



## 2015 EU Justice Scoreboard: supporting Member States to improve their justice systems' effectiveness

Brussels, 09 March 2015

Today, the European Commission has released the [2015 EU Justice Scoreboard](#), which gives an overview of the quality, independence and efficiency of the justice systems of Member States.

The EU Justice Scoreboard is an information tool aiming to assist Member States to achieve more effective justice by providing objective, reliable and comparable data on their civil, commercial and administrative justice systems.

*'An effective justice system is a fundamental pillar of every democracy. Justice reforms play a key role in strengthening the Union's common values and creating the investment friendly environment that we need for sustainable growth'* said Věra Jourová, EU Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality. *"In 2014, most Member States were engaged in reforming their justice system; the Commission welcomes and supports their efforts. More effective justice systems will lead to an increased mutual trust among Member States. We know that justice reforms take time to produce results, but we see some encouraging signs in the new scoreboard. I am confident that Member States will pursue reforms with determination and commitment'.*

The information feeds the European Semester, the EU annual economic policy coordination. Together with individual country assessments, the EU Justice Scoreboard contributes to identify possible shortcomings and to encourage Member States to carry out, where necessary, structural reforms in the area of justice.

### Key findings from the 2015 EU Justice Scoreboard include:

- **Improvement in the efficiency of justice systems** in Member States can be observed. However, the situation varies significantly depending on the respective Member State and indicator. Reaping the rewards of justice reforms takes time.
- **Efforts to enhance the use of information and communication technology (ICT) tools for the judicial systems have continued.** However, the indicators reveal gaps in a number of Member States, both for ICT tools available for the administration and management of courts and for electronic communications between courts and parties.
- **More than 20% of judges participated in continuous training on EU law or on the law of other Member States** in the majority of Member States. This considerably exceeds the 5% annual target of legal practitioners who need to be trained in order to reach, by 2020, the objective of 50%.
- The majority of Member States enable **free online access to civil and commercial judgments for the general public.**
- **The higher the court, the lower the share of female judges.** Even if the share of female professional judges for both first and second instance shows a positive trend, for the Supreme Courts most Member States still have some way to go to reach the gender balance of 40-60%.

This third edition of the EU Justice Scoreboard (for previous editions, see [IP/13/285](#) and [IP/14/273](#)) seeks to identify possible trends in the three key sections: **efficiency, quality, and independence of justice.** It contains new indicators and more fine-tuned data based on new sources of information, such as the efficiency of courts in the areas of public procurement and intellectual property rights.

New parameters, such as the use and the promotion of alternative dispute resolution methods, including in consumer disputes, the quality of online small claims proceedings, courts' communications policies and the share of female professional judges are included. The Scoreboard also pays attention to those factors that can help improve the quality of the judicial systems.

### Next steps

The findings of the Scoreboard will be taken into account for the on-going country specific analyses of the 2015 [European Semester](#) (see the latest reports on the 2015 European Semester, [IP/15/4504](#) and [MEMO/15/4511](#)).

The findings of the Scoreboard are also taken into account when deciding the funding priorities under the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) as regards justice reforms. Special indicators were set up, in order to monitor the effectiveness of ESIF support.

## Background

The 2015 EU Justice Scoreboard brings together data from various sources, in particular data provided by the Council of Europe Commission for the Evaluation of the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ), which collects data from Member States. It also uses information obtained from other sources, for example through the close cooperation with the European Network of Councils of the Judiciary (ENCJ).

It looks at the same indicators as in 2014, while also drawing on some additional sources of information:

- **Efficiency of justice systems:** indicators on the efficiency of proceedings: length of proceedings, clearance rate and number of pending cases.
- **Quality indicators:** training, monitoring and evaluation of court activities, the use of satisfaction surveys, budget, and human resources.
- **Independence:** the Scoreboard presents data on the perceived independence of the justice system as provided by the World Economic Forum (WEF) in its annual Global Competitiveness Report. The 2015 Scoreboard also provides updated information on the legal safeguards presented last year and expands the comparative overview on structural independence.

