DE, LU, AT: scenario is not applicable as consumer authorities are not empowered to decide on infringements of relevant consumer rules. An estimate of average length was provided by DK, EL, FR, RO and FI for certain years.

- Money laundering –

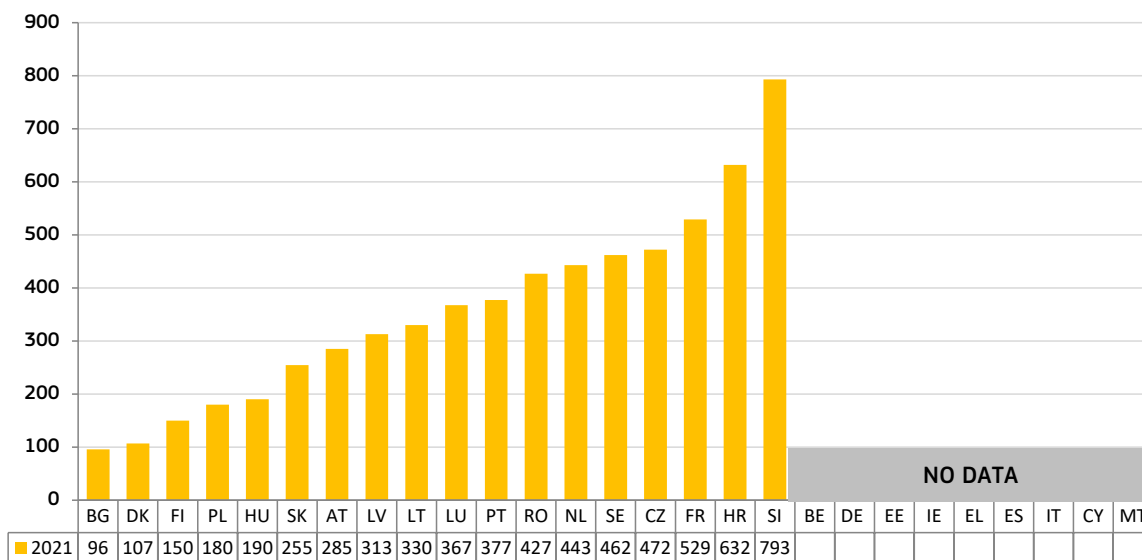
Figure 22 Money laundering: average length of court cases in 2014, 2019 – 2021 (*) (1st instance/in days) (source: European Commission with the Expert Group on Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism)



(*) No data for 2021: BE, DE, FR, HR, IT and RO. BG: The average length of the cases is calculated from the day of opening the court case to the day of the court decision in months. PT: the database was filtered, for each and every judicial county, by the relevant criteria to reach the information related to money laundering files; regarding the average number of days, the dates of infraction and the date of final decision or closure were considered. CY: Serious cases, before the Assize Court, are on average tried within a year. Less serious offences, before the District Courts, take longer to be tried. SK*: data correspond to average length of the whole proceedings, including at appeal court.

– Anti-corruption –

Figure 23 Corruption (bribery): average length of court cases in 2021 (*) (1st instance/in days) (source: European Commission with the National Contact Points for Anti-corruption)

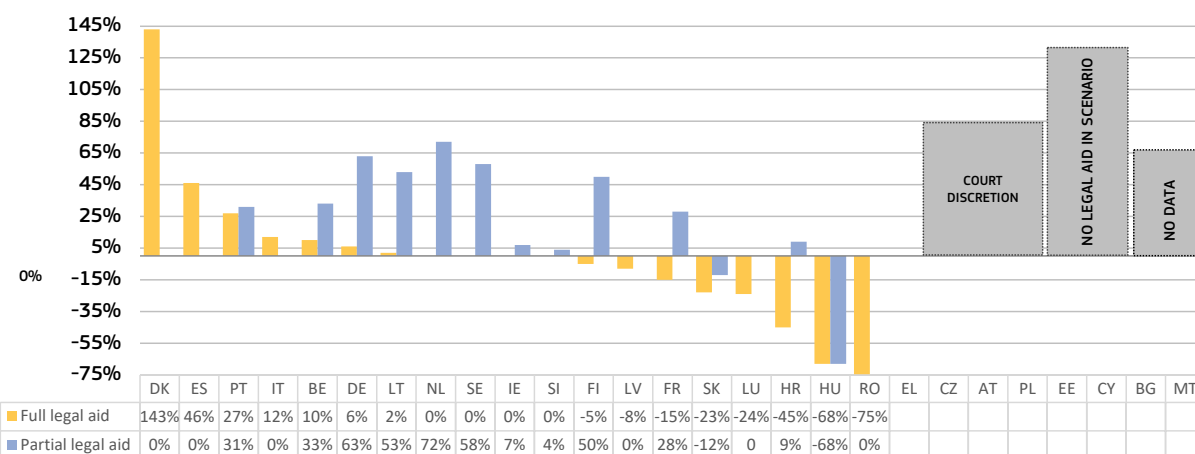


(*) No reply on this question from **MT** and **CY**. For **BE, EE, DE, IE, EL, ES** and **IT** the exact number of days is not available. **NL**: The average processing time for the 27 cases is 443 days. However, the indictment/subpoena at this starting point is not yet final, and often the case is not yet ready for trial, so it takes some time before it is placed in a hearing. If the starting point is the first hearing and the endpoint is the date of the final verdict (by first instance judge), then the average processing time for the above-mentioned cases is 100 days.

