



European Commission



THE 2024 EU JUSTICE SCOREBOARD

Factsheet / 11 June 2024

This document contains a selection of graphs with quantitative data from the 2024 EU Justice Scoreboard.

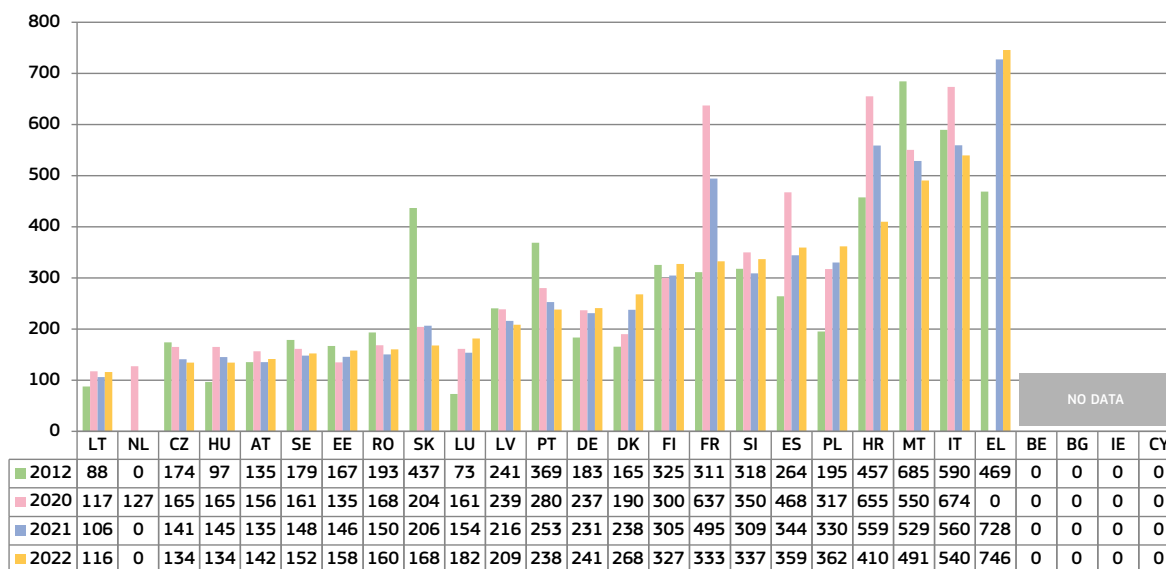


See the complete 2024 EU Justice Scoreboard at: <https://europa.eu/!dBqH4r>

EFFICIENCY OF JUSTICE SYSTEMS

In 2022, civil and commercial cases were **resolved within < 1 year in most Member States** and the lengths of proceedings **decreased in 17 Member States** (compared to 2021).

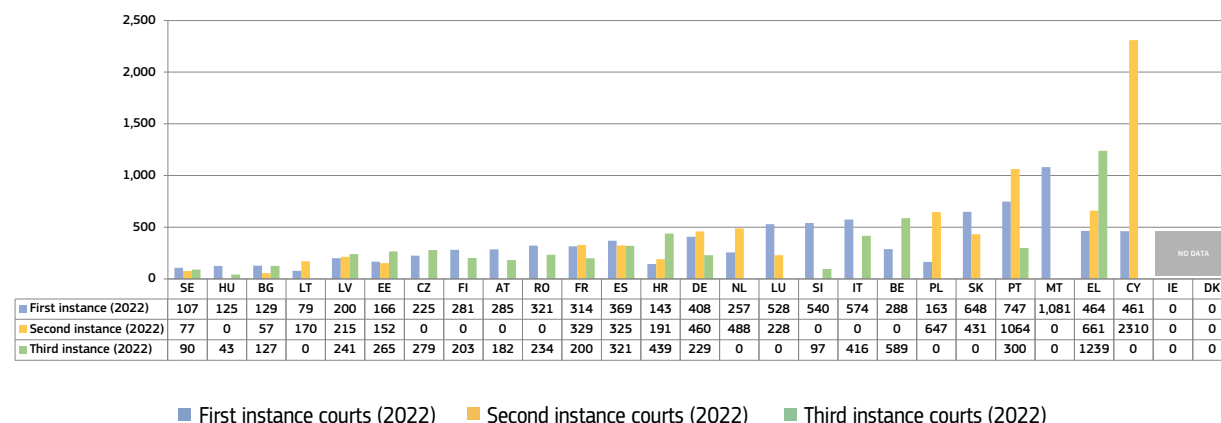
Figure 6 Estimated time needed to resolve litigious civil and commercial cases at first instance in 2012, 2020 – 2022 (*) (1st instance/in days) (source: CEPEJ study)



