



LANZAROTE COMMITTEE

Committee of the Parties to
the Council of Europe Convention on
the protection of children against
sexual exploitation and
sexual abuse

Rules of Procedure

adopted by the Committee
on 30 March 2012

and revised on 17 March 2016
and on 6 December 2022

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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French edition:
Comité de Lanzarote
Règlement intérieur

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Cover design and layout:
Documents and Publications
Production Department
(DPDP), Council of Europe

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Printed at the Council of Europe

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The Committee of the Parties (hereinafter “the Lanzarote Committee”),

Having regard to Chapter X of the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (CETS No. 201) (hereinafter referred to as “the Convention”),

Pursuant to paragraph 3 of Article 39 of the Convention,

Adopts the present Rules of Procedure:

Part I – The Lanzarote Committee

Rule 1 – Functions

1.1 Monitoring of the implementation of the Convention

Pursuant to paragraphs 1 and 3 of Article 41 of the Convention and in accordance with Part II of these rules, the Lanzarote Committee shall monitor the implementation of the Convention and, where appropriate:

- a.** facilitate the effective use and implementation of the Convention, including the identification of any problems and the effects of any declaration or reservation made under the Convention;
- b.** express an opinion on any question concerning the application of the Convention.

1.2 Exchange of information, experiences and good practices

Pursuant to paragraphs 2 and 3 of Article 41 of the Convention and in accordance with Part III of these rules, the Lanzarote Committee shall facilitate the collection, analysis and exchange of information, experiences and good practices between States to improve their capacity to prevent and combat sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children. Where appropriate, the Lanzarote Committee shall:

- a. facilitate the exchange of information on significant legal, policy or technological developments;
- b. express an opinion on any question concerning the application of the Convention.

Rule 2 – Composition

2.1 Members

1. Pursuant to Article 39 of the Convention, members of the Lanzarote Committee shall be representatives of the Parties to the Convention.¹

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1. Pursuant to Article 45 of the Convention, the member States of the Council of Europe, the non-member States which have participated in its elaboration and the European Union may become Parties to the Convention. Pursuant to the procedure set out in Article 46 of the Convention also any non-member State of the Council of Europe, which has not participated in the elaboration of the Convention may become a Party. According to Article 2.g of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (1969), a State Party should be understood as a “State which has consented to be bound by the treaty and for which the treaty is in force”.

2. Parties to the Convention shall nominate – as their representatives – experts of the highest possible rank in the field of children’s rights, in particular in the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.

3. Each member of the Lanzarote Committee may be accompanied by other national representatives. Where a Party designates more than one representative, only one of them shall have the right to vote and reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses. The Party which holds the Chairmanship of the Lanzarote Committee may appoint an additional expert who will be reimbursed for travel and subsistence expenses. Only one representative of that Party shall have the right to vote.

4. Each Party that nominates a representative pursuant to paragraph 2 shall strive, insofar as possible, and within the limit of what is compatible with the representative’s national duties, to nominate that representative for a term of office of at least two years.

5. The Lanzarote Committee may decide on measures to restrict the participation in its work of a Party that has ceased to be a member of the Council of Europe, following a decision by the Committee of Ministers in the context of a procedure launched under Article 8 of the Statute of the Council of Europe for a serious violation of Article 3 of the Statute. Similarly, measures restricting the participation of a Party can be taken in respect of any non-member state of the Council of Europe concerned by a Committee of Ministers’ decision restricting or suspending its relations with it due to serious breaches of international law comparable to a serious violation of Article 3 of the Statute. No measures contravening the rights of the States Parties under the Convention may be imposed. No participants or observers shall

be present during the Committee's examination of the matter. Voting shall be in accordance with Rule 18 paragraph 2 and the decision taken shall have immediate effect. Any reconsideration of the decision shall be in accordance with Rule 17 and shall be carried out as swiftly as possible. The Chairperson shall ensure the orderly implementation of the decision in the interest of the effective functioning of the Committee.