3.2.1. Accessibility

– Legal aid, court fees and legal fees –

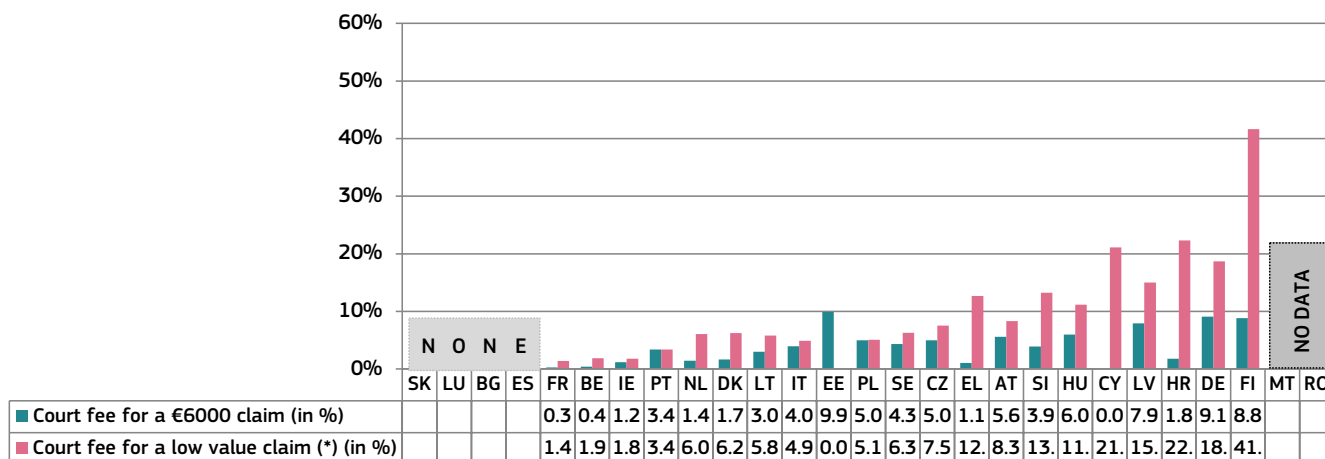
Figure 24 Income threshold for legal aid in a specific consumer case, 2022 (*) (differences in % from Eurostat poverty threshold) (source: European Commission with the Council of Bar and Law Societies in Europe (CCBE) ⁽²⁾)



(*) Calculations are based on 2021 at-risk-of-poverty (AROP) threshold values. **BE, DE, ES, FR, HR, IE, IT, LT, LU, NL, SI, SK, FI**: legal aid has to also take into account the applicant's disposable assets. **EE**: decision to grant legal aid is not based on the level of the applicant's financial resources. **EL**: Beneficiary of legal aid is the person whose capital annual income does not exceed the 2/3 of the lowest annual salaries as provided by the existing legislation.

2 The 2022 data is collected using replies from Council of Bar and Law Societies in Europe (CCBE) members to a questionnaire based on the following specific scenario: a dispute of a consumer with a company (two different claim values indicated: EUR 6 000 and the Eurostat AROP threshold for each Member State). Given that conditions for legal aid depend on the applicant's situation, the following scenario was used: a single 35-year-old employed applicant without any dependant or legal expenses insurance, with a regular income and a rented apartment.

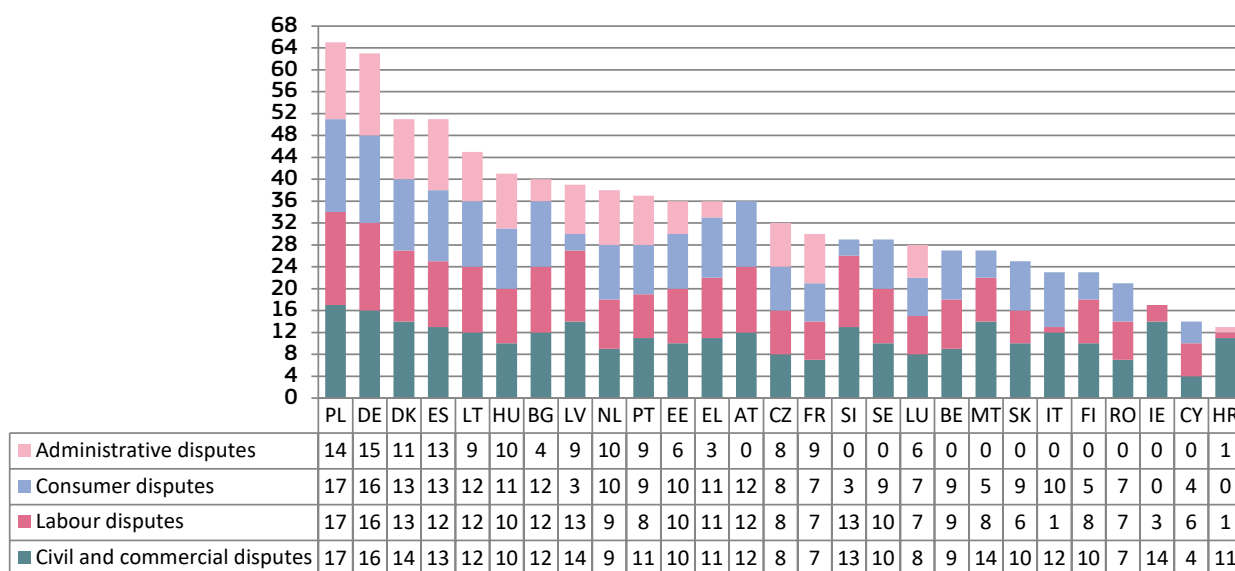
Figure 25 Court fee to start judicial proceedings in a specific consumer case, 2022 (*) (amount of court fee as a proportion of the value of the claim) (source: European Commission with the Council of Bar and Law Societies in Europe (CCBE) ⁽³⁾)



(*) Calculations are based on 2021 at-risk-of-poverty (AROP) threshold values. 'Low value claim' is a claim corresponding to the Eurostat poverty threshold for a single person in each Member State, converted to monthly income (e.g. in 2021, this value ranged from EUR 242 in RO to EUR 2124 in LU). EE, PT: No data on the court fee for a low value claim. NL: Court fees values correspond to a litigant with less than EUR 29400 annual income.