(*) 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.

In **9 of the Member States** facing challenges with the length of proceedings in first instance courts, higher instance courts perform more efficiently.

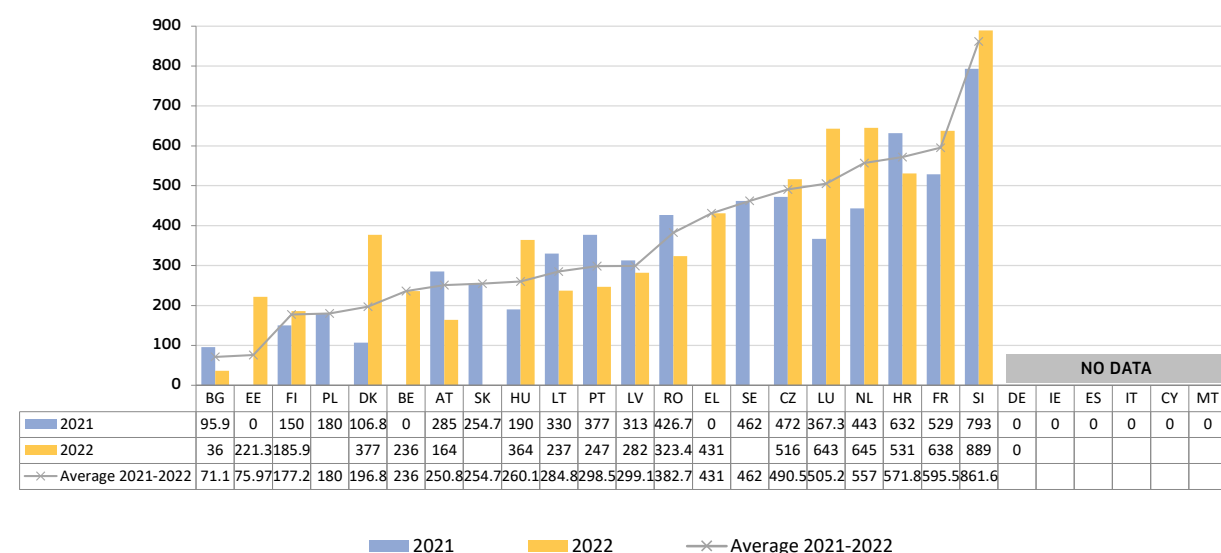
Figure 9 Estimated time needed to resolve administrative cases at all court instances in 2022 (*) (1st and, where applicable, 2nd and 3rd instance/in days) (source: CEPEJ study)



(*) 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, PL, RO, SI, SK** and **FI**, for third instance courts in **CY, LT, LU** and **MT**. 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 **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.

In **10 Member States** bribery cases in criminal courts are resolved within < 1 year.

Figure 23 Corruption (bribery): average length of court cases in 2021-2022 (*) (1st instance/ in days) (source: European Commission with the National Contact Points for Anti-corruption)

