



**HUMAN RIGHTS,
DEMOCRACY
AND THE RULE OF LAW**

**DROITS DE L'HOMME,
DÉMOCRATIE
ET ÉTAT DE DROIT**

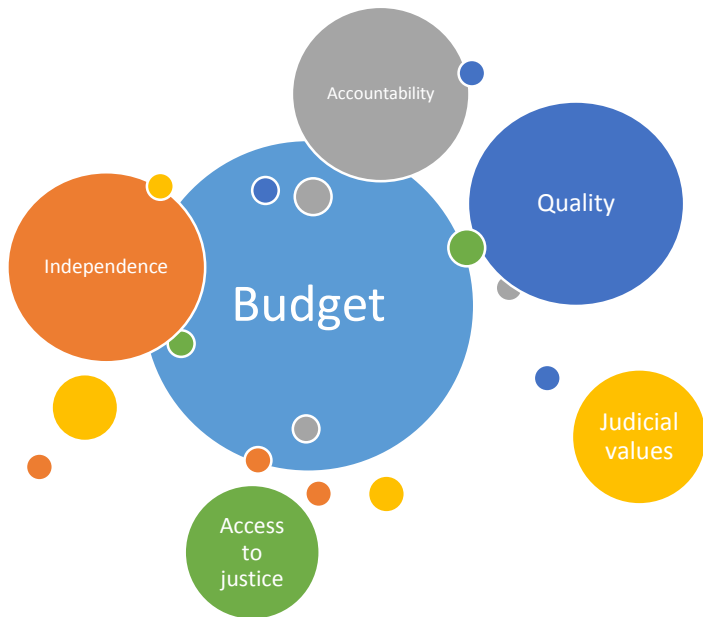
The main trends on the functioning of justice in Europe

Jaša Vrabec, Président of the CEPEJ Working Group on Evaluation (CEPEJ-GT-EVAL)

15/10/2024



Budget



The importance of budget:

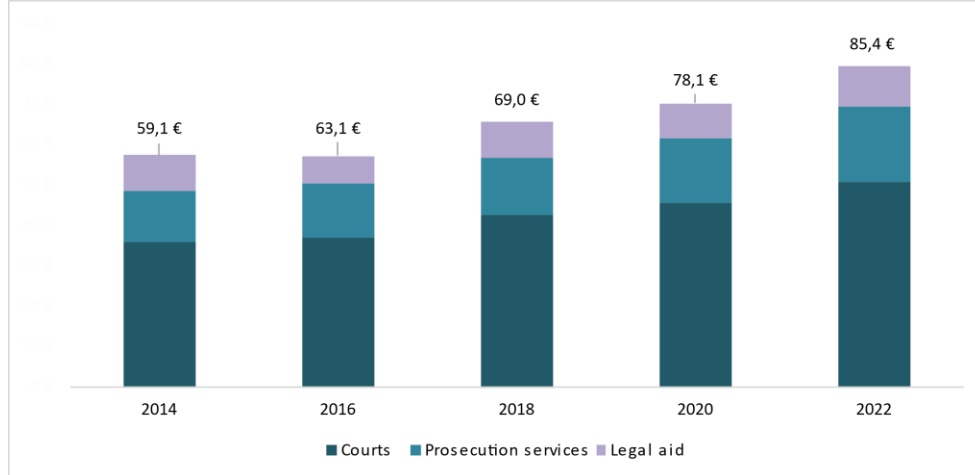
- Budget and Independence
- Budget and Quality of Justice
- Budget and Judicial Values
- Budget and Access to Justice
- Budget and Accountability