– Accessing alternative dispute resolution methods –

Figure 26 Promotion of and incentives for using ADR methods, 2022 (*) (source: European Commission ⁽⁴⁾)



(*) Maximum possible: 68 points. Aggregated indicators based on the following indicators: 1) website providing information on ADR; 2) media publicity campaigns; 3) brochures for the general public; 4) provision by the court of specific information sessions on ADR upon request; 5) court ADR/mediation coordinator; 6) publication of evaluations on the use of ADR; 7) publication of statistics on the use of ADR; 8) partial or full coverage by legal aid of costs ADR incurred; 9) full or partial refund of court fees, including stamp duties, if ADR is successful; 10) no requirement for a lawyer for ADR procedures; 11) judge can act as a mediator; 12) agreement reached by the parties becomes enforceable by the court; 13) possibility to initiate proceedings/file a claim and submit documentary evidence online; 14) parties can be informed of the initiation and different steps of procedures electronically; 15) possibility of online payment of applicable fees; 16) use of technology (artificial intelligence applications, chat bots) to facilitate the submission and resolution of disputes; and 17) other means. For each of these 17 indicators, one point was awarded for each area of law. IE: administrative cases fall into the category of civil and commercial cases. EL: ADR exists in public procurement procedures before administrative courts of appeal. ES: ADR is mandatory in labour law cases. PT: for civil/commercial disputes, court fees are refunded only in the case of justices for peace. SK: the Slovak legal order does not support the use of ADR for administrative purposes. FI: consumer and labour disputes are also considered to be civil cases. SE: judges have procedural discretion on ADR. Seeking an amicable dispute settlement is a mandatory task for the judge unless it is inappropriate due to the nature of the case.

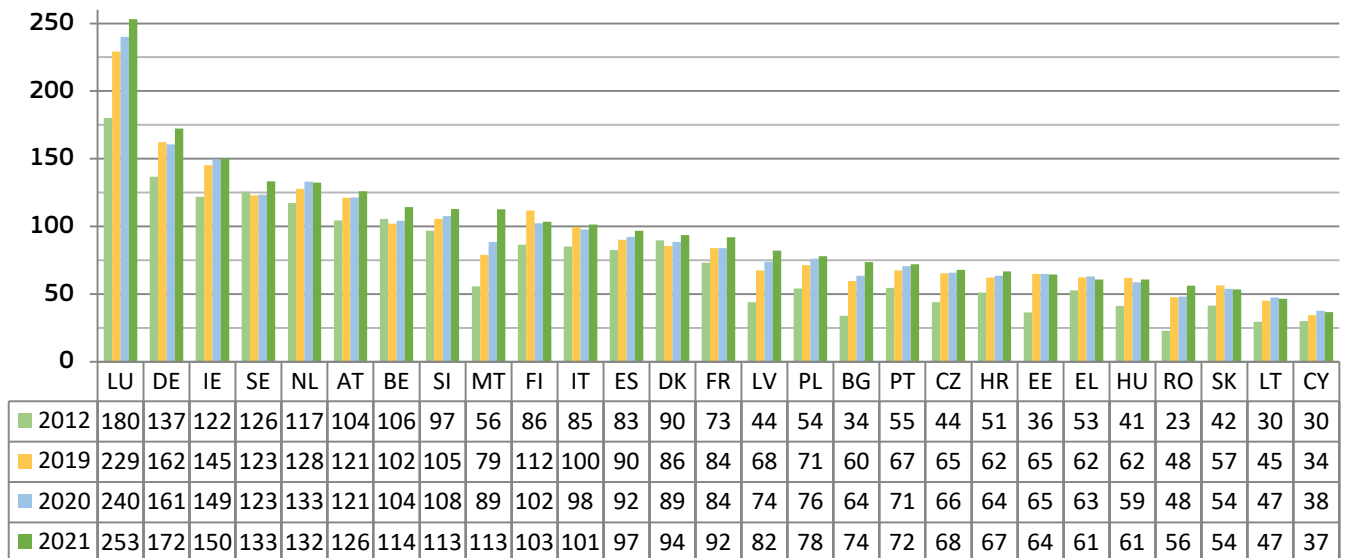
3 The data, referring to income thresholds valid in 2022, have been collected using replies from Council of Bar and Law Societies in Europe (CCBE) members to a questionnaire based on the following scenario: a consumer dispute between an individual and a company (two different claim values indicated: EUR 6 000 and the Eurostat AROP threshold for each Member State).

4 2022 data collected in cooperation with the group of contact persons on national justice systems.