2.2 Participants

1. The following may appoint representatives to participate in the meetings of the Lanzarote Committee with no right to vote:

- a.* the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe;
- b.* the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe;
- c.* the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights;
- d.* relevant Council of Europe intergovernmental committees;
- e.* the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe;
- f.* any other Council of Europe body invited to do so by the Committee of Ministers after consulting the Lanzarote Committee.

Where applicable, the defrayal of expenses of these participants shall be governed by the rules or terms of reference of the institutions and bodies listed above.

2. The following may appoint representatives to participate in the meetings of the Lanzarote Committee with no right to vote nor defrayal of expenses:

- a.* member States of the Council of Europe that are not yet Parties to the Convention;
- b.* States which have observer status with the Council of Europe;
- c.* States invited to accede to the Convention;
- d.* the European Union and its agencies;
- e.* the United Nations and its specialised agencies;
- f.* Europol;
- g.* Interpol;
- h.* the World Health Organisation;
- i.* the International Organisation of La Francophonie;
- j.* the Council of the Baltic Sea States;
- k.* the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children;
- l.* the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions;
- m.* other intergovernmental organisations and any other entity authorised to participate in meetings of steering and ad hoc committees by virtue of a resolution or decision of the Committee of Ministers.

2.3 Observers

1. Pursuant to paragraph 3 of Article 40 of the Convention, representatives of civil society, in particular of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), may be admitted as observers to the Lanzarote Committee following the procedure set out in Resolution CM/Res(2021)3 on intergovernmental committees

and subordinate bodies, their terms of reference and working methods.²

2. The Lanzarote Committee may also authorise, on an ad hoc basis, the participation as observers of representatives of additional bodies, in particular:

- a.** private sector organisations involved in information and communication;
- b.** tourism and travel agencies;
- c.** financial institutions;
- d.** other relevant civil society actors.

3. In accordance with Resolution CM/Res(2021)3, observers shall have no right to vote nor defrayal of expenses.

Rule 3 – Chairperson

1. The Lanzarote Committee shall elect a chairperson and a vice-chairperson from among its members.

2. The chairperson shall conduct proceedings and sum up conclusions whenever she/he thinks necessary. She/he may call to order a speaker who departs from the subject under discussion

2. See Point III.C.8.a of Resolution CM/Res(2021)3: “as a general rule, upon their request to the Secretary General, observers are admitted, to steering and ad hoc committees or any subordinate body answerable to them, on the basis of a unanimous decision by that steering or ad hoc committee; in the event where unanimity is not reached, the matter may be referred to the Committee of Ministers at the request of two-thirds of the members of the committee concerned. The Committee of Ministers shall decide on the matter by a two-thirds majority of all the representatives entitled to sit on it.”

or from the Lanzarote Committee's functions set out in Rule 1 above. The chairperson shall retain the right to speak and to vote in her/his capacity as a member of the Lanzarote Committee, except in cases where an additional expert from the same Party has been appointed to sit on the Lanzarote Committee.

3. The vice-chairperson shall replace the chairperson if the latter is absent or otherwise unable to preside at the meeting. If the vice-chairperson is absent, the chairperson shall be replaced by another member of the bureau, appointed by the latter, or where there is no bureau, by a member of the Lanzarote Committee appointed by the Lanzarote Committee.

4. The terms of office of the chairperson and vice-chairperson shall be of two years, renewable once.

5. The election of the chairperson and vice-chairperson shall require a two-thirds majority at the first ballot and a simple majority at the second ballot. The elections are held by secret ballot, unless the Lanzarote Committee decides otherwise by unanimity.

6. The Lanzarote Committee shall strive to achieve gender balance, as well as geographical balance while electing its chairperson and vice-chairperson.