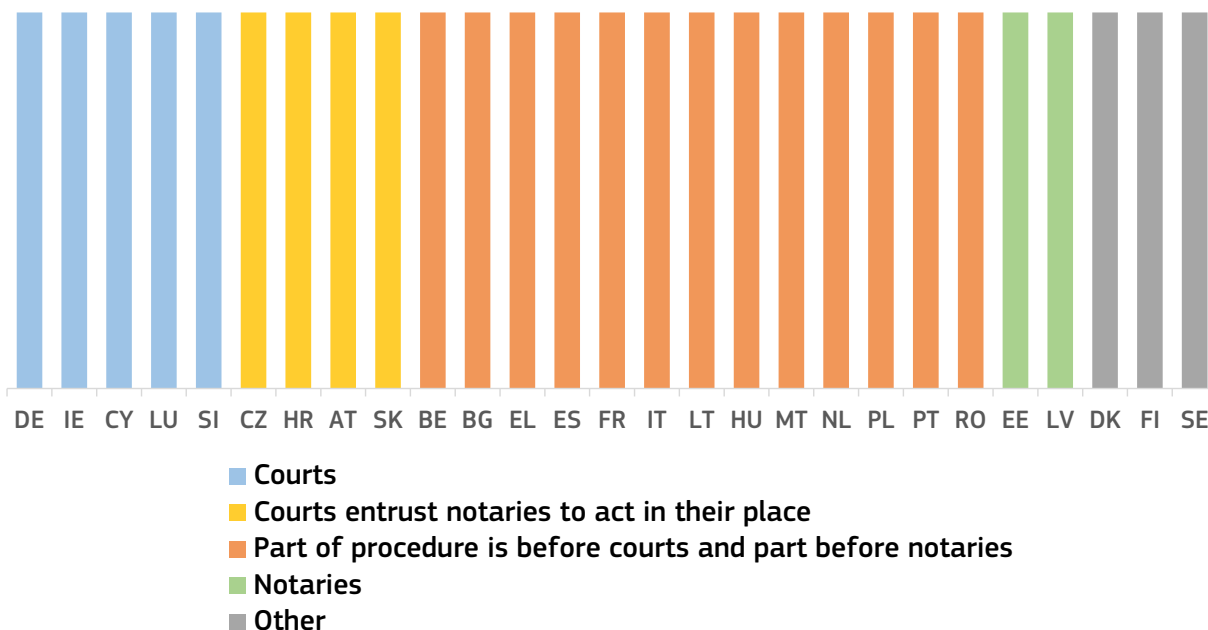


(*) No reply to this question from **DE, IE, ES, IT, CY, MT, PL, SK** and **SE, NL**: In this calculation, the period starts to run at the date the Public Prosecution Service (PPS) summoned the defendant to appear in court: the period ends on the day when the judge of first instance delivers the final verdict. The average processing time for the aforementioned 35 cases is 645 days. However, account must be taken of the fact that a case is often not ready for the hearing at the moment the period starts to run. As a result, it takes some time before the case is presented for hearing. The average length from first hearing until delivery of the final verdict is 194 days.

QUALITY AND CITIZEN-FRIENDLY JUSTICE SYSTEMS

In **13 Member States**, part of the procedure is before courts and part of it before notaries. In five Member States, the procedures are entirely before the courts, whereas in two the procedures are entirely before the notaries. In four Member States, the courts can entrust notaries to act in their place.

Figure 27 Authorities involved in succession procedures, 2023 (*) (source: European Commission)



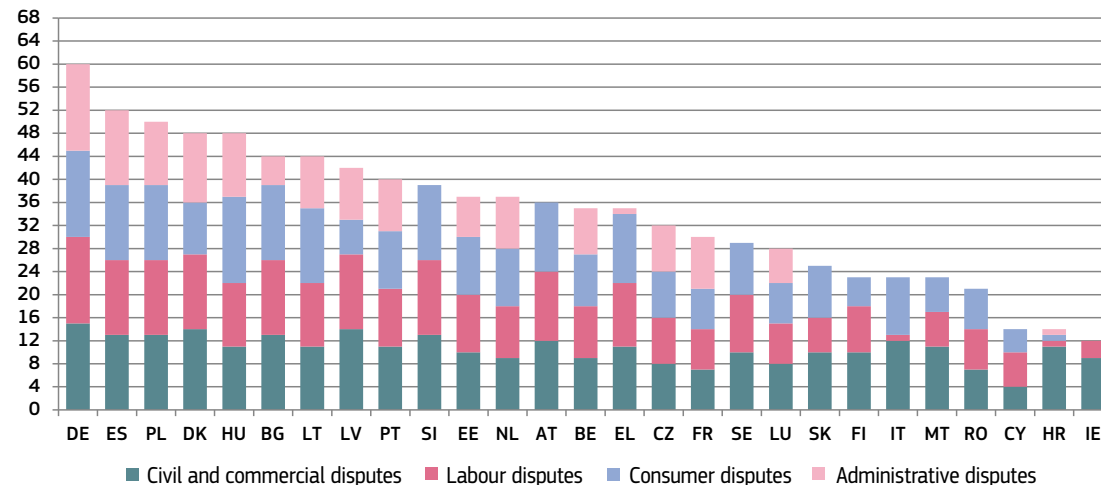
(*) Data were retrieved from the e-Justice Portal and validated in cooperation with the Group of Contact Persons on National Justice Systems. **BE**: There is no legal obligation to consult a notary in each case, except for certain type of cases (e.g. a holographic or international will, judicial partition or division of real estate). In certain situations, the court of first instance or justice of the peace may be required to act. **BG**: An acceptance of succession is normally submitted by a written application to the district judge. Notaries are essential for publishing wills, describing the state of the will, noting its unsealing, and attaching the paper, all initialed by relevant parties. **CZ**: A district court has the jurisdiction to handle all succession proceedings, but usually instructs a notary to manage the proceedings. That notary then acts and takes decisions in the proceedings on behalf of the court. **DK**: The probate court (in the district court) ensures that the estate of a deceased person is settled and distributed correctly. In practice, it will often be the heirs themselves who distribute the inheritance. In some cases, succession cases need to be handled by a trustee who usually is a lawyer. The trustee is responsible for settling and closing the estate in collaboration with the probate court. The probate court can decide whether the distribution must be handled by a trustee. **DE**: In principle, it is the probate court of the local court at the testator's last usual place of residence in Germany that is competent to deal with matters of inheritance. **EE**: Notaries oversee succession proceedings if the testator's last residence was in Estonia. If the last residence was in a foreign country, Estonian notaries handle proceedings for Estonian property when not possible abroad or when foreign proceedings exclude or lack recognition in Estonia, irrespective of EU regulations. **IE**: The Dublin Probate Office and fourteen District Probate Offices handle the issuance of Grants of Probate for cases with a will and Letters of Administration for cases without a will. These offices are part of the Irish Courts Service. **EL**: The succession court or the district civil court of the capital city of the State has jurisdiction on succession-related matters. Notaries, the Greek consular authorities and tax authorities are also competent to draw up and safeguard wills. **ES**: Notaries determine the parties' entitlement to inherit the estate by law in the absence of disposition of property. In case of disputes between the parties concerned, it will be settled by the courts. **FR**: Matters of succession are dealt with by notaries - their involvement is mandatory if the estate includes immovable property and optional if there is no immovable property. In the event of a dispute, the regional court has exclusive subject-matter and territorial jurisdiction. **HR**: Probate proceedings in the first instance are conducted before a municipal court or before a notary public, as a trustee of the court. **IT**: The declaration of acceptance or renunciation occurs through a declaration issued by a notary or a clerk of the competent court in the jurisdiction where the succession is opened. **CY**: The competent authority is the District Court of the last domicile of the testator/deceased. **LT**: The notary and the court at the place of the opening of the succession are competent in matters of succession. **LU**: The heir or heirs assign all transactions for the settlement of the estate to a notary chosen by them or appointed by the testator. **HU**: Legal matters related to the estate are generally settled in probate proceedings conducted by a notary public. If there is a legal dispute between the interested parties, this may not be settled by the notary public but in court proceedings. **MT**: Courts have general jurisdiction to decide disputes related to successions. When there are no disagreements or disputes on successions, notaries and lawyers are usually engaged. **NL**: The notary is the competent authority with respect to inheritance law. If the heir wishes to waive the inheritance or accepts it on condition that the charges do not exceed the entitlement, he or she must submit a declaration to the court. **AT**: For the purposes of carrying out the process in succession matters, the district court relies on the services of a notary acting in the capacity of a court commissioner. **PL**: Applicants refer matters of succession to a notary or the court with jurisdiction over the testator's last place of residence. **PT**: If the inheritance is contested, either the courts or notary's offices can conduct the inventory. **RO**: The competent bodies for non-contentious succession procedures are notaries, while courts of first instance are responsible for contentious succession proceedings. **SK**: The district court appoints a notary to handle the case. Generally, acts by the notary are considered as acts by the court, with a few exceptions. **FI**: Various authorities have jurisdiction over matters relating to the administration of succession. The district court is involved, but only regarding cases relating to the estate. **SE**: The distribution of the inheritance is mostly carried out without the involvement of the authorities. Inheritance disputes are also resolved by an ordinary court of competent jurisdiction.

QUALITY AND CITIZEN-FRIENDLY JUSTICE SYSTEMS

In **2023**, the overall promotion effort increased, with nine Member States reporting more means of promotion, in particular about ADR methods in consumer disputes. The number of ways used to promote ADR methods is still lower for administrative disputes than for other disputes but has also increased since 2023

Figure 28 Promotion of and incentives for using ADR methods, 2023 (*)

(source: European Commission (*))



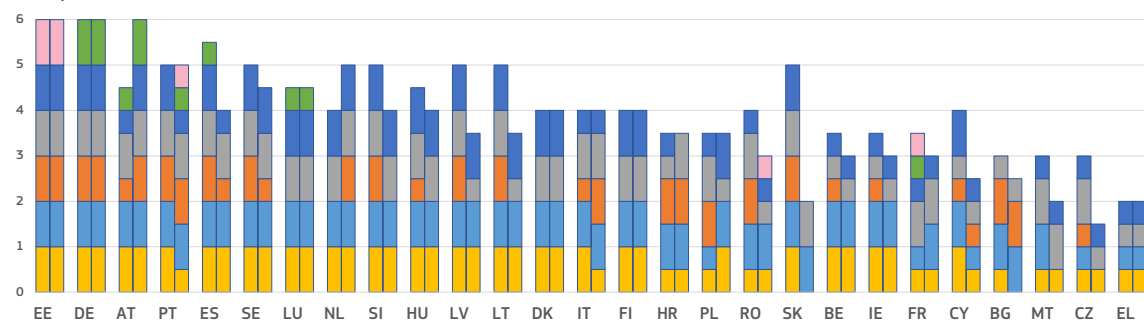
(*) Maximum possible: 68 points. Aggregated indicators based on the following indicators: 1) website providing information on ADR; 2) media publicity campaigns; 3) brochures for the general public; 4) provision by the court of specific information sessions on ADR upon request; 5) court ADR/mediation 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.

(*) 2023 data collected in cooperation with the group of contact persons on national justice systems.

Figure 44 reveals the **use of digital technology by courts and prosecution services**. It shows that Member States do not fully use the potential allowed by their procedural rules (cf. Figure 43). Member States' courts, prosecutors and court staff already have various digital tools at their disposal, such as case-management systems, videoconferencing systems and teleworking arrangements. However, further progress could still be achieved in electronic case allocation systems, with automatic distribution based on objective criteria.

Figure 44 Use of digital technology by courts and prosecution services, 2023 (*) (source:

European Commission (*))



For each Member State, the two columns represent the use of digital technology in the following authorities (from left to right):

1. courts
2. prosecution service

- Use of distributed ledger technologies (blockchain)
- Use of artificial intelligence applications in core activities
- Staff can work securely remotely
- Use of distance communication technology, particularly for videoconferencing
- Electronic case allocation, with automatic distribution based on objective criteria
- Use of an electronic Case Management System
- Judges/prosecutors can work securely remotely

(*) Maximum possible: 7 points. For each criterion, one point was given if courts and prosecution services, respectively, use a given technology and 0.5 point was awarded when the technology is not always used by them.

