

[Home](#) > ... > [Your Rights](#) > [Defendants \(criminal Proceedings\)](#) > Portugal

Defendants (criminal proceedings)

Content provided by:

Portugal



Portugal

The following factsheets explain what happens when a person is suspected of or accused of a crime which is dealt with by a trial in court.

Summary of the criminal process

The following is a summary of the normal stages in a criminal process:

- The investigation establishes whether a crime has been committed and identifies who by, and ends with a decision to prosecute or to close the investigation;
- The “instruction” or inquiry stage is optional, depending on the charge, the defendant, or the plaintiff or civil party in the criminal process. It ends with a decision by the Examining Magistrate whether or not to commit the suspect to trial;
- The trial comprises the court hearing.

Details about all of these stages in the process and about your rights can be found in the factsheets. This information is not a substitute for legal advice and is intended to be for guidance only.

Role of the European Commission

Please note that the European Commission has no role in criminal proceedings in Member States and cannot assist you if you have a complaint. Information is provided in these factsheets about how to complain and to whom.

Click on the links below to find the information that you need

[1 - My rights during the investigation](#)

[2 - My rights during trial](#)

[3 - My rights after the trial](#)

Related links

[Portuguese Bar Association](#)

[Public Prosecutor's Office](#)

[Portuguese Justice Portal](#)

■ Last update: 25/09/2025

The national language version of this page is maintained by the respective Member State. The translations have been done by the European Commission service. Possible changes introduced in the original by the competent national authority may

not be yet reflected in the translations. The European Commission accepts no responsibility or liability whatsoever with regard to any information or data contained or referred to in this document. Please refer to the legal notice to see copyright rules for the Member State responsible for this page.