



Presidency of Ireland
Council of Europe
May - November 2022

Présidence de l'Irlande
Conseil de l'Europe
Mai - Novembre 2022



Presidency of Ireland, Council of Europe

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Minister for Foreign Affairs
Simon Coveney T.D. © DFA

“the pursuit of
peace based upon
justice and
international
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and civilisation”

Introduction by Minister for Foreign Affairs Simon Coveney T.D.

Ireland is honoured to hold the Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe once again. While a lot has changed since Ireland's most recent Presidency in 1999-2000, our commitment to human rights remains as firm as ever. A central pillar of Ireland's foreign policy, it underpins our global engagement. In Strasbourg, Geneva, Brussels and New York, we are proud to raise our voice to champion human rights concerns, defend the multilateral system and hold to account those responsible for human rights violations.

The Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine has brought the founding principle of the Council of Europe into sharp relief; "that the pursuit of peace based upon justice and international cooperation is vital for the preservation of human society and civilisation". It is clear that the work of the Council of Europe, based on the promotion and protection of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, is more vital than ever.

As one of the ten founding members, Ireland has not forgotten the key role that membership of the Council of Europe played in shaping our own path in European cooperation. Our participation in the negotiations in London that culminated in the Council of Europe Statute in 1949 represented crucial early engagement with the foundations of postwar cooperation. A relatively poor and geographically peripheral young nation, Ireland entered as an equal to discussions on the future of the European continent.

This year will see Ireland hold both the Presidency of the Council of Europe and a seat on the UN Security Council, while also preparing to mark our 50th anniversary as an EU member state on 1 January 2023. As a small country, Ireland depends on the international rules-based order and the multilateral system. The Council of Europe, the EU and the UN sit at the heart of that system, and therefore can be found at the heart of Irish foreign policy.

Across our six-month Presidency term, Ireland will pursue three clear and complementary priorities, with the overarching aim of renewing “the conscience of Europe” in the wake of war on our continent. First, at a time of turmoil, we will reaffirm ‘Our Founding Freedoms’, by refocusing on human rights protection for civilians across Europe, above all through the vital work of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR). Second, we will actively promote participatory democracy and engagement with young people through ‘Hear Our Voices’, drawing on our own experience with citizens’ assemblies. Finally, framed within the Irish concept of ‘Fáilte’, we will work to foster a Europe of welcome, inclusion, and diversity.

Ireland will back these priorities through clear financial commitments. Our increased voluntary contributions will support the ongoing work of the Court in times of turbulence following the cessation of Russia’s membership and secure existing and diverse areas of work, including the Action Plan for Ukraine, combatting child sexual exploitation and continuing the fight to eliminate all forms of gender-based violence.

“We are proud to raise our voice to champion human rights issues of concern, defend the multilateral system and to work to hold accountable those responsible for human rights violations.”

Ireland’s founding membership of the Council of Europe and our implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) helped consolidate the rule of law in our young state and served as a bridge for us from isolation to integration. Over the past seven decades, the Council’s fundamental principles of pluralist democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law have spurred positive change across our state and society, shaping modern Ireland. Through our Presidency, we hope to aid the Council in protecting and promoting these vital principles at a time when they are most needed, safeguarding them for the decades and generations to come.

Réamhrá Ón Aire Gnóthaí Eachtracha Simon Coveney T.D.

Is mór an onóir d'Éirinn Uachtaránacht Choiste na nAirí ar Chomhairle na hEorpa ashealbhú arís. Thug ionsaí Chónaidhm na Rúise i gcoinne na hÚcráine faoiseamh géar do phrionsabal bunaidh Chomhairle na hEorpa; “go bhfuil saothrú na síochána bunaithe ar cheartas agus ar chomhar idirnáisiúnta ríthábhachtach chun an tsochaí dhaonna agus an tsibhialtacht a chaomhnú”. Is léir go bhfuil obair Chomhairle na hEorpa, atá bunaithe ar chur chun cinn agus cosaint chearta an duine, an daonlathais agus an smachta reachta, níos tábhachtaí ná riamh. Cé gur tháinig athrú mór ar ár nUachtaránacht is déanaí i 1999/2000, tá tiomantas na hÉireann do chearta an duine seasmhach i gcónaí. Leanann sé de bheith ina chrann taca lárnach dár mbeartas eachtrach agus is creat níos leithne é dár gcur chuige i leith rannpháirtíochta domhanda. Táimid bródúil as ár nguth a ardú chun ceisteanna imní chearta an duine a chosaint, chun an córas iltaobhach a chosaint agus chun oibriú chun iad siúd atá freagrach as sárúithe ar chearta an duine a bheith cuntasach.

Mar thír den deichniúr ball bunaidh, níl dearmad déanta ag Éirinn ar an bpríomhról a bhí ag ballraíocht ar Chomhairle na hEorpa i múnú ár mbealach féin i gcomhoibriú Eorpach. B'ionann ár rannpháirtíocht sna caibidlíochtaí i Londain ar tháinig Reacht Chomhairle na hEorpa chun críche i 1949 agus rannpháirtíocht luath ríthábhachtach le bunsraitheanna an chomhair iarchogaidh. Chuaigh Éire, náisiún óg atá measartha bocht agus imeallach ó thaobh na tíreolaíochta de, isteach mar chothrom le plé ar thodhchaí mhór-roinn na hEorpa. I mbliana beidh Uachtaránacht Chomhairle na hEorpa ag Éirinn agus suíochán ar Chomhairle Slándála na Náisiúin Aontaithe, mar a rinneamar i 2000. Mar thír bheag, braitheann Éire ar an ord idirnáisiúnta atá bunaithe ar rialacha agus ar an gcóras iltaobhach. Tá Comhairle na hEorpa agus na Náisiúin Aontaithe ag croílár an chórais sin, agus mar sin is féidir iad a fháil i gcroílár bheartas eachtrach na hÉireann.

