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Costs of proceedings

The European Union (EU) has granted a number of rights to its citizens such as the freedom of movement within its borders. These rights have changed the lives of many citizens and exchanges in the EU have increased significantly in the last few years. However, EU citizens cannot take full advantage of these rights if the right to access to justice is not facilitated. In that context, information must be available on costs of proceedings, for example if a citizen envisages going to court or wishes to enforce a court judgment.

Litigation costs in civil and commercial matters are governed by national legislation and costs are not harmonised at EU level. Thus, costs vary from one Member State to another.

To obtain detailed information on costs of proceedings in the Member States, as well as on several case studies carried out on behalf of the European Commission, please select one of the flags listed on the right hand side.

If you do not have sufficient financial resources to meet the costs of a court case you can apply for [legal aid](#).

Additional information can be obtained from the attached study (available in English and French only) undertaken to identify the sources of costs of civil judicial proceedings in each Member State by:

defining the proportion of each identified source of cost on the overall cost of civil judicial proceedings,

comparing the costs incurred by litigants in different Member States,

identifying variations in sources of costs and costs amounts,

identifying how transparency of the costs of judicial proceedings and the limitation of differences in sources of costs and costs amounts can foster greater access to justice,

making recommendations for possible actions at the EU level, possibly through the establishment of minimum standards, to facilitate access to justice by improving the transparency of costs of civil justice,

generally, identifying links, where appropriate and relevant, between costs of justice and access to justice for the citizens, and

identifying specific issues pertaining to cross-border disputes.

The study provides a snapshot of the situation in the European Union at a precise moment in time - December 2007.

Related Attachments

Study on the Transparency of Costs of Civil Judicial Proceedings in the EU  (2615 Kb)  – English version

Study on the Transparency of Costs of Civil Judicial Proceedings in the EU  (2665 Kb)  – French version

Annex 1: Results of the public questionnaire  (1700 Kb) 

National report - Belgium  (829 Kb) 

National report - Bulgaria  (566 Kb) 

National report - Czech Republic  (703 Kb) 

National report - Denmark  (560 Kb) 

National report - Germany  (565 Kb) 

National report - Estonia  (872 Kb) 

National report - Ireland  (400 Kb) 

National report - Greece  (849 Kb) 

National report - Spain  (640 Kb) 

National report - France  (1312 Kb) 

National report - Italy  (772 Kb) 

National report - Cyprus  (555 Kb) 

National report - Latvia  (742 Kb) 

National report - Lithuania  (950 Kb) 

National report - Luxembourg  (551 Kb) 

National report - Hungary  (533 Kb) 

National report - Malta  (742 Kb) 

National report - Netherlands  (702 Kb) 


National report - Austria  (829 Kb) 

National report - Poland  (396 Kb) 

National report - Portugal  (781 Kb) 

National report - Romania  (544 Kb) 

National report - Slovenia  (723 Kb) 

National report - Slovakia  (872 Kb) 

National report - Finland  (504 Kb) 

National report - Sweden  (457 Kb) 

[National report - United Kingdom](#)  (448 Kb) 

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