3.2.2. Resources

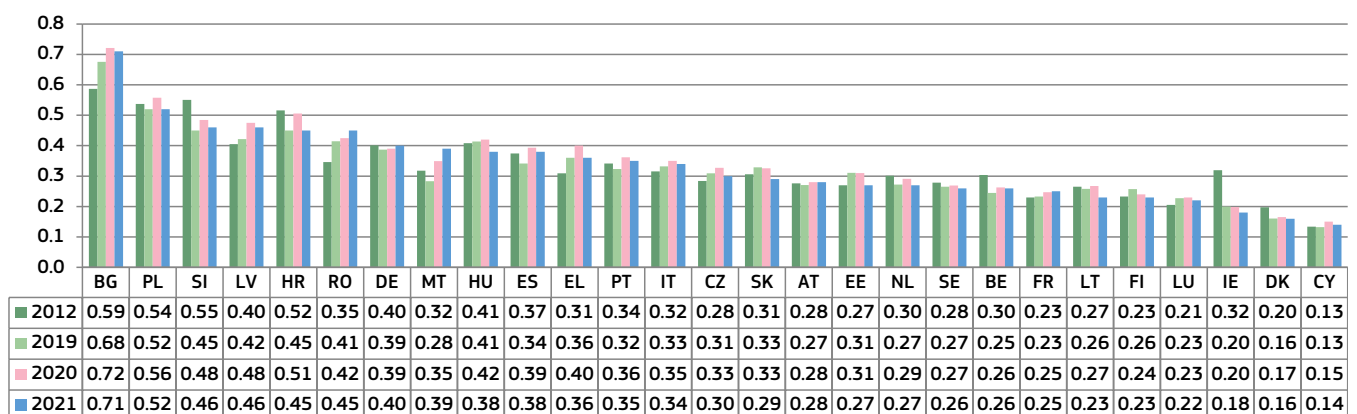
– Financial resources –

Figure 32 General government total expenditure on law courts in EUR per inhabitant, 2012, 2019 – 2021 (*)
(source: Eurostat)



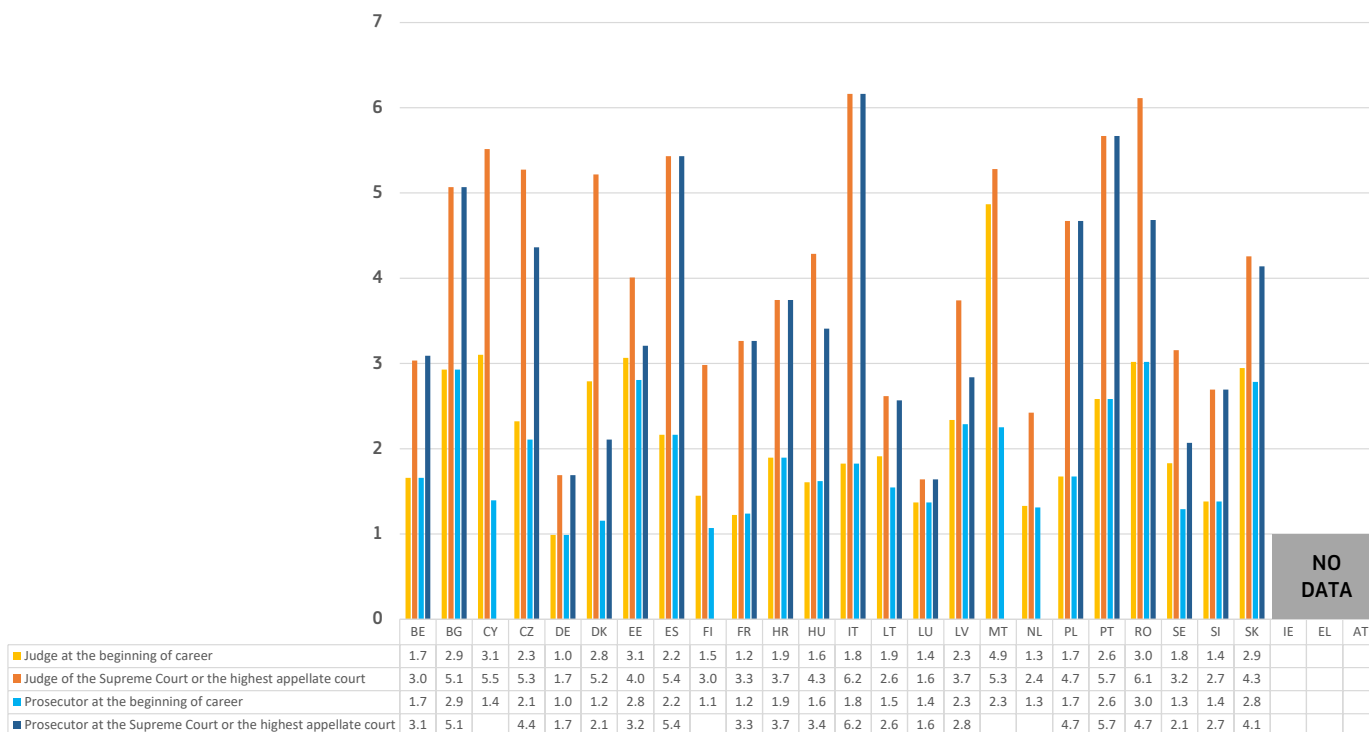
(*) Member States are ordered according to their expenditure in 2021 (from highest to lowest). While a significant effort was undertaken to harmonise the recording of government measures to mitigate the economic and social impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, a full harmonisation of data for the reference years 2020 and 2021 was not yet achieved. The likelihood of future revisions is thus higher than usual and EU and euro area data is provisional for 2021. Further, data for other years is provisional for **DE, ES, FR** and **PT**.

