



**HUMAN RIGHTS,
DEMOCRACY
AND THE RULE OF LAW**

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

**DROITS HUMAINS,
DÉMOCRATIE
ET ÉTAT DE DROIT**



ALBANIA ALBANIE ANDORRA ANDORRE ARMENIA ARMENIE AUSTRIA AUTRICHE AZERBAIJAN AZERBAÏDIJAN BELGIUM BELGIQUE BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA BOSNIE-HERZÈGOVINE BULGARIA BULGARIE CROATIA CROATIE CYPRUS CHYPRE CZECHIA TCHÉQUIE DENMARK DANEMARK ESTONIA ESTONIE FINLAND FINLANDE FRANCE FRANCE GEORGIA GEORGIE GERMANY ALLEMAGNE GREECE GRÈCE HUNGARY HONGRIE ICELAND ISLANDE IRELAND IRLANDE ITALY ITALIE LATVIA LETTONIE LIECHTENSTEIN LIECHTENSTEIN LITHUANIA LITUANIE LUXEMBOURG LUXEMBOURG MALTA MALTE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA REPUBLIQUE DE MOLDOVA MONACO MONACO MONTENEGRO MONTÈNEGRO NETHERLANDS PAYS-BAS NORTH MACEDONIA MACÉDOINE DU NORD NORWAY NORVEGE POLAND POLOGNE PORTUGAL PORTUGAL ROMANIA ROUMANIE SAN MARINO SAINT-MARIN SERBIA SERBIE SLOVAK REPUBLIC RÉPUBLIQUE SLOVAQUE SLOVENIA SLOVÉNIE SPAIN ESPAGNE SWEDEN SUÈDE SWITZERLAND SUISSE TÜRKIYE TÜRKIYE UKRAINE UKRAÏNE UNITED KINGDOM ROYAUME-UNI ALBANIA ALBANIE ANDORRA ANDORRE ARMENIA ARMENIE AUSTRIA AUTRICHE AZERBAIJAN AZERBAÏDIJAN BELGIUM BELGIQUE BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA BOSNIE-HERZÈGOVINE BULGARIA BULGARIE CROATIA CROATIE CYPRUS CHYPRE CZECHIA TCHÉQUIE DENMARK DANEMARK ESTONIA ESTONIE FINLAND FINLANDE FRANCE FRANCE GEORGIA GEORGIE GERMANY ALLEMAGNE GREECE GRÈCE HUNGARY HONGRIE ICELAND ISLANDE IRELAND IRLANDE ITALY ITALIE LATVIA LETTONIE LIECHTENSTEIN LIECHTENSTEIN LITHUANIA LITUANIE LUXEMBOURG LUXEMBOURG MALTA MALTE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA REPUBLIQUE DE MOLDOVA MONACO MONACO MONTENEGRO MONTÈNEGRO NETHERLANDS PAYS-BAS NORTH MACEDONIA MACÉDOINE DU NORD NORWAY NORVEGE POLAND POLOGNE PORTUGAL PORTUGAL ROMANIA ROUMANIE SAN MARINO SAINT-MARIN SERBIA SERBIE SLOVAK REPUBLIC RÉPUBLIQUE SLOVAQUE SLOVENIA SLOVÉNIE SPAIN ESPAGNE SWEDEN SUÈDE SWITZERLAND SUISSE TÜRKIYE TÜRKIYE UKRAINE UKRAÏNE UNITED KINGDOM ROYAUME-UNI

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**46 MEMBER STATES
700 MILLION EUROPEANS**

INTRODUCTION

Established on 5 May 1949 (Treaty of London) by 10 states

Comprises 46 member states today

Based in Strasbourg (France)

Intergovernmental political Organisation,
founded on three main values:
human rights, democracy and the rule of law

MAIN AREAS



INSTITUTIONS AND BODIES

[Secretary General](#)

[Committee of Ministers](#)

[Parliamentary Assembly](#)

[Congress of Local and Regional Authorities](#)

[European Court of Human Rights](#)

[Commissioner for Human Rights](#)

[Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations \(INGO\)](#)



THE SECRETARY GENERAL

- responsible for the strategic planning of the Organisation
- co-ordinates its activities and budget
- manages the Secretariat (2500 staff members)
- **Alain Berset** (Switzerland) took office on 18 September 2024 for a five-year term
- has established the [New Democratic Pact for Europe](#)



THE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS

Decision-making body

- comprises the foreign ministers of all the member states, or their ambassadors
- adopts legal instruments (recommendations, conventions) and approves the Organisation's budget
- supervises the execution of the judgements delivered by the European Court of Human Rights
- meets annually at ministerial level and several times a month (ambassadors)



THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

Forum for debates and proposals

- represents the 46 national parliaments:
306 members and their substitutes (2 to 18 per delegation)
- is responsible for many conventions
- elects the judges of the European Court of Human Rights, the Commissioner for Human Rights and the Secretary General
- meets in four public plenary sessions per year



THE CONGRESS

Voice of local
and regional democracy

- comprises 612 local and regional representatives reflecting over 130 000 municipalities and regions in Europe
- supervises the implementation of the European Charter of Local Self-Government and observes elections
- holds two public plenary sessions a year



THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Judiciary body

- is composed of 46 judges based permanently in Strasbourg
- supervises the implementation of the [European Convention on Human Rights](#)
- is accessible to individuals and governments
- has so far delivered 28 600 judgements (December 2025)



THE COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

An independent voice

- promotes awareness and respect for human rights
- issues state and thematic reports after on-site visits
- **Michael O'Flaherty** (Ireland) elected for a six-year non-renewable term in 2024



THE CONFERENCE OF INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

- comprises some 250 INGOs with participatory status
- is the voice of civil society in the Council of Europe
- provides a vital and dynamic link between politicians and citizens
- meets twice a year during plenary sessions

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

More than 220 treaties, including on the following topics...

Abolition of death penalty

Prevention of torture

Cultural convention

European Social Charter

Protection of national minorities

Anti-doping

Cybercrime

Human trafficking

Sexual exploitation of children

Violence against women and domestic violence

Medicrime

European pharmacopoeia

Artificial intelligence



MULTI-FACETED CO-OPERATION



Observer states

Neighbourhood Partners

Parliamentary Partners for democracy

Partial agreements

External & Liaison offices

Union européenne, ONU, OSCE

THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

Two separate organisations with complementary roles



A strategic partnership

Joint programmes

Ratification of 15 conventions
by the European Union

Accession of the Union to the
European Convention on Human Rights

EUROPEAN SYMBOLS

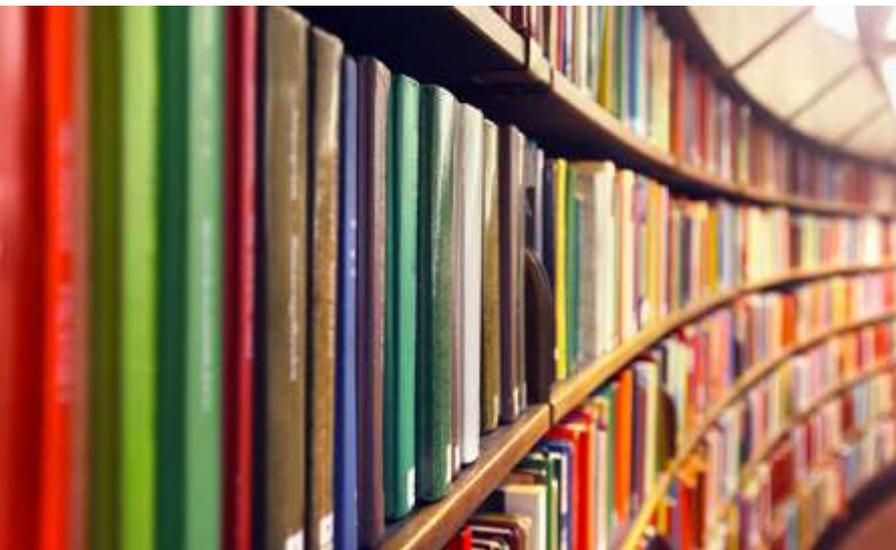
THE EUROPEAN FLAG

Created by the Council of Europe in 1955
and adopted by the European Union in 1985

THE EUROPEAN ANTHEM

Prelude to the « *Ode to Joy* », Beethoven's 9th Symphony
chosen by the Council of Europe in 1972
and adopted by the EU in 1985

MORE INFORMATION



FREE RESOURCES edoc.coe.int
BOOKSHOP book.coe.int

[SOME VIDEOS](#)

HUMAN RIGHTS CHANNEL
LA CHAÎNE DES DROITS HUMAINS

Council of Europe

46 Member States



All references to literary, scientific or technical works, institutions, organizations, or persons shall be understood in full accordance with the information found in Council documents (LRA) and in the glossary at the end of this document.