The EU Justice Scoreboard contributes to the [European Semester](#) process by helping to identify justice-related issues that deserve particular attention. Together with the specific assessment of the situation in Member States, the 2014 EU Justice Scoreboard contributed to addressing [country-specific recommendations](#) in the area of justice for twelve Member States (BG, ES, HR, IE, IT, LV, MT, PL, PT, RO, SK, SI). In this way, the Scoreboard will assist both the EU and Member States in achieving more effective justice systems for citizens and businesses. This will help to reinforce growth strategies in the countries concerned and in the EU as a whole.

While the Scoreboard does not present an overall single ranking, it gives an overview of the functioning of all justice systems based on various indicators, which are of common interest for all Member States. It does not promote any particular type of justice system and treats all Member States on an equal footing. Whatever the model of the national justice system or the legal tradition in which it is anchored, timeliness, independence, affordability, and user-friendly access are some of the essential parameters of what constitutes an effective justice system.

Full document available : [2015 EU Justice Scoreboard](#)

Summary of the Justice scoreboard: [Factsheet](#)

[Annotated graphs](#) with the full figures

[Questions and answers](#) on the 2015 EU Justice Scoreboard

European Semester: [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/index_en.htm)

Webpage of Věra Jourová, EU Commissioner for Justice: [http://ec.europa.eu/commission/2014-2019/jourova\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/commission/2014-2019/jourova_en)

Follow the Commissioner on Twitter: [@VeraJourova](#)

Follow EU Justice on Twitter: [@EU\\_Justice](#)

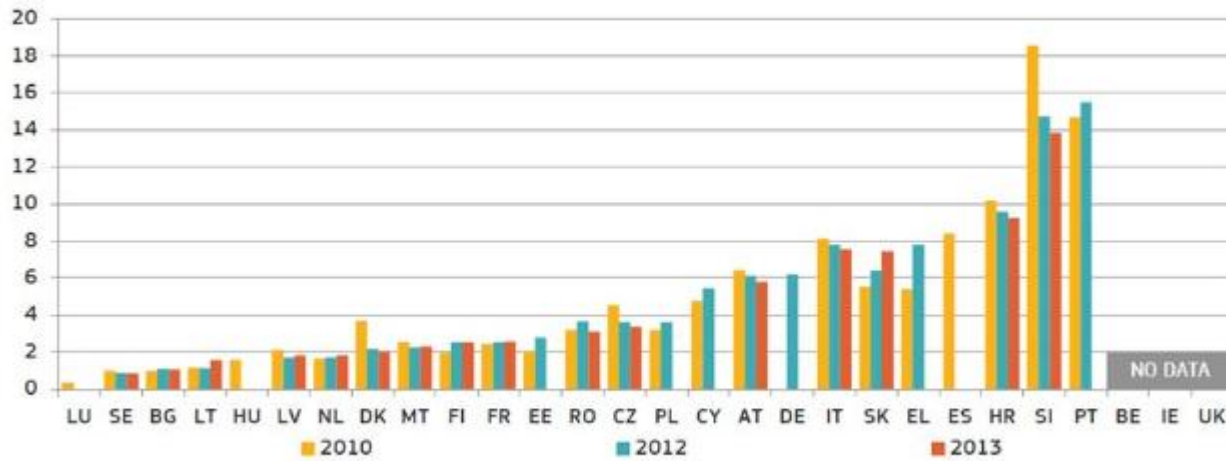
## Annex

### Efficiency

**Figure 10**

Number of civil, commercial, administrative and other pending cases\* (First instance/per 100 inhabitants)

