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**Defendants (criminal proceedings)**

Sweden

These factsheets explain what happens when a person is suspected of or accused of a crime which is dealt with by a trial in court. For information on minor offences like road traffic offences, which are usually dealt with by a fixed penalty like a fine, go to Factsheet 5. If you are the victim of a crime, you can find full information about your rights here.

#### **Summary of the criminal process**

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

A crime is reported to the police;

The criminal investigation (preliminary investigation) is carried out by the police; in the case of more serious crimes the investigation is led by the prosecutor;

There is a possibility in the majority of cases of getting a public defence counsel;

In the case of more serious or repeated crimes the prosecutor may ask the court for you to be held in detention. A special detention hearing will then take place;

The prosecutor brings a prosecution in the district court;

The district court holds a trial (main hearing) to examine whether it is proven that you have committed the crime and, if so, to decide on sanctions etc;

If an appeal is lodged by any of the parties, the Court of Appeal examines whether the district court's judgment should be confirmed or changed;

In a few cases the judgment can also be reviewed by the Supreme Court;

The judgment becomes legally enforceable, that is to say final, and the sentence will be enforced if there has been a conviction.

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. If you need assistance, always check with a lawyer or other expert to establish what applies in your particular situation.

#### **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 – Getting legal advice](#)

[2 – My rights during the investigation of a crime](#)

questioning

arrest

detention

continuing police investigation

preparation of the case by the defence

prosecution

[3 – My rights during the trial](#)

[4 – My rights after the trial](#)

[5 – Road traffic offences](#)

#### **Related links**

[Swedish Courts](#)

[Swedish Prosecution Authority](#)

[Swedish Bar Association](#)

[Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority](#)

[Swedish Prison and Probation Service](#)

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