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BACK



BUILDINGS OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

STRASBOURG

Palais de l'Europe



Human Rights Building

[European Youth Center](#)



European Directorate for the Quality of Medicines & Healthcare (EDQM)



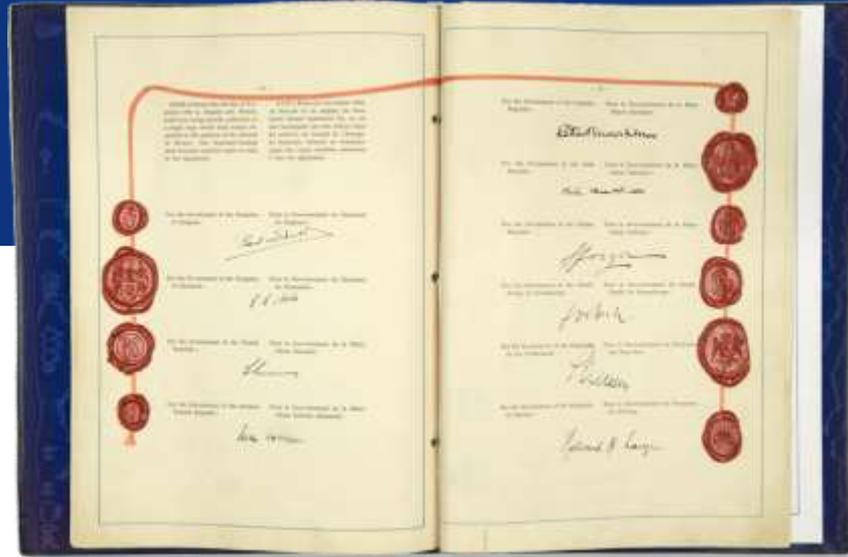
[BACK](#)

Agora



THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Signed in 1950



IT GUARANTEES

- Freedom of thought, conscience and religion
- Freedom of expression
- The right of education
- Free elections
- The right to a fair trial

IT PROHIBITS

- Torture
- Slavery and hard labour
- Discrimination
- The death penalty





THE EUROPEAN YOUTH CENTRES

in Strasbourg and Budapest

- run training activities for 5000 youth association leaders and support projects of of 15000 young people thanks to the European Youth Foundation
- organise « youth peace camps » gathering young people coming from conflict-stricken regions
- launch campaigns such as the « No Hate Speech Movement » 
- decide on priorities and programmes through a unique « co-management » system including youth organisations and government representatives

OBSERVER STATES with the Council of Europe

Canada, Holy See, Japan, Mexico and USA

NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERS

Morocco and Tunisia

PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

Parliaments with Observer status: Canada, Israel and Mexico

Parliaments with Partner for Democracy status:
Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco and Palestine*

EXTERNAL OFFICES

Ankara, Baku, Belgrade,
Bucharest, Chisinau, Kyiv, Paris,
Podgorica, Pristina, Rabat,
Sarajevo, Skopje, Tbilisi, Tirana,
Tunis, Venice and Yerevan

LIAISON OFFICES

Brussels (EU), Geneva (UN),
Vienna (OSCE, UN) and
Warsaw (ODIHR)

*This designation should not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Council of Europe member States on this issue

[Council of Europe Development Bank](#)
[European Directorate for the Quality of Medicines & Healthcare \(EDQM\)](#)
[Pompidou Group](#)
[EUR-OPA Major Hazards](#)
[Eurimages](#)
[North-South Centre \(Lisbon\)](#)
[Venice Commission](#)
[Partial Agreement on the Youth Card](#)
[European Audiovisual Observatory](#)
[European Centre for Modern Languages \(Graz\)](#)
[GRECO \(Group of States against Corruption\)](#)
[EPAS \(Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport\)](#)
[Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes](#)
[Enlarged Partial Agreement on the Observatory History Teaching in Europe](#)
[Register of Damage caused by the aggression of the
Russian Federation against Ukraine](#)



[Corporate film](#)



[Film 75th Anniversary](#)



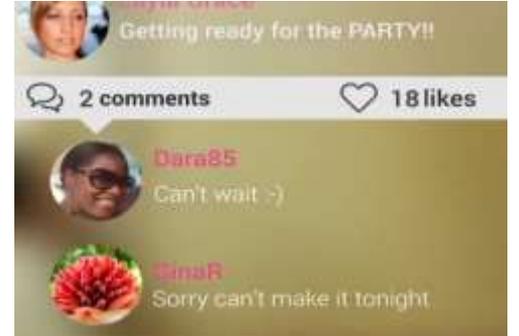
[European Court of Human Rights](#)



[Fight against stereotypes](#)



[Data protection](#)



[No hate speech](#)