Figure 33 General government total expenditure on law courts as a percentage of GDP, 2012, 2019 – 2021 (*)
(source: Eurostat)



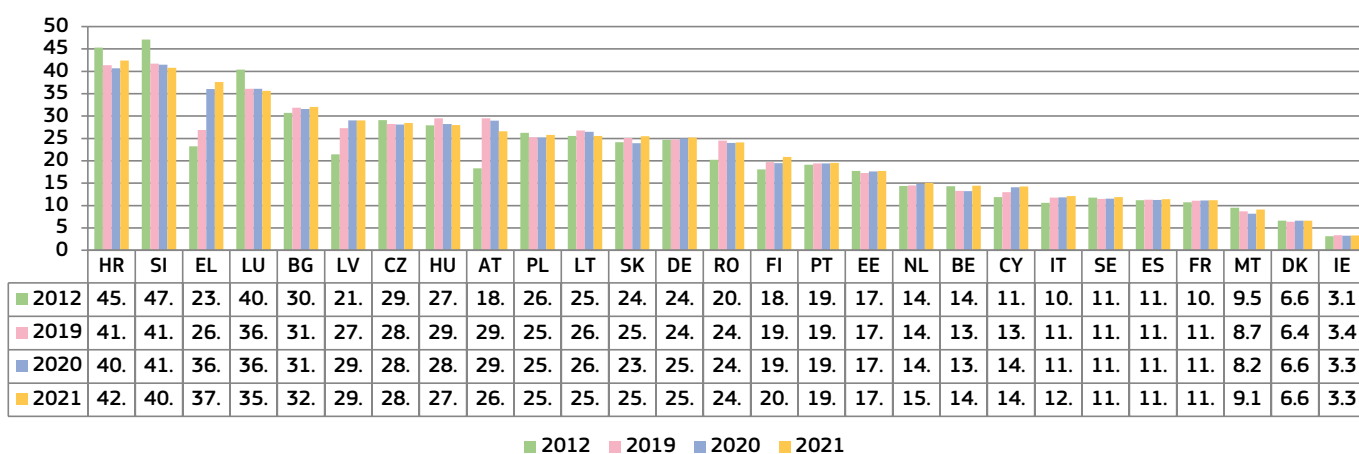
(*) Member States are ordered according to their expenditure in 2020 (from highest to lowest). While a significant effort was undertaken to harmonise the recording of government measures to mitigate the economic and social impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, a full harmonisation of data for the reference years 2020 and 2021 was not yet achieved. The likelihood of future revisions is thus higher than usual and EU and euro area data is provisional for 2021. Further, data for other years is provisional for **DE, ES, FR** and **PT**.

Figure 34 Ratio of annual salaries of judges and prosecutors with annual average gross salary in the country in 2021 (*) (per 100 000 inhabitants) (source: Council of Europe’s European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) study)



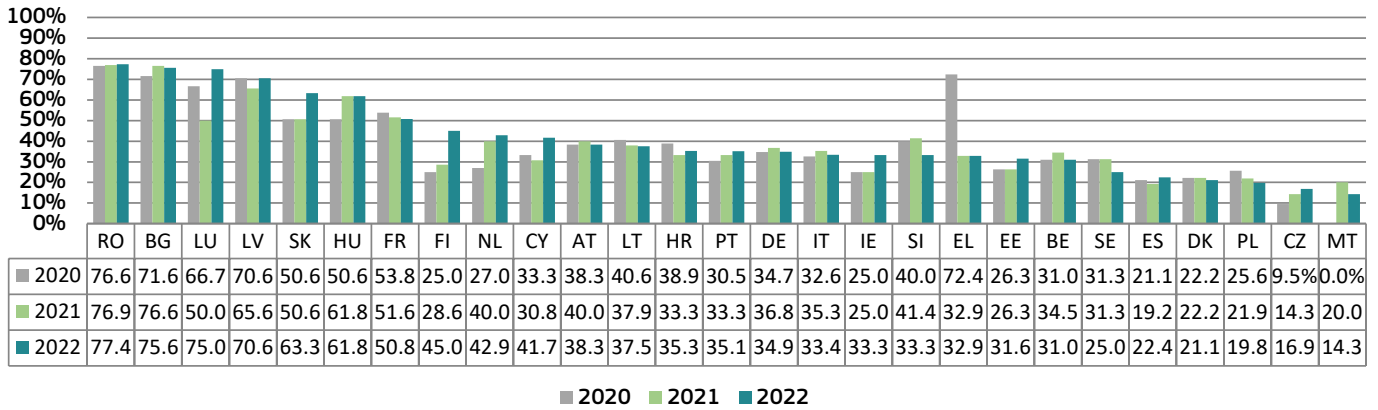
– Human resources –

Figure 35 Number of judges, 2012, 2019 – 2021 (*) (per 100 000 inhabitants) (source: Council of Europe’s European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) study)



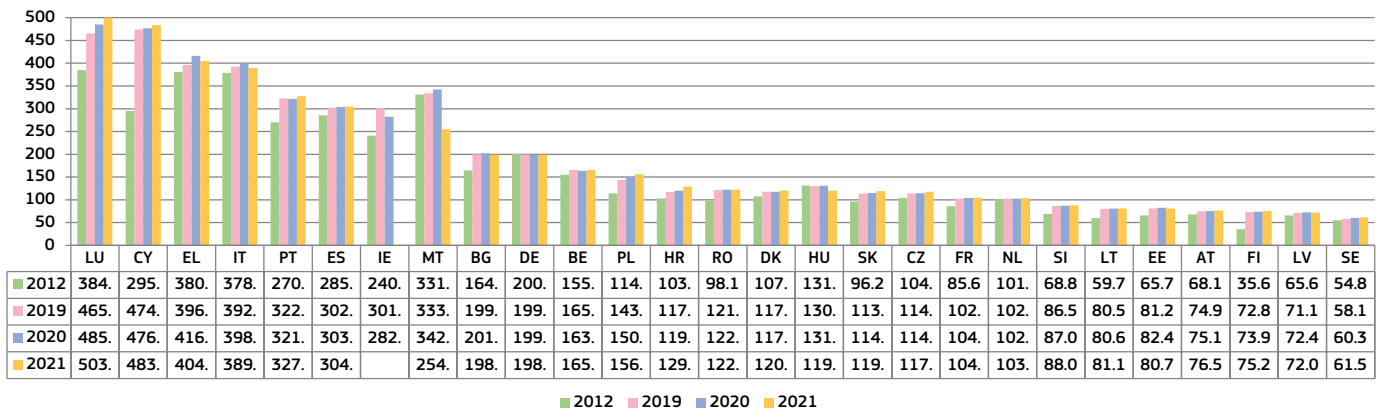
(*) This category consists of judges working full-time, in accordance with the CEPEJ methodology. It does not include the Rechtspfleger/court clerks that exist in some Member States. AT: data on administrative justice have been part of the data since 2016. EL: since 2016, data on the number of professional judges include all the ranks for criminal and civil justice as well as administrative judges. IT: Regional audit commissions, local tax commissions and military courts are not taken into consideration. Administrative justice has been taken into account since 2018.

