

FIREWALL and JUSTICE

Building trust, promoting safe societies

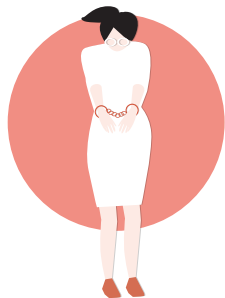


 **PICUM**

PLATFORM FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ON
UNDOCUMENTED MIGRANTS

The justice system is
NOT WORKING FOR ALL

Undocumented person
experiences a crime.



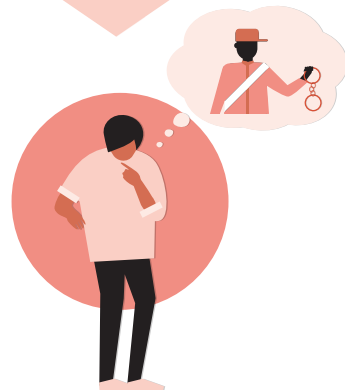
CRIME VICTIM ARRESTED

because of
immigration status.

**PERPETRATOR
GOES FREE**



Undocumented person
witnesses a crime.



The undocumented
WITNESS RISKS ARREST

if they come forward.

**CRITICAL EVIDENCE
ABOUT THE CRIME IS LOST**



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

Unequal access to justice due to immigration status
AFFECTS LIVES

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.



HOW CAN WE SOLVE THIS?

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.

Undocumented person witnesses a crime.



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



Victim receives **SUPPORT**



PERPETRATOR ARRESTED



Perpetrator is apprehended



Incident is **properly investigated**



Victim is referred to **support services**



Undocumented witness comes forward to report incident

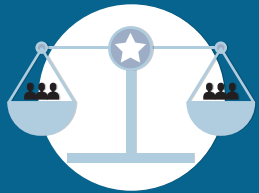


Victims and witnesses **do not face possible deportation** for coming forward



Police pursue leads and apprehend offender

WHAT CAN WE ACHIEVE?



Trust in police
and justice system



Safer
communities



Reduced
impunity for crime



Improved
crime prevention



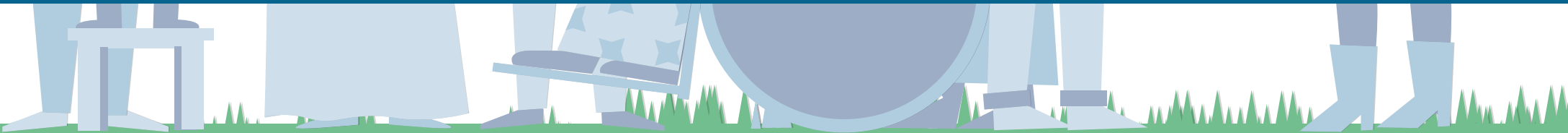
More efficient
use of resources



Support and referrals
for victims of crime



Public
safety prioritised



LEARN AND SHARE



Find out how the
'firewall' works in
practice, and what
you can do



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