Rule 4 – Bureau

1. The Lanzarote Committee shall appoint a bureau consisting of the chairperson, the vice-chairperson and up to five other members of the Lanzarote Committee. The functions of the bureau are:

- a.** to assist the chairperson in conducting the Lanzarote Committee's business;

- b. to supervise the preparation of meetings at the Lanzarote Committee's request;
 - c. to ensure continuity between meetings as necessary;
 - d. to execute other additional specific tasks delegated by the Lanzarote Committee.
2. The other members of the bureau shall be elected in the same manner as the chairperson and vice-chairperson, taking into account geographical distribution and gender balance. Their terms of office shall be of two years, renewable once.

Rule 5 – Secretariat

The Secretary General of the Council of Europe shall provide the Lanzarote Committee with the necessary staff, including an executive secretary, as well as with the administrative and other services it may require.

Rule 6 – Languages

1. The official languages of the Lanzarote Committee shall be those of the Council of Europe, namely French and English.
2. A member of the Lanzarote Committee may speak in a language other than the official languages. In this case, the member concerned shall be responsible for arranging interpretation into one of the official languages at her/his expense.
3. Any document written in a language other than the official languages shall be translated into one of the official languages; the member, participant or observer submitting it being responsible for making the necessary arrangements and covering the costs.

Rule 7 – Venue of meetings

1. The Lanzarote Committee shall as a general rule be convened at the premises of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.
2. Exceptionally, the Secretary General may authorise the convening of the Lanzarote Committee elsewhere, in particular in other Council of Europe premises, if there is no objection from the government of the State on whose territory it is intended to hold the meeting and if suitable technical facilities are available, in accordance with the principles of sound management and within the resources available.
3. If deemed appropriate, the meetings of the Lanzarote Committee may be held by videoconference or in a hybrid nature, in conditions permitting confidentiality of discussions and also interpretation in the Council of Europe's official languages.

Rule 8 – Convening of meetings

1. Pursuant to paragraph 2 of Article 39 of the Convention, the Lanzarote Committee shall meet whenever at least one third of the Parties or the Secretary General so requests. It shall hold such meetings as are required for the exercise of its functions as set out in Rule 1.
2. The meetings shall be convened by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe in accordance with the single procedure set out in Resolution CM/Res(2021)3. The place, date and opening time of the meeting, its probable duration and the subjects to be dealt with shall be communicated to all members, participants and observers. Convocations shall be circulated six weeks in advance of the meeting, except in cases of urgency which shall be duly explained.

3. Members, participants and observers who are unable to attend a meeting or a part thereof shall notify, in due time, the secretariat who shall inform the chairperson.

Rule 9 – Agenda

1. The secretariat, in close consultation with the chairperson, shall draw up the draft agenda which shall be concrete, operational and result oriented.

2. The agenda shall be adopted by the Lanzarote Committee at the beginning of the meeting.

Rule 10 – Documents, list of decisions and meeting reports

1. The secretariat shall submit the working documents in advance to the Chair for his/her information and possible consideration.

2. The secretariat shall be responsible for distributing all the working documents for the meetings of the Lanzarote Committee.

3. Documents requiring a decision shall be sent, in the official languages, to members at least three weeks before the opening of the meeting at which the decision is to be taken. However, in exceptional cases, if no member objects, the Lanzarote Committee may deliberate on a document submitted at a later stage.

4. Documents shall be made public after the meeting of the Lanzarote Committee for which they were prepared, unless the Lanzarote Committee decides otherwise.

5. At the end of each meeting, the executive secretary shall submit to the Lanzarote Committee a list of the decisions taken

during the meeting for its approval. Unless the Lanzarote Committee decides otherwise, the list of decisions shall be made public.

6. No later than one month after the last meeting day, the secretariat shall submit a draft meeting report to the chairperson for her/his approval. The draft report is then sent to all members, participants and observers who may suggest amendments to the draft report within ten working days. In consultation with the chairperson, the secretariat finalises the meeting report as soon as possible and makes it public.

7. Information and communication technologies should be used whenever possible. In this connection, videoconference tools may be used as indicated in Rule 7§3.

Rule 11 – Privacy of meetings

Meetings shall not be held in public, unless the Lanzarote Committee decides otherwise.

Rule 12 – Quorum

There shall be a quorum if a majority of the members of the Lanzarote Committee are present.