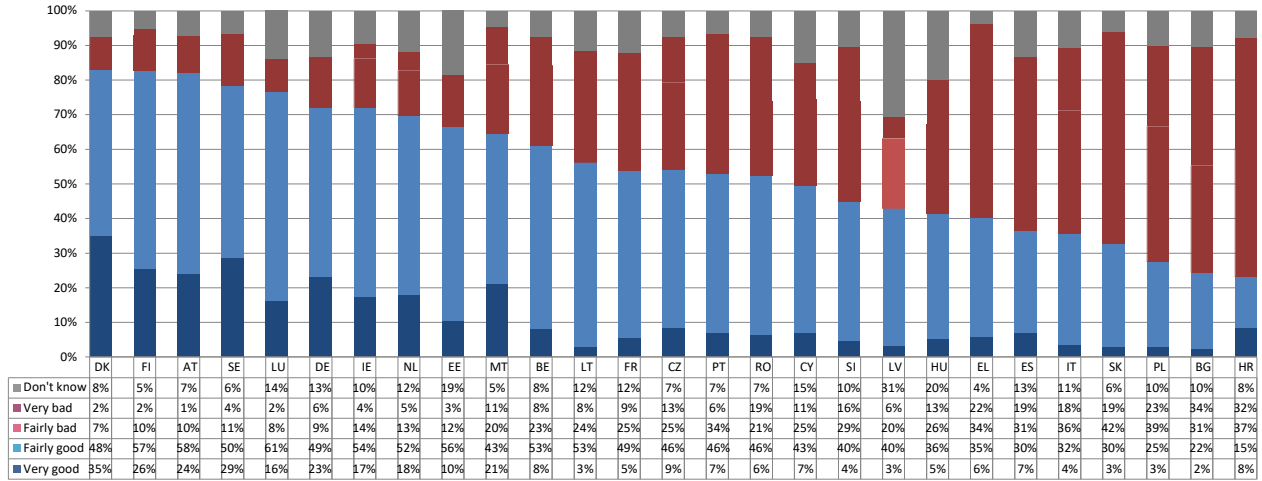
(*) 2023 data collected in cooperation with the group of contact persons on national justice systems.

INDEPENDENCE OF JUSTICE SYSTEMS

Perceived judicial independence and effectiveness of investment protection

Figure 51 How the general public perceives the independence of courts and judges (*)

(source: Eurobarometer (*))

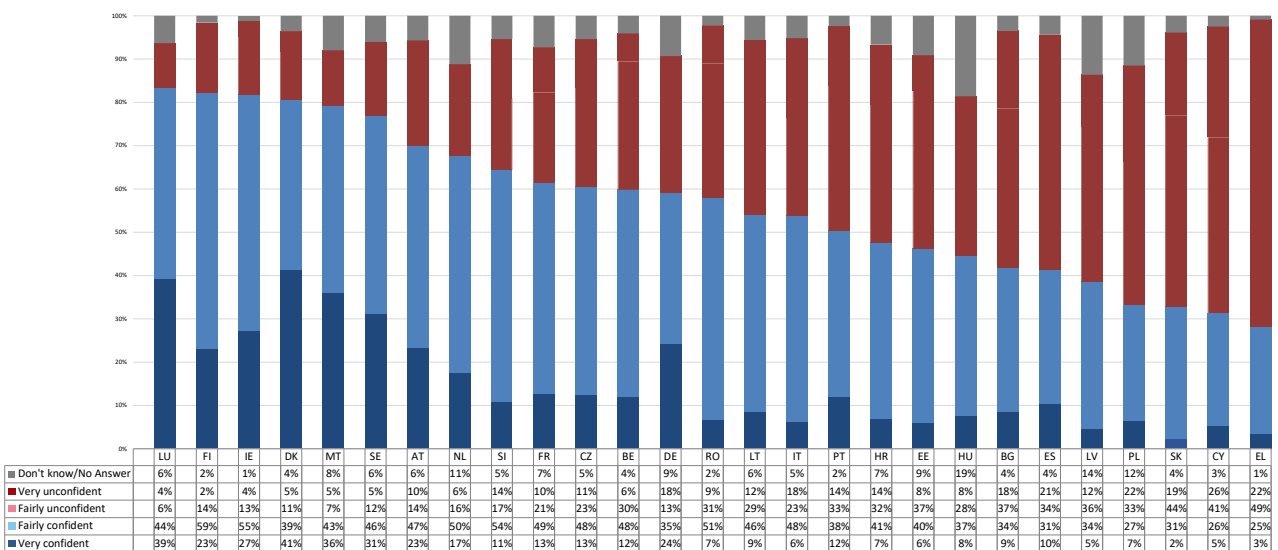


(*) Member States are ordered first by the percentage of respondents who stated that the independence of courts and judges is very good or fairly good (total good); if some Member States have the same percentage of total good, then they are ordered by the percentage of respondents who stated that the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