Budget

1,1 bn
€

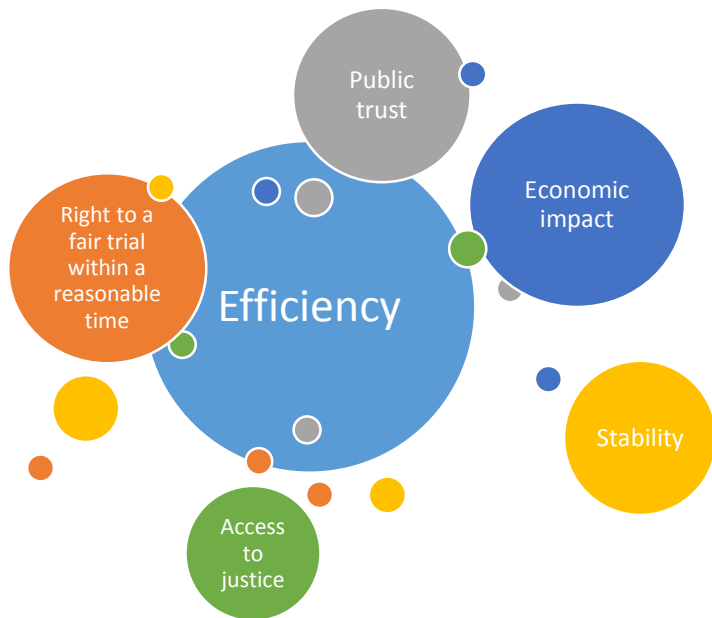
€ 85,4
per inh

0,31%
of GDP



- Steady growth of the budget from 2014 to 2022
- Wealthier countries allocate a higher judicial system budget per capita
- Less wealthy countries dedicate a larger percentage of their GDP to justice

Efficiency



The importance of judicial efficiency:

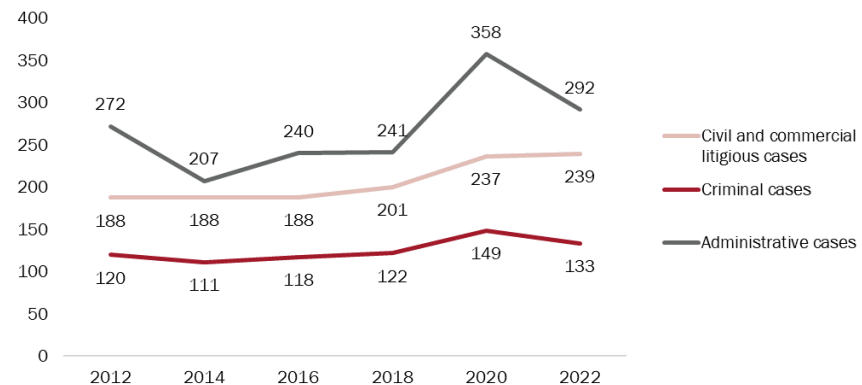
- Article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)
- Public trust and confidence
- Economic impact
- Social and political stability
- Access to justice

Efficiency

- In 2022, the average length of proceedings in first instance was:
 - 133 days for criminal cases
 - 239 days for civil/commercial litigious cases
 - 292 days for administrative cases

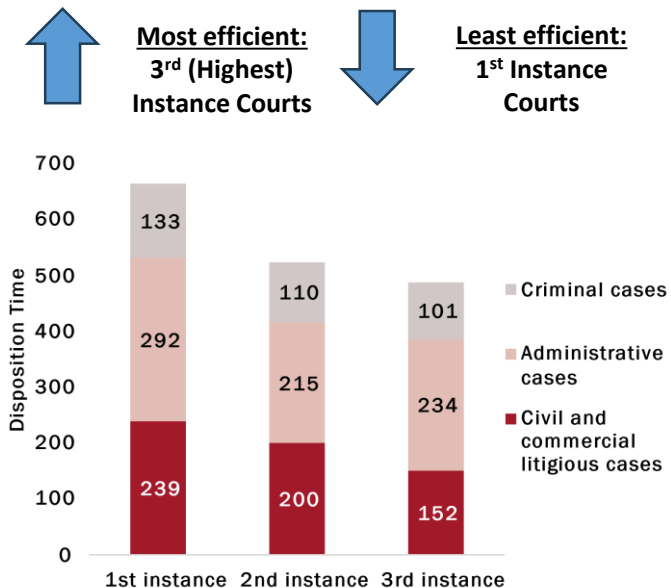
- In 2022, the overall length of proceedings decreased compared to 2020, but it still has not returned to pre-pandemic levels