Rule 13 – Proposals

1. Any proposal must be submitted in writing in an official language if a member of the Lanzarote Committee so requests. In that case it shall not be discussed until the proposal has been circulated.

2. Proposals made by participants and observers may be put to a vote if they are submitted at least two weeks before the opening of the meeting at which the proposal is to be discussed.

3. Proposals made by participants and observers during the meeting may be put to a vote if sponsored by one member of the Lanzarote Committee.

Rule 14 – Order of voting on proposals or amendments

1. Where a number of proposals relate to the same subject, they shall be put to a vote in the order in which they were submitted. In case of doubt, the chairperson shall decide.

2. Where a proposal is the subject of an amendment, the amendment shall be put to a vote first. Where two or more amendments to the same proposal are presented, the Lanzarote Committee shall vote first on whichever departs furthest in substance from the original proposal. It shall then vote on the next furthest removed from the original proposal, and so on until all the amendments have been put to a vote. However, where the acceptance of one amendment necessarily entails rejection of another, the latter shall not be put to a vote. The final vote shall then be taken on the proposal as amended or not. Where there is a doubt as to the order of priority, the chairperson shall decide.

3. Parts of a proposal or amendment may be voted on separately.

4. In the case of proposals with financial implications, the most costly shall be put to a vote first.

Rule 15 – Points of order

During the discussion of any matter, a member of the Lanzarote Committee may at any time raise a point of order which shall

immediately be decided upon by the chairperson in accordance with these rules. Any appeal against the decision of the chairperson shall immediately be put to a vote. A member may not, in raising a point of order, speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.

Rule 16 – Order of procedural motions

Procedural motions shall take precedence over all other motions except points of order. They shall be put to a vote in the following order:

- a.* suspension of the sitting;
- b.* adjournment of the debate on the topic being discussed;
- c.* postponement of a decision on the substance of a proposal until a specified date;
- d.* closure of the discussion on the topic.

Rule 17 – Reconsideration of a question

When a decision has been taken, re-examination may only occur if a member of the Lanzarote Committee so requests, and if this request receives a two-thirds majority of the votes cast.

Rule 18 – Voting

- 1.** Each member of the Lanzarote Committee shall have one vote. Where the delegation of a Party is composed of more than one representative, only one is entitled to take part in voting.
- 2.** Voting requires a quorum. The decisions of the Lanzarote Committee are taken by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast.

3. Procedural matters shall be settled by a majority of the votes cast.
4. If any question arises as to whether a matter is procedural or not, it shall not be treated as procedural unless the Lanzarote Committee so decides by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast.
5. In the case of a vote by written procedure, the secretariat shall transmit to members, on the Chair's instruction, the draft decision to be voted upon together with a voting form indicating the deadline by which members must ensure that their vote reaches the secretariat of the Lanzarote Committee. In the case of a vote by secret ballot, the secretariat shall ensure the secrecy of the vote.
6. For the purposes of these rules "votes cast" shall mean the votes of members cast in favour or against. Members who abstain shall be regarded as not having cast a vote.
7. Voting may take place online as long as it is in conditions permitting confidentiality.

Rule 19 – Working parties

1. The Lanzarote Committee may, within the framework of its general functions whenever it is necessary and within the limits of resources available, set up ad hoc working parties to deal with specific matters.
2. The terms of reference of such a working party shall be defined by the Lanzarote Committee.

Rule 20 – Hearings

1. The chairperson, the bureau or the Lanzarote Committee may decide to organise hearings with any qualified persons,

including from civil society, who are in a position to contribute to the work of the Lanzarote Committee within the limits of resources available.

2. These hearings may also serve as a means of receiving contributions from children in the form of views expressed by them on the themes covered by the Committee's monitoring round.

3. These hearings of children carried out pursuant to paragraph 2 shall:

- a. respect the geographical balance of the Parties to the Lanzarote Committee;
- b. be based on voluntary participation by children and conducted without discrimination on any grounds including race, ethnicity, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, disability, birth, sexual orientation or other status.