Figure 36 Proportion of female professional Supreme Court judges 2020 – 2022 (*) (source: European Commission ⁽⁵⁾)



(*) The data are sorted by 2022 values, from the highest to the lowest. **MT**: No women on the highest court 2020.

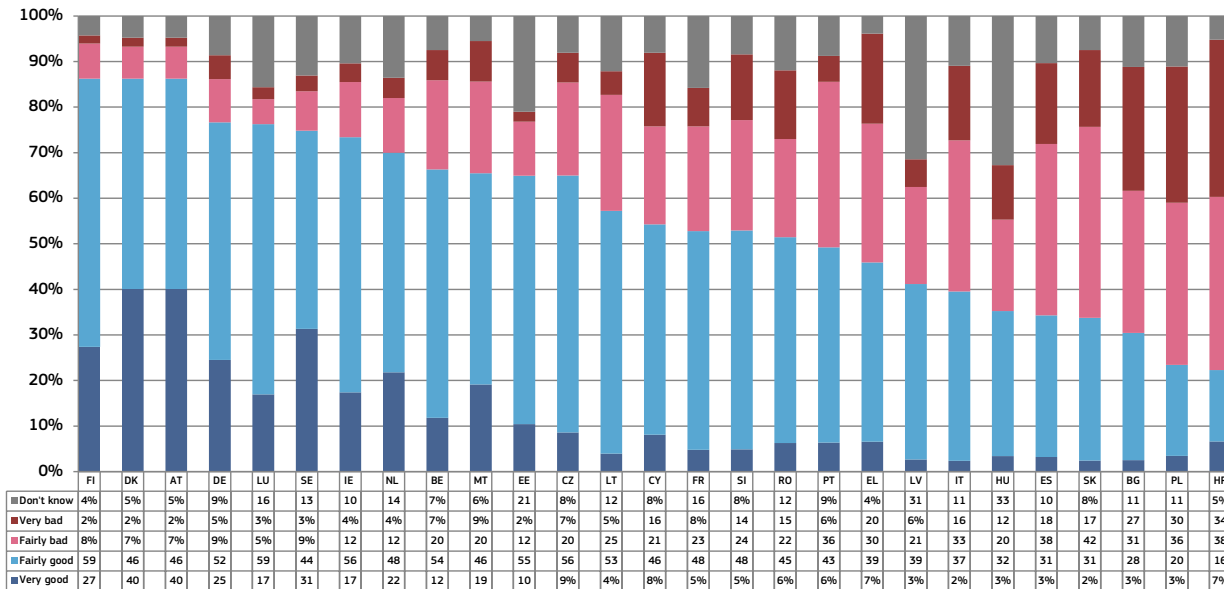
Figure 37 Number of lawyers, 2012, 2019 – 2021 (*) (per 100 000 inhabitants) (source: Council of Europe’s European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) study)



(*) In accordance with the CEPEJ methodology, a lawyer is a person qualified and authorised by national law to plead and act on behalf of their clients; to engage in the practice of law; to appear before the courts or advise and represent their clients in legal matters (Recommendation Rec (2000)21 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the freedom of exercise of the profession of lawyer). **DE**: no distinction is made between different groups of lawyers in Germany, such as between solicitors or barristers. **FI**: since 2015, the number of lawyers provided includes both the number of lawyers working in the private sector and the number of lawyers working in the public sector.

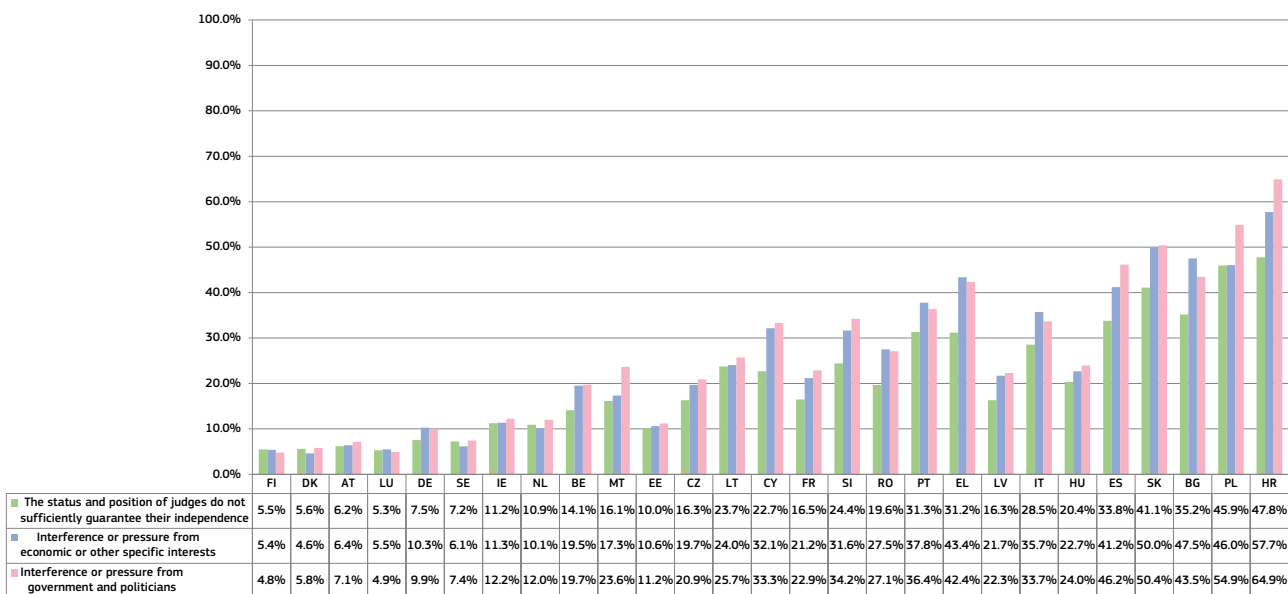
3.3.1. Perceived judicial independence and effectiveness of investment protection