Average length of procedures (First instance)

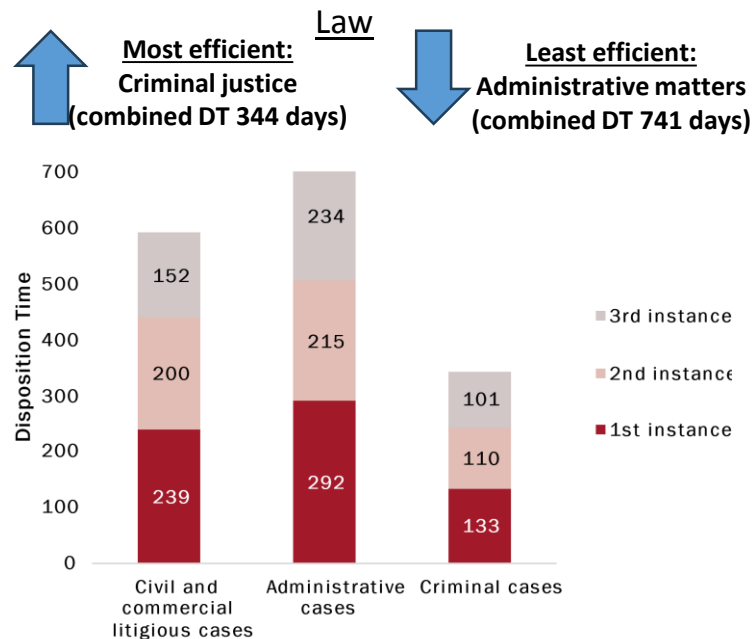


Efficiency

Court Efficiency by Instance



Court Efficiency by Area of Law



Efficiency

High **variability** among countries

E.g. Civil/ commercial litigious cases:

- First instance: median 239 days, minimum 58 days, maximum 746 days
- Second instance: median 200 days, minimum 62 days, maximum 2272 days
- Third instance: median 152 days, minimum 22 days, maximum 1063 days

First instance

746
540
518
491
417
410
397
377
375
362
359
337
333
327
312
308
299
268
257
241
238
212
209
187
182
176
171
168
168
160
158
152
142
141
134
134
116
115
69
58

Second instance

2 272
1 736
753
571
563
489
464
422
404
391
343
326
238
232
218
207
206
200
185
172
169
166
161
141
140
135
121
106
101
97
95
85
82
72
70
62

Third instance

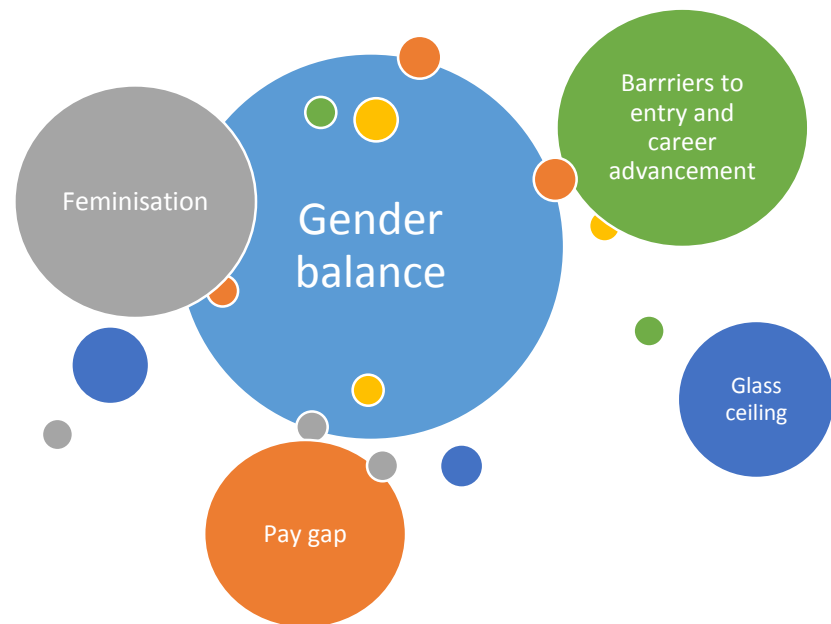
1 063
691
567
557
487
451
378
371
361
334
329
237
217
216
216
188
180
153
151
151
149
148
142
138
129
124
119
115
102
98
88
73
57
48
22

