Council of the EU

PRESS
EN

PRESS RELEASE
440/26
08/06/2026

Council greenlights law reinforcing protection of victims' rights

Today, the Council gave the final go-ahead to an EU law that reinforces the rights of victims to information, support and protection. Victims will be able to report a crime more easily and will have access to an EU-wide helpline for support and information. Victims' personal data will also be better protected. This new directive updates the 2012 EU law on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime.

> This updated EU law sends a clear message: victims deserve strong protection of their rights and effective support. No one should have to face the aftermath of crime alone. With the EU-wide helpline 116 006, victims anywhere in the EU can access information on their rights, as well as support and guidance when they need it most.
>
> *Costas Fytiris, Minister of Justice and Public order of the Republic of Cyprus*

Key provisions

116 006 - EU-wide helpline for victim support

Victims of crime across the EU will benefit from faster and more accessible support through an EU-wide helpline under the common number: 116 006.

Through this helpline, victims will receive information on their rights, emotional support and guidance on available support services. Existing national helpline numbers may continue to operate alongside the EU-wide number.

Easier crime reporting

Member states will have to make it easier for victims to report crimes through accessible and user-friendly digital tools when this is in their best interest. Victims will be able to report criminal offences online and submit evidence electronically.

Stronger protection for child victims

Children who are victims of crime will benefit from dedicated, child-friendly support services. These will include age-appropriate protection measures, psychological support and the possibility of having their interviews recorded on video.

Access to legal aid

Victims participating in criminal proceedings who cannot afford a lawyer will have access to legal aid, helping them exercise their rights and seek compensation.

Faster compensation

Victims who have been awarded compensation in the course of criminal proceedings will benefit from stronger measures to ensure that they receive it from the offender. In cases of violent intentional crime, if compensation is not paid within a reasonable time,

member states, upon certain conditions, may advance the payment and later recover the amount from the offender.

Protection of personal data

Victims will benefit from stronger safeguards to protect their contact details, with the aim of encouraging them to report crime and seek justice.

Next steps

The directive will be published in the Official Journal in July 2026, and it will enter into force 20 days after publication. Member states will have 24 months to transpose the directive into national law.

Background

An estimated 70–75 million people in the EU are victims of crime each year, according to the Commission. In France alone, 116 006 helpline receives more than 72 000 calls per year. Currently, only 14 countries set up this victim helpline.

- Timeline EU Law Tracker
- Fighting crime (background information)

Press office - General Secretariat of the Council of the EU
Rue de la Loi 175 - B-1048 BRUSSELS - Tel.: +32 (0)2 281 6319
press@consilium.europa.eu - www.consilium.europa.eu/press