Figure 49 How the general public perceives the independence of courts and judges (*) (source: Eurobarometer (6) - light colours: 2016, 2021 and 2022, dark colours: 2023)



(*) Member States are ordered first by the percentage of respondents who stated that the independence of courts and judges is very good or fairly good (total good); if some Member States have the same percentage of total good, then they are ordered by the percentage of respondents who stated that the independence of courts and judges is fairly bad or very bad (total bad); if some Member States have the same percentage of total good and total bad, then they are ordered by the percentage of respondents who stated that the independence of courts and judges is very good; if some Member States have the same percentage of total good, total bad and of very good, then they are ordered by the percentage of respondents who stated that the independence of courts and judges is very bad.

Figure 50 Main reasons among the general public for the perceived lack of independence (share of all respondents - higher value means more influence) (source: Eurobarometer (7))



6 Eurobarometer survey FL519, conducted between 16 and 24 January 2023. Replies to the question: 'From what you know, how would you rate the justice system in (your country) in terms of the independence of courts and judges? Would you say it is very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad?', see: https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/justice-and-fundamental-rights/effective-justice/eu-justice-scoreboard_en FL 503 (2022), FL 489 (2021), FL 435 (2016), also available on the Eurobarometer website: <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/screen/home>.

7 Eurobarometer survey FL519, replies to the question: 'Could you tell me to what extent each of the following reasons explains your rating of the independence of the justice system in (our country): very much, somewhat, not really, not at all?' if reply to Q1 is 'fairly bad' or 'very bad'.

Figure 52 Main reasons among companies for the perceived lack of independence (rate of all respondents - higher value means more influence) (source: Eurobarometer ⁽⁸⁾)

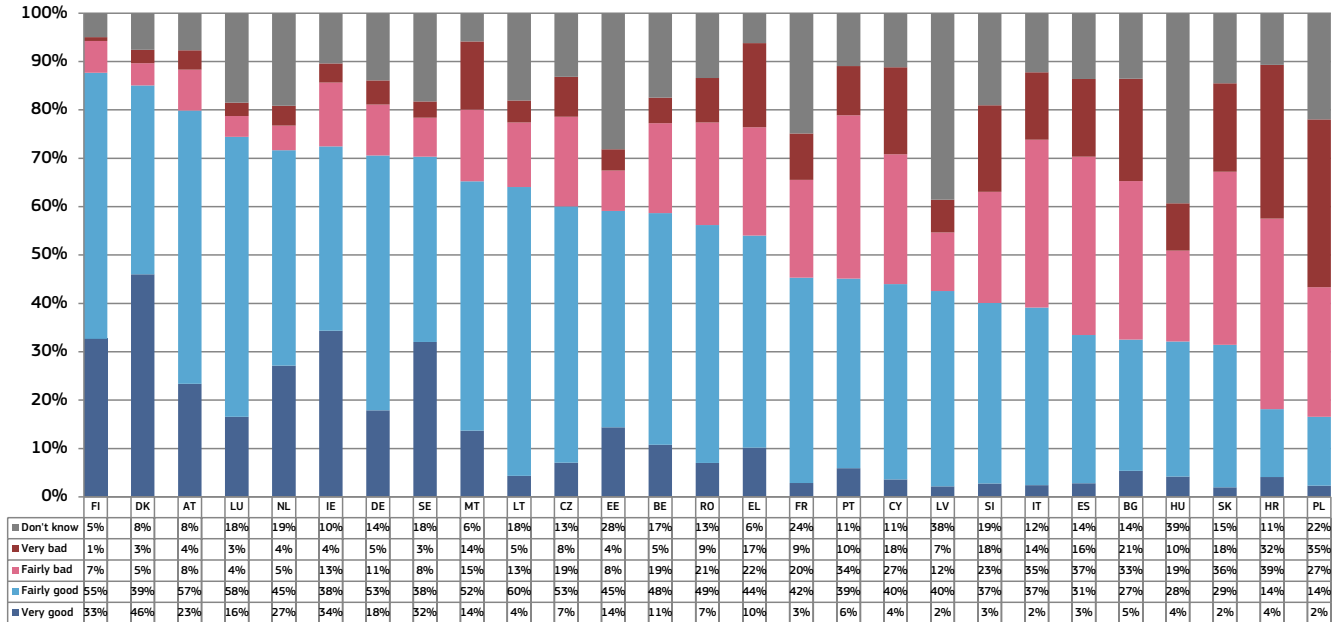
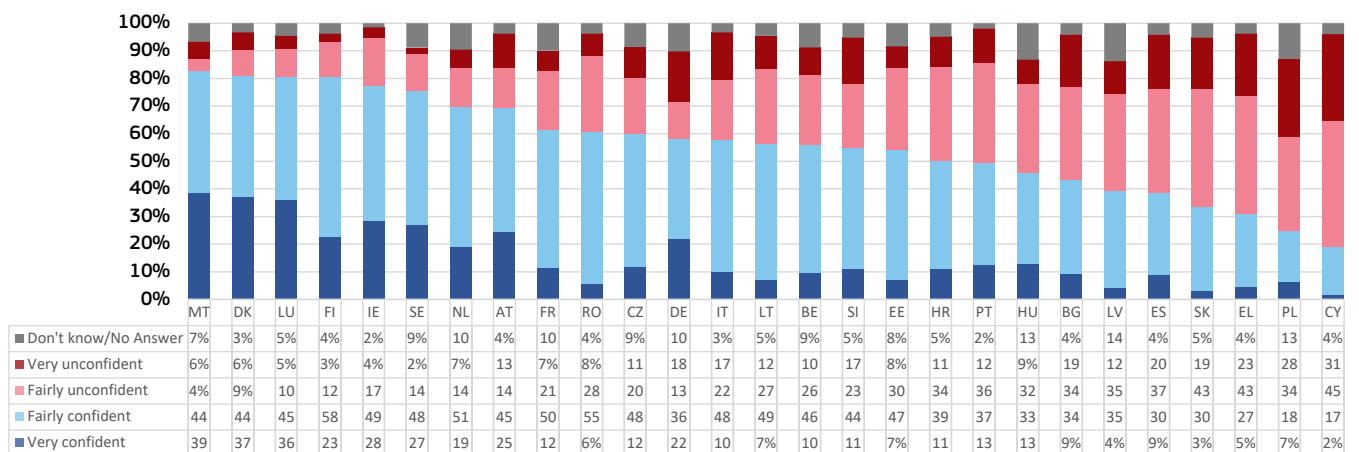


