

The justice system is
NOT WORKING FOR ALL

LEARN AND SHARE

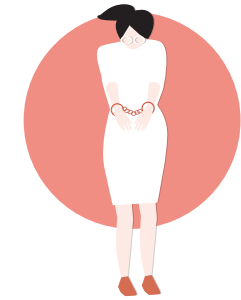
FIREWALL and JUSTICE

Unequal access to justice due to immigration status
AFFECTS LIVES

Undocumented person
experiences a crime.



Undocumented person
witnesses a crime.



CRIME VICTIM ARRESTED
because of
immigration status.



The undocumented
WITNESS RISKS ARREST
if they come forward.

PERPETRATOR GOES FREE



CRITICAL EVIDENCE ABOUT THE CRIME IS LOST



Find out how the 'firewall' works in practice, and what you can do
WWW.PICUM.ORG

+32 2 210 17 80



info@picum.org

@PICUM_post

Rue du Congrès /
Congresstraat 37-41,
post box 5
1000 Brussels Belgium



facebook.com/picum.org

 **PICUM.ORG/FIREWALL**



Building trust,
promoting safe societies

Claudia is a Brazilian national who was forced to come to Europe by her husband, who threatened to take away her child if she didn't move with him. When they arrived, he refused to apply for a spousal visa for her. Claudia's visitor's visa expired, and she became undocumented. Claudia continued to experience sexual and psychological abuse by her husband, who withheld and hid her documents. When she reported her abuse, the police refused to take photos of her bruises and reported her to the immigration authorities. Claudia separated from her husband and became destitute. She is now applying for residence permit on the basis of her daughter's citizenship and stays in a shelter. A judge has refused to give her custody of her child because of her insecure residence permit status.

Courtesy of Latin American Women's Rights Service (LAWRS)

To be able to serve and protect, we need to know what our society requires concerning safety and security. The Amsterdam police organizes dialogues with undocumented migrants to get to know their needs concerning safety and security. This can be if they are the victim of a crime but also if they are the witness of a crime. The aim is to ensure access to justice to all victims of crime, tackle impunity of perpetrators and increase trust in the police. We also disseminate a small card, explaining how undocumented migrants can safely report to the police, in different languages in migrant communities. In addition, it is very important to keep training police officers to be aware of everyone's right to report safely. We see that more people are coming forward independently now to report crimes and that trust has increased.

Ramon Arnhem, Program Director, "Everyone's Police", Amsterdam Police


Who is an Undocumented Migrant?

Undocumented (or irregular) migrants are people who do not have authorisation to stay in the country they are in. Some entered the country irregularly. Many had authorisation at some point, and later lost it - perhaps due to an unsuccessful application for international protection, expiry or loss of a permit that is dependent on a particular job or personal relationship.



When police officers arrest victims and witnesses of crime because they are undocumented, public safety and trust suffer.

With support from:
 **OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS** SIGRID RAUSING TRUST

 With financial support from the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation "EaSI" (2014-2020). For further information please consult: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/eaesi>. The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the official position of the European Commission.

 **PICUM**
PLATFORM FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ON UNDOCUMENTED MIGRANTS

HOW CAN WE SOLVE THIS?

WHAT CAN WE ACHIEVE?

THE FIREWALL

When local police prioritise public safety and victims' rights over immigration enforcement

"Without public confidence, the police will struggle to tackle threats to public safety and security, undermining the fundamental basis of our democracy."

Source: Eurocop Charter 2025



Undocumented person experiences a crime.

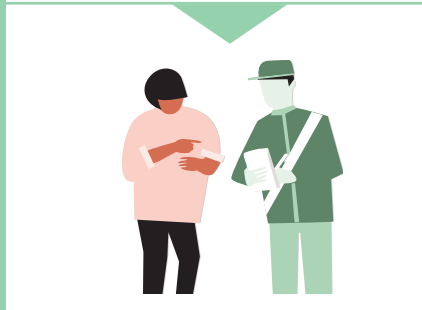


PERPETRATOR ARRESTED
regardless of victim's migration status.

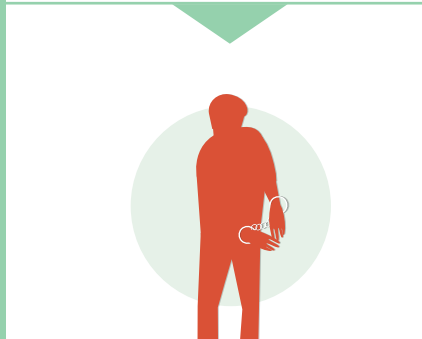


Victim receives **SUPPORT**

Undocumented person witnesses a crime.



They do not fear authorities and come forward to **REPORT THE INCIDENT**



PERPETRATOR ARRESTED

- Perpetrator is apprehended
- Incident is properly investigated
- Victim is referred to support services
- Undocumented witness comes forward to report incident
- Victims and witnesses do not face possible deportation for coming forward
- Police pursue leads and apprehend offender



- Trust in police and justice system
- Safer communities
- Reduced impunity for crime
- Improved crime prevention
- More efficient use of resources
- Support and referrals for victims of crime
- Public safety prioritised