

2022 HELP NETWORK CONFERENCE

Speaking points

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Chers membres et partenaires du réseau HELP,
chères toutes et tous qui sont présents ici dans la salle et en ligne,
chers collègues,

C'est un grand plaisir pour moi de prendre la parole encore une fois lors de la Conférence HELP. Je suis heureux que cette année je puisse échanger avec un nombre plus large de représentants du réseau HELP **en personne**.

Firstly, I would like to warmly **thank our Irish partners** for their support of the 2022 HELP Network Conference. As you know already, the Conference is taking place under the auspices of the Irish Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

The past two years have been a challenge for everyone. I have also stated in different fora before that national legal systems, and individual legal professionals, are no exception. Being on the frontline to defend democracy, uphold the rule of law and protect human rights, you and your colleagues had at the same time to adapt to the emerging challenges related to the pandemic and more recently the far-reaching consequences for the whole of Europe and beyond of the war in Ukraine. In all of this, you needed and still need to also uphold the European Convention on Human Rights.

It has been said and written on many occasions that domestic actors of the justice systems are the primary enforcers of the European Convention of Human Rights. This is the essence of the **principle of subsidiarity** which has since this August has become an integral part of the text of the Convention. And in order for them to fulfil this role, they need to have tools and systematised knowledge readily available.

The Council of Europe HELP Programme, through its three pillars: the HELP Network, the HELP online courses and the HELP Methodology for training of legal professionals is working exactly

towards that aim: empowering through knowledge the justice professionals to think, act, live in the spirit of the European human rights standards.

En ce qui concerne les cours HELP :

- Actuellement, **plus de 40 cours modèles** sur différents thématiques sont disponibles gratuitement dans plus de **500 versions linguistiques** pour les plus de **105.000 utilisateurs** de la plateforme en ligne HELP. Ces chiffres augmentent de jour en jour.
- Les **nouveaux cours développés par HELP** au cours de la dernière année ou en cours de finalisation imminente vous ont été présentés. Vous avez entendu les présentations de cours HELP sur la Motivation judiciaire/juridique et droits de l'homme, Cybercriminalité, Droits humains dans les forces armées et autres.
- Nous travaillons déjà sur le développement de nouveaux cours HELP tels que **l'Interaction entre la Charte des droits fondamentaux de l'UE et la Convention Européenne de Droits de l'Homme**. La mise à jour du cours **HELP sur l'Interdiction de mauvais traitements** est également en course, et la nouvelle version modernisée sera disponible en anglais d'ici la fin de cette année, avec un nouveau module sur l'Interdiction de mauvais traitements dans le contexte du conflit.

Yesterday, you also heard of the so-called **HELP Asylum/Migration eDesks**, which is an innovative way to use the HELP infrastructure (the HELP Platform and the HELP courses) to provide for a rapid support to lawyers in countries with big refugee influx as a result of the Russian aggression on Ukraine.

Very importantly, at the Conference we were very happy to provide to our Ukrainian colleagues, working on training of judges, prosecutors and lawyers, a forum to share their experiences of working in such tragic circumstances. I would like to warmly thank them for addressing our

audience. We are working intensely in this period to identify practical solutions to provide, also through the HELP Programme, further support through capacity building of Ukrainian legal professionals.

This brings me to the other HELP Projects with geographical scope:

- The **HELP in EU Project** continued this spring with its Phase III, again thanks to the continued support of our EU partners. The same goes for the **HELP in the South Mediterranean** and **HELP in Central Asia**. We have also submitted a project proposal for **EU/CoE Judicial Training on Rule of Law and Human Rights**, under which we plan to work with **multipliers** (national trainers and justice training institutions) as well as with **young, newly appointed justice professionals**. We are looking forward to the news on this Project
- As of next year, **HELP in the Western Balkans** will no longer be a part the EU/CoE Horizontal Facility, however the HELP courses will be transversally included in topical actions under the Facility. And we are in parallel working on identifying other appropriate avenues of securing the presence of HELP in this very important region in the HELP Network.

In all of these HELP actions, synergies are sought with the HELP Network **international partners**: the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN), the Council of Bar and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), to name just a few.

This already takes me to my key message: **working together**.

As in previous years, I would like to reiterate that **we are the strongest when we work together**. HELP is there to support you in your training endeavors, within our capacities. There are many modalities for this:

- Judicial and lawyers' training institutions can and do resort to HELP courses in the classical way through the HELP tutored courses.
- They, but also the individual justice professionals, can also benefit from the publicly available, self-learning HELP courses, which allow you for a bigger autonomy and possibilities of large-scaling of training efforts. This is something that we very much encourage.

The HELP courses are a cost-effective, publicly and freely available resource and their effects can be easily multiplied. And you have been very active and innovative if making the most out of them. Many of you integrate the HELP courses in your training curricula. This is a practice that I would like to again this year strongly commend and encourage. In some countries, HELP courses are used to obtain specific licenses or accreditations. Finally, some of you even physically integrate the HELP courses in your own online training platforms.

Your engagement again demonstrates what we always knew: that out of the three pillars of the HELP Programme (the HELP Network, the HELP Platform and courses, and the HELP Methodology for training of legal professionals), the HELP Network is by far the most important one. Or if I may express myself in such a way, the HELP Network is **the soul of the HELP Programme**.

On this note, I **thank you** again for all your engagement, work and for the strong partnership we have built over the years. I would like to greet you and leave you to hear more on the HELP Strategy for the upcoming period by Eva Pastrana, the Head of the Justice and Human Rights Training Division.

Merci beaucoup pour votre attention et soutien !