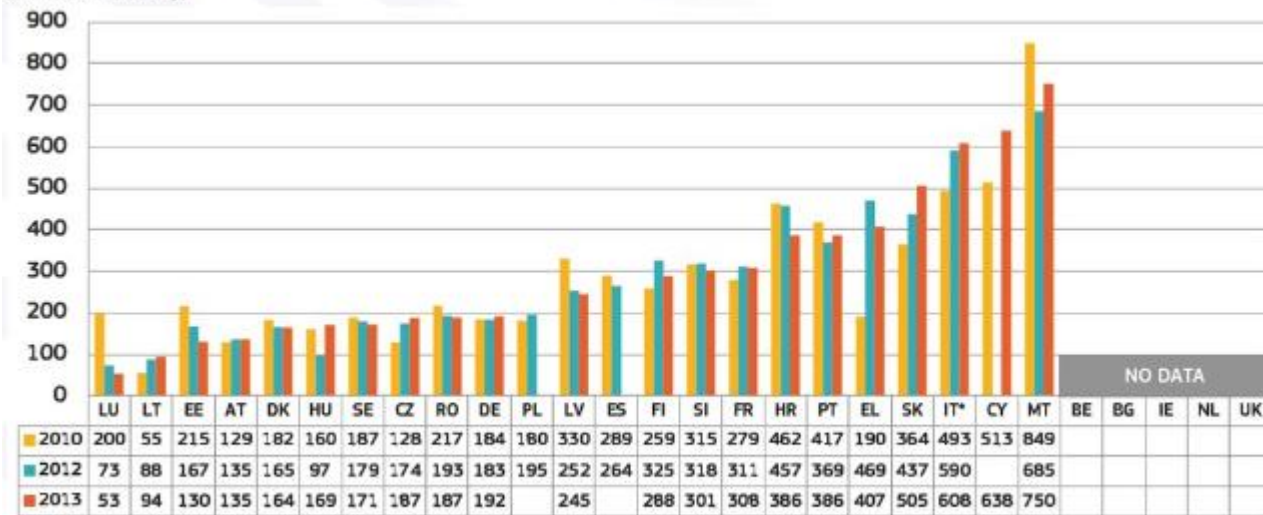
source: CEPEJ study



\* 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). Changes in incoming cases may allegedly explain variations in LT and SK. In DK the digitalization of the land registry may allegedly explain the decrease in pending cases.

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

(source: CEPEJ study)<sup>1</sup>



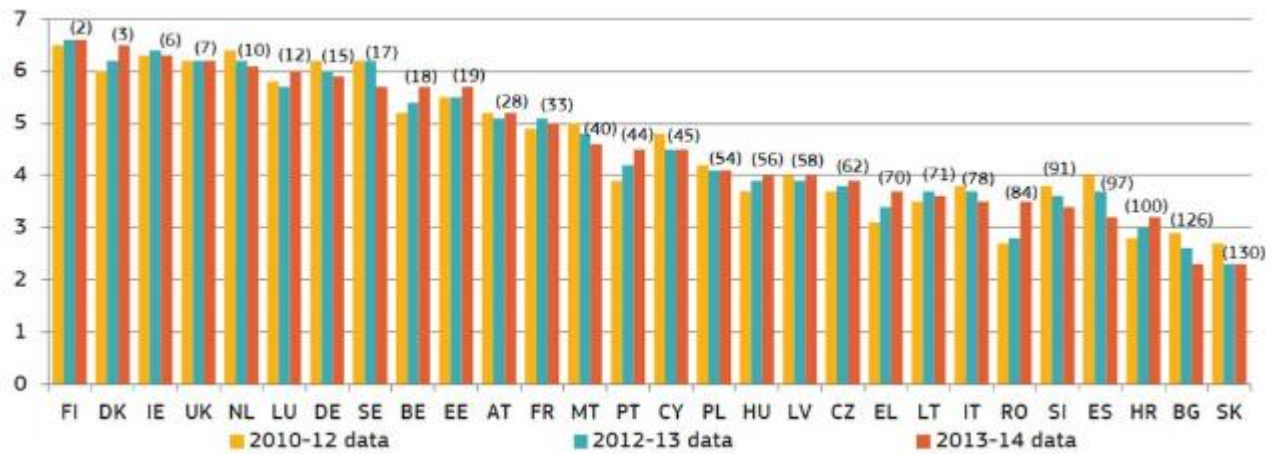
<sup>1</sup> Comparisons should be undertaken with care, as some Member States reported changes in the methodology for data collection or categorisation (CZ, EE, IT, CY, LV, HU, SI) or made caveats on completeness of data that may not cover all Länder or all courts (DE, LU). NL provided a measured disposition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

**Quality**

**Independence**

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

source: *World Economic Forum*<sup>24</sup>



\* The number in brackets displays the latest rank among 144 countries in the world.

IP/15/4575

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