Figure 53 How companies perceive the effectiveness of investment protection by the law and courts (*) (source: Eurobarometer ⁽⁹⁾ - light colours: 2022, dark colours: 2023)

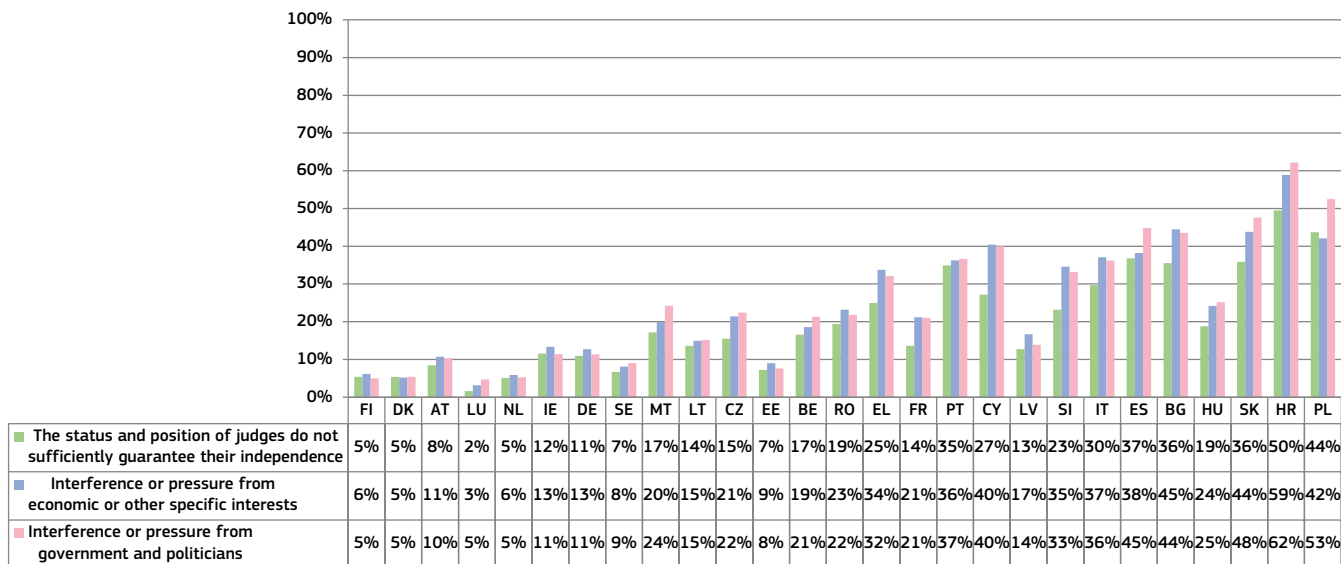


(*) Member States are ordered first by the combined percentage of respondents who stated that they are very or fairly confident in investment protection by the law and courts (total confident).

8 Eurobarometer survey FL520; replies to the question: 'Could you tell me to what extent each of the following reasons explains your rating of the independence of the justice system in (your country): very much, somewhat, not really, not at all?' if the response to Q1 was 'fairly bad' or 'very bad'.

9 Eurobarometer survey FL519, replies to the question: 'Could you tell me to what extent each of the following reasons explains your rating of the independence of the justice system?' Eurobarometer survey FL520; replies to the question: 'To what extent are you confident that your investments are protected by the law and courts in (your country) if something goes wrong?' For the purpose of the survey, investment was defined as including any kind of asset that a company owns or controls and that is characterised by the commitment of capital or other resources, the expectation of gain or profit or the assumption of risk.

Figure 54 Main reasons among companies for their perceived lack of effectiveness of investment protection (rate of all respondents - higher value means more influence) (source: Eurobarometer ⁽¹⁰⁾)



(*) Member States are ordered first by the combined percentage of respondents who stated that they are very or fairly confident in investment protection by the law and courts (total confident).

10 Eurobarometer survey FLS20; replies to the question: ‘What are your main reasons for concern about the effectiveness of investment protection?’ if the response to Q3 was ‘fairly unconfident’ or ‘very unconfident’.