Access to justice



- **Access to information:** 44 countries provide free access to information
- **Financial accessibility:** Legal aid is available in all member States
 - Only 11% of the judicial system budget is allocated to legal aid
 - Access to court is free of charge in only 3 member states
 - Reimbursement of court fees at a later stage is still problematic.
- **Physical access:** Ongoing reduction of the number of courts

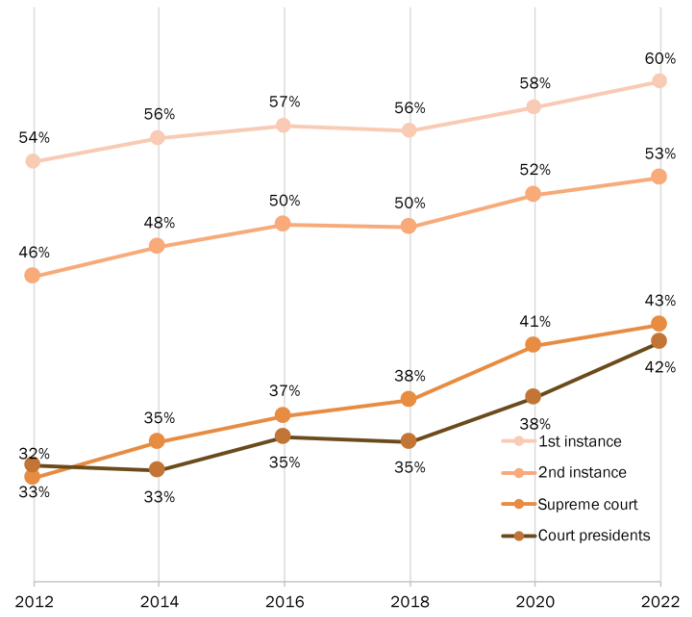
Gender balance



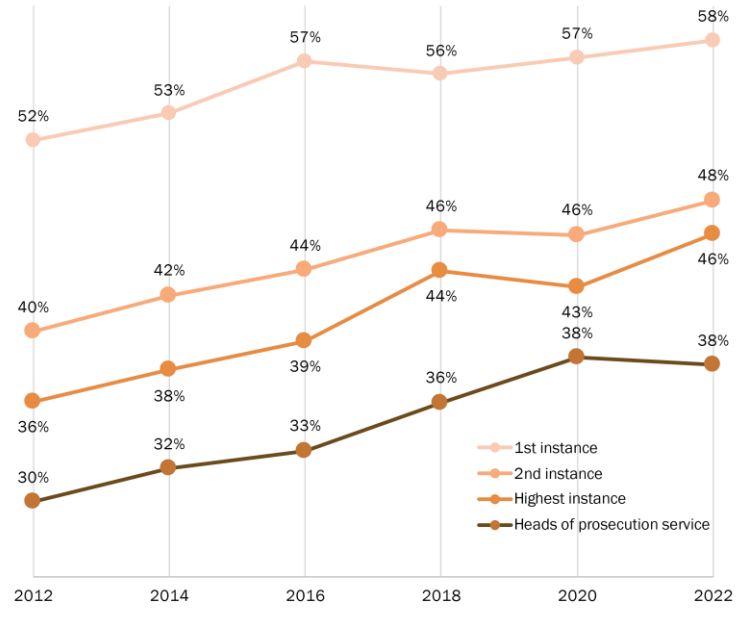
- More women judges in the last 10 years
- Impact on organization of the judicial offices and on the working conditions
- Glass ceiling effect is still present