Rule 21 – Periodic reports to the Committee of Ministers

The Lanzarote Committee shall inform the Committee of Ministers on the state of its work regularly and at least once a year.

Part II – Monitoring of the implementation of the Convention

Rule 22 – General principles

1. While carrying out its functions, the Lanzarote Committee respects the internationally recognised requirement to apply the principle of the best interests of the child.

2. The Lanzarote Committee also respects the international instruments on the protection of children's rights referred to in the preamble of the Convention as well as those adopted subsequently such as the Guidelines of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on Child Friendly Justice adopted on 17 November 2010.

Rule 23 – General overview

1. Following ratification and within six months from the entry into force of the Lanzarote Convention in respect of the Party concerned, every Party to the Convention shall be required to reply to a questionnaire aimed at providing the Lanzarote Committee with a general overview of the legislation, institutional framework and policies for the implementation of the Convention at the national, regional and local levels. Thereafter, the Parties should regularly inform the Lanzarote Committee of any substantial changes to the situation described in their replies to the General Overview Questionnaire.

2. States having signed the Convention shall be invited to reply to the questionnaire referred to in paragraph 1 of this rule.

3. The secretariat shall compile the replies received.

Rule 24 – Thematic monitoring

1. The monitoring of the implementation of the Convention in the Parties shall be based on a procedure divided by rounds, each round concerning a theme decided by the Lanzarote Committee or any other approach deemed appropriate by the Lanzarote Committee within the scope of the Convention.

2. The Lanzarote Committee will determine the length of each monitoring round in the light of the themes selected and the provisions of the Convention to be monitored.
3. The monitoring round will be initiated by addressing a questionnaire on the implementation of the relevant provisions of the Convention with respect to the selected theme. The Parties shall respond to the questionnaire within the time-limit set by the Lanzarote Committee.

Rule 25 – Independent experts

1. The Lanzarote Committee may ask its executive secretary to commission the services of independent experts, within the limits of budgetary appropriations, to assist it in carrying out its monitoring tasks.
2. To this effect, the members, participants and observers of the Lanzarote Committee may suggest possible independent experts to the secretariat.

Rule 26 – Questionnaires

1. The Lanzarote Committee shall adopt the questionnaires referred to in Rule 23, paragraph 1 and in Rule 24, paragraph 3, which shall be prepared by the secretariat.
2. The secretariat shall address such questionnaires to the Parties through the member in the Lanzarote Committee representing the Party to be monitored and who will act as “contact person”.
3. Parties shall submit their replies in one of the official languages of the Council of Europe to the secretariat within the time limit set by the Lanzarote Committee. The replies shall be

detailed, answer all questions and contain all relevant reference texts. The replies shall be made public.

4. The Lanzarote Committee shall seek the views of the representatives of civil society and any other bodies involved in preventing and combating sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children on the implementation of the Convention by Parties, in particular by asking them to comment on the replies to the questionnaire submitted by the Parties or by any other means, in one of the official languages of the Council of Europe and within the time-limit set by the Lanzarote Committee. The secretariat transmits these comments to the Party(ies) concerned and makes them public.

5. The secretariat may request additional information if it appears that the replies are not exhaustive or are unclear. Where warranted, with the consent of the Party or Parties concerned and within the limits of budgetary appropriations, the Bureau of the Lanzarote Committee may decide to carry out a visit in the Party or Parties concerned to clarify the situation.

Rule 27 – Implementation reports

1. The Lanzarote Committee shall adopt reports on the implementation of the Convention. These shall be based on the information collected through the questionnaires (replies submitted by the Parties and comments thereon), and, if need be, by any other means the Lanzarote Committee deems necessary (such as through hearings of representatives of civil society and any other bodies involved in preventing and combating sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children or during meetings with authorities of the Party(ies) concerned or other stakeholders).