(*) Eurobarometer survey FL540, conducted between 14 and 27 February 2024. 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://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/upholding-rule-law/eu-justice-scoreboard_en#surveys; FL519 (2023), FL503 (2022), FL435 (2016), also available at: <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/screen/home>.

Figure 55 shows, for the third time, the indicator on how companies perceive the effectiveness of investment protection by the law and courts as regards, in their view, unjustified decisions or inaction by the State

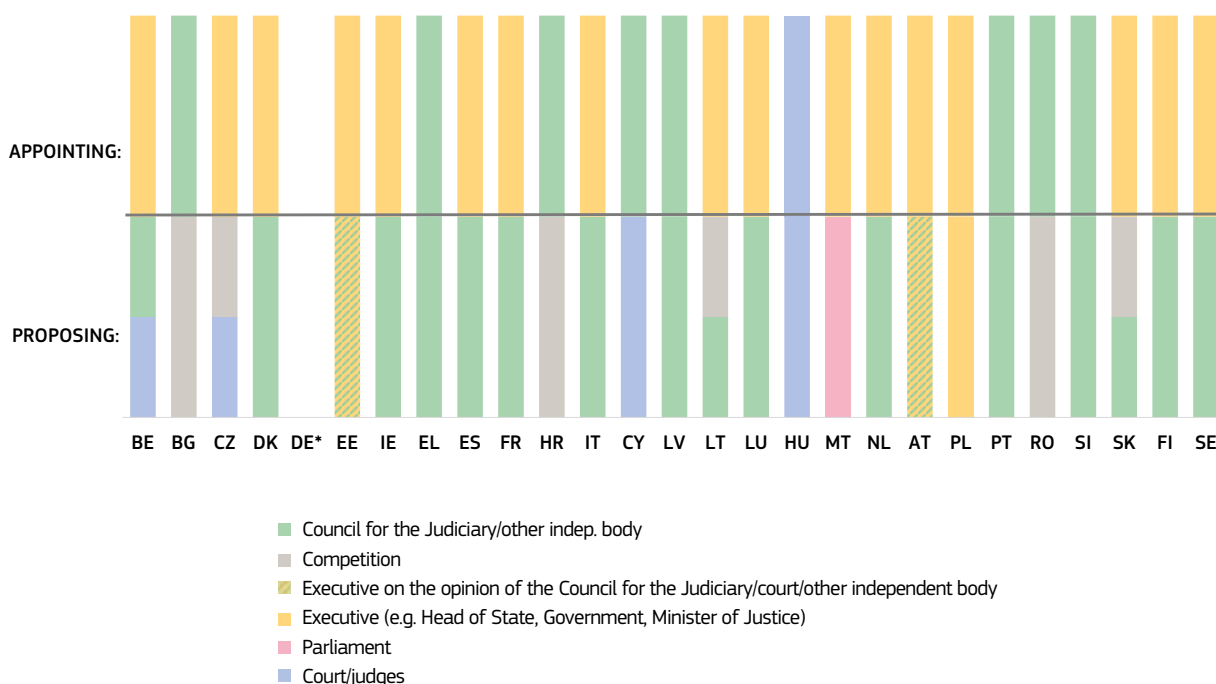
Figure 55 How companies perceive the effectiveness of investment protection by the law and courts (*) (source: Eurobarometer)



(*) 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).

Figure 58 shows the authorities proposing candidates for their appointment as court presidents and the authorities that appoint them. In the majority of the Member States the Council for the Judiciary or another independent body is involved in the proposing or appointing phase.