Gender balance

Courts

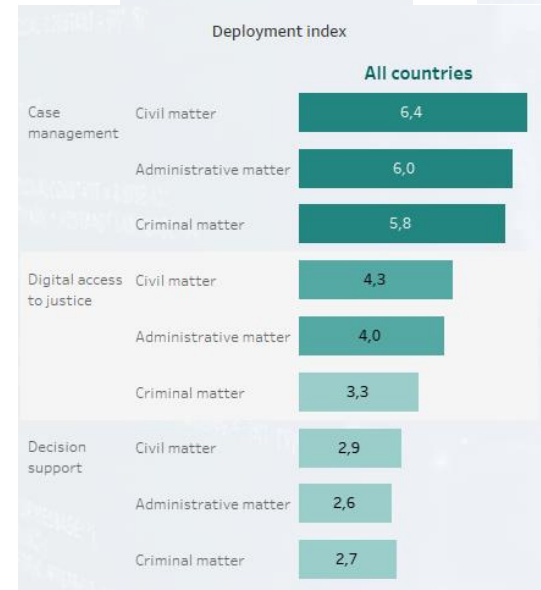
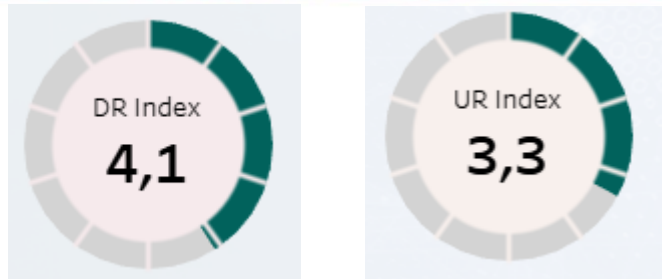


Prosecution services

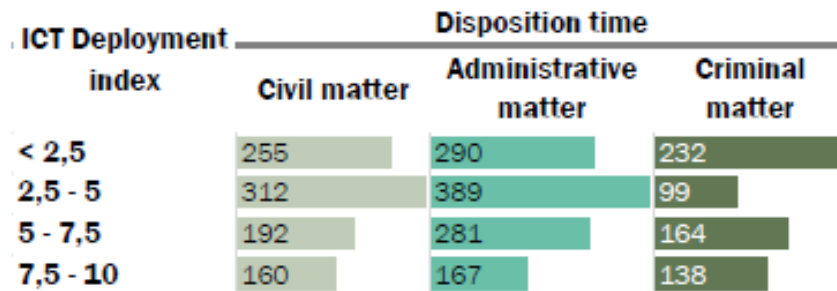


Judicial digitalisation (ICT)

1. Basic infrastructure (case management)
2. Electronic communication and access (digital access)
3. Advanced tools (decision support)



Is digitalisation improving efficiency?



If the country has higher ICT deployment index, it will probably also be more efficient.

Challenges and priorities

- AI use in the judiciary is limited
- Access to justice for vulnerable groups is insufficient
- Judicial budgets increase, but allocation is imbalanced
- Backlogs remain a major rule of law challenge
- Data gaps limit understanding of judicial realities
- CEPEJ is committed to adapting to evolving needs

HUMAN RIGHTS,
DEMOCRACY
AND THE RULE OF LAW

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

DROITS DE L'HOMME,
DÉMOCRATIE
ET ÉTAT DE DROIT

Thank you for your attention