2. The implementation reports shall be prepared by rapporteurs appointed by the Lanzarote Committee, in cooperation with the secretariat and, if need be, with independent experts as defined in Rule 25.
3. The Lanzarote Committee shall decide at the early stages of the monitoring round whether it prepares implementation reports by Party or a thematic report for all Parties.
 - a. When the implementation reports are by Party, each Party shall receive a draft copy of its implementation report before it is sent to the Lanzarote Committee. This allows the Party to comment on the draft and clarify any misunderstandings before the draft report is sent to the Lanzarote Committee for examination and adoption.
 - b. When the implementation report covers all Parties, each Party has the opportunity to comment on the draft and clarify any misunderstandings throughout the drafting phase of the implementation report.
4. The implementation reports should contain at least the following elements:
 - a. a general description of the relevant legislation, case law or other documentation, including statistics, and a summary of good practices in implementing the Convention;
 - b. an overview of any problems in implementing the Convention and of the negative effects of any declaration or reservation made under the Convention;
 - c. conclusions containing recommendations as to the steps to be taken to improve the effective implementation of the Convention.

5. The implementation reports shall be transmitted to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe for information together with any comment from the Party concerned. They shall be made public on the day of their adoption by the Committee.
6. The Lanzarote Committee may on a regular basis ask Parties to inform it of the steps taken to implement its recommendations.

Rule 28 – Special reports and urgent situations

1. If the Lanzarote Committee receives reliable information indicating a situation where problems require immediate attention to prevent or limit the scale or number of serious violations of the Convention, it may request the urgent submission of a special report concerning measures taken to prevent possible serious or persistent cases of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse against children in any Party or Parties to the Convention.
2. The same procedure applies when a Party to the Convention sends a request to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe or to the Lanzarote Committee to address an issue as a matter of urgency.
3. Taking into account the information submitted by the Party or Parties concerned, as well as any other reliable information available to it, the Lanzarote Committee may designate one or more of its members and/or independent experts as referred to in Rule 25 to assess the specific situation and to report urgently to the Lanzarote Committee. Where warranted and with the consent of the Party or Parties concerned, the assessment may include a visit in the Party or Parties concerned. This visit takes place in cooperation with the national authorities of the Party(ies) concerned, the member of the Lanzarote Committee nominated

by the latter, the relevant Council of Europe bodies and, if need be, with the assistance of independent experts.

4. After examining the findings of the assessment referred to in paragraph 3 of this Rule, the Lanzarote Committee shall transmit these findings and its recommendations to the Party or Parties concerned and, together with any comments from the Party or Parties concerned, to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe for information. These documents shall be made public on the day of their adoption by the Lanzarote Committee.

Part III – Exchange of information, experiences and good practices

Rule 29 – General principles

Members, participants, observers and the secretariat shall systematically bring to the Lanzarote Committee's attention any relevant information, experience and good practice falling within the Convention's remit with a view to improve the Parties' capacity to prevent and combat sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children.

Rule 30 – General comments, proposals and opinions

1. Having regard to the conclusions of the implementation reports adopted to fulfil its monitoring functions or as a result of any discussion during its work, the Lanzarote Committee may decide to:

- a. issue general comments or opinions on its interpretation of the Convention;

- b.* discuss any appropriate amendments to the Convention in the light of significant legal, policy or technological developments found during the monitoring round;
 - c.* consider adopting an opinion on any question concerning the application of the Convention, pursuant to paragraph 3.b of Article 41 of the Convention.
- 2.** Proposals of amendments to the Convention agreed upon by the Lanzarote Committee as a result of the discussions referred to in paragraph 1.*b.* of this rule, may be communicated to the Secretary General by the Party or Parties that support(s) them with a view to their possible adoption in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 44 of the Convention.

Rule 31 – Expertise

The Lanzarote Committee may provide expertise within its field of competence to Council of Europe bodies and to other bodies if considered appropriate.

Part IV – Amendments and entry into force

Rule 32 – Amendments

The Lanzarote Committee may amend these Rules of Procedure by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast.

Rule 33 – Entry into force of the rules

The present rules, as well as any amendment, enter into force on the day following their adoption.

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The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

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