Figure 58 Appointment of court presidents: proposing and appointing authorities (*) (source: European Network of Councils for the Judiciary and Network of Presidents of Supreme Judicial Courts of the EU (**))



(*) **BE:** proposal: The Decision on the proposal is taken by the council for the judiciary on the mandatory advice of the president of the court; appointment: the King through a Royal decree drafted by the Minister of Justice. **BG:** proposal: common assembly of the court; the minister of justice, the candidate him/herself; appointment: Supreme Judicial Council. **CZ:** The figure reflects the appointment of the presidents of first instance courts/district courts. proposal: president of the regional court in accordance with the result of selection procedure announced by the regional court; appointment: Minister of Justice. For other court presidents (presidents of regional courts and of high courts), President appoints on a proposal from the Minister of justice and in accordance with the result of the selection procedure announced by the Ministry. **DK:** proposal: Judicial Appointments Council based on application of candidates to open positions; appointment: Minister of Justice. **EE:** The presidents of the first and second instance courts are appointed by the Minister of Justice after having heard the opinion of the full court for which the president is being appointed and receiving the approval from the Council for Administration of Courts. **IE:** proposal: Judicial Appointment Commission; appointment: President, upon nomination from the Government. **DE:** proceedings at the level of the federal states differ greatly. In half of the 16 federal states, judicial electoral committees participate in the recruitment. In some of the federal states, this matter is dealt with completely by their state Ministry of Justice, whereas in other federal states the authority to decide on recruitment and on the (first) appointment has been transferred to the presidents of the higher regional courts. Some federal states provide for mandatory participation of a council of judges. Others require a joint appointment by the competent minister and a conciliation committee if the council of judges objects. In some federal states, judges are elected by the state parliaments and have to be appointed by the state executive. **IT:** proposal: Council; appointment: President of the Republic. **CY:** There is no proposing authority. The President and members of the Appeal Court, the Administrative Presidents of the District Courts, or the President of a Court of a Specialised Jurisdiction (depending on the position of the appointment), as well as the President of the Cyprus Bar Association and the Attorney General, can only submit their opinions/views ; appointment: Supreme Judicial Council. **LV:** proposal: Judicial Candidacy Selection Committee; appointment: Judicial Council. **LT:** The figure reflects the appointment of chairpersons of regional and district courts. proposal: Selection Commission of Candidates to Judicial Office + mandatory advice from the Judicial Council; appointment: President. Parliament appoints chairpersons of the Court of Appeal. **LU:** proposal: National Council for Justice; appointment: Grand-Duke. **MT:** The Chief Justice is appointed by the President acting in accordance with a resolution of Parliament supported by the votes of not less than two-thirds of all the members. **FR:** proposal: Superior Council of Magistracy; appointment: President of the Republic. **CZ:** Figure reflects the framework in place regarding the presidents and vice-presidents of the district courts, regional courts and high courts. **ES:** Although the formal appointment of court presidents is done by a Royal Decree signed by the King (in his capacity as Head of State) and the Minister of Justice, neither the King nor the Minister can object to the binding proposal for appointment made by the Council for the Judiciary. **HU:** Figure reflects the appointment of presidents of district courts, who are appointed by the regional court presidents. The President of the National Office for the Judiciary appoints the regional court presidents and the regional appeal court presidents. The judges at the district court form an opinion on the applicants to the vacancy by a secret ballot. **AT:** Proposal: special chamber of the court, higher court and supreme court; appointment: the Federal President on advice of the Minister of Justice. **PL:** The Minister of Justice appoints from the judges in a given court. **PT:** The presidents of the courts of first instance are selected and appointed by the Judicial High Council from among judges. The Presidents of the Courts of Appeal and the Supreme Court of Justice are elected by their peers. **FI:** proposal: Judicial Appointments Board; appointment: President. **SE:** proposal: Judges Proposal Board; appointment: Government.

(**) Data collected through an updated questionnaire drawn up by the Commission in close association with the EN CJ. Responses to the updated questionnaire from Member States that have no Councils for the Judiciary are not EN CJ members, were obtained through cooperation with the NPSC.