

# EU action: PROTECTION for Victims

EN



*"I can't face the thought of standing up in court and telling everyone what happened to me..."*  
*"I'm scared he will hurt me again..."*  
*"I wish they would all just leave me alone..."*  
*"No one understands me..."*

Under the new EU laws, all EU countries would have to ensure that the **privacy and integrity of victims is protected** throughout the legal process.

## What would this mean in practice?

### ▪ Protection from further trauma

Victims should not be made to re-live their experiences during police interrogations or in court. This can usually be avoided by ensuring proper safeguards and requiring all the agencies involved in a case to cooperate with each other. When necessary, judges should be able to hold hearings outside the courtroom via video link or in a private session.

### ▪ Avoiding contact with offenders

Victims should not have to fear retaliation or intimidation from their attacker. This can involve

placing a restraining order barring the offender from contacting the victim in any way, or ensuring they do not meet in a police or court waiting room.

### ▪ Protecting privacy

Victims should be protected from excessive media attention. Their personal data, including photographs, should be used only for the purposes of the case.

### ▪ Sensitive treatment by trained professionals

Some people need especially sensitive treatment. Children, in particular, should only ever be questioned by specially trained professionals, and always in the presence of someone the child trusts. Similarly, victims of sexual violence should be treated with sensitivity, by people trained to understand the nature and specificities of what they have experienced.

### From this...

*"I was raped when I was 17. In court I had to explain why I was wearing a short dress when I was attacked. They let my attacker ask me questions about my private life. I was completely humiliated by the experience. If I'd known this at the start I'm not sure I'd have ever spoken up."*

### ...to this

*"My husband used to beat me. The police put a restraining order on him and gave me a personal alarm. During the trial, my son and I were allowed to wait in a separate room and give evidence on a video camera. A child expert was there to help us. Later, they warned me when my husband was released from prison and made sure my protection order was transferred when I moved back to my home country. I'm not afraid anymore."*