Tá sé mar aidhm ag tosaíochtaí na hÉireann dár nUachtaránacht sé mhí tacaíocht a thabhairt d'obair leanúnach na Cúirte Eorpaí um Chearta an Duine (ECtHR) agus institiúidí Chomhairle na hEorpa agus iad a chur chun cinn. Díríonn an chéad cheann díobh seo, 'Ár Saoirsí Bunaithe', ar chosaint chearta an duine do shibhialtaigh ar fud na hEorpa a neartú, agus an ECtHR i gcroílár na cuntasachta do bhallstáit. Díríonn an dara ceann, 'Eistigí linn', ar chur chun cinn an daonlathais rannpháirtíoch agus rannpháirtíocht le daoine óga. Tá sé d'aidhm ag an tríú tosaíocht, 'Fáilte', cur níos mó le cothú na hEorpa fáilteach, cuimsitheachta agus éagsúlachta. Tacóidh Éire leis na tosaíochtaí sin trí ghealltanais airgeadais shoiléire. Tacóidh ár ranníocaíochtaí deonacha méadaithe le hobair leanúnach na Cúirte in am an chruacháis airgeadais tar éis scor de bhallraíocht na Rúise agus shlánóidh sí réimsí oibre atá ann cheana féin agus réimsí éagsúla oibre, lena n-áirítear an Plean Gníomhaíochta don Úcráin, dúshaothrú gnéasach leanaí a chomhrac agus leanúint leis an gcomhrac chun deireadh a chur le gach ceann díobh. foirmeacha foréigin inscne.

Bhí ballraíocht bhunaidh na hÉireann ar Chomhairle na hEorpa agus ár gcur i bhfeidhm ar an gCoinbhinsiún Eorpach um Chearta an Duine thar a bheith cabhrach chun an smacht reachta a chomhdhlúthú agus chun tacú le hathrú sóisialta dearfach in Éirinn. Le seachtó mbliana anuas, tá muid treoraithe ag prionsabail bhunúsacha na Comhairle maidir le daonlathas iolraíoch, meas ar chearta an duine agus an smacht reachta. Tá súil againn go gcuirfidh ár nUachtaránacht le hobair na Comhairle chun na prionsabail seo a chosaint ar feadh na mblianta agus na glúnta atá le teacht.

Introduction Du Ministre Des Affaires Étrangères Simon Coveney T.D.

L'Irlande est fière d'assumer à nouveau la présidence du Comité des Ministres du Conseil de l'Europe. Si bien des choses se sont passées depuis la dernière présidence de l'Irlande en 1999-2000, notre engagement en matière de droits de l'homme reste toujours aussi ferme. Pilier central de la politique étrangère de l'Irlande, les droits de l'homme sont à la base de notre engagement dans le monde. À Strasbourg, Genève, Bruxelles et New York, nous sommes fiers de faire entendre notre voix pour faire valoir les préoccupations en matière de droits de l'homme, défendre le système multilatéral et demander des comptes aux responsables de violations des droits de l'homme. L'agression de la Fédération de Russie contre l'Ukraine a mis en lumière le principe fondateur du Conseil de l'Europe, à savoir que "la recherche d'une paix fondée sur la justice et la coopération internationale est vitale pour la préservation de la société humaine et de la civilisation". Il est clair que le travail du Conseil de l'Europe, fondé sur la promotion et la protection des droits de l'homme, de la démocratie et de l'État de droit, est plus vital que jamais.

En tant que l'un des dix membres fondateurs, l'Irlande n'a pas oublié le rôle déterminant que l'adhésion au Conseil de l'Europe a joué dans la conception de notre propre voie en matière de coopération européenne. Notre participation aux négociations de Londres, qui ont abouti au statut du Conseil de l'Europe en 1949, a représenté un engagement précoce et crucial dans les fondements de la coopération d'après-guerre. En tant que jeune nation relativement pauvre et géographiquement périphérique, l'Irlande a participé d'égal à égal aux discussions sur l'avenir du continent européen. Cette année, l'Irlande assumera à la fois la présidence du Conseil de l'Europe et occupera un siège au Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies, tout en se préparant à célébrer son 50e anniversaire en tant qu'État membre de l'UE le 1er janvier 2023. En tant que petit pays, l'Irlande dépend de l'ordre international fondé sur des règles et du multilatéralisme. Le Conseil de l'Europe, l'UE et les Nations unies sont au cœur de ce système et se trouvent donc au cœur de la politique étrangère irlandaise.

Au cours des six prochains mois de notre présidence, l'Irlande poursuivra trois priorités claires et complémentaires, dans le but global de renouveler "la conscience de l'Europe" dans ce contexte de guerre sur notre continent. Tout d'abord, en cette période agitée, nous réaffirmerons "nos libertés fondatrices" en nous recentrant sur la protection des droits de l'homme pour les citoyens de toute l'Europe, surtout grâce au travail essentiel de la Cour européenne des droits de l'homme (CEDH). Ensuite, nous ferons la promotion active de la démocratie participative et de l'engagement des jeunes par le biais de "Entendez nos voix", en nous appuyant sur notre propre expérience des assemblées citoyennes. Enfin, dans le cadre du concept irlandais de "Fáilte", nous nous efforcerons de favoriser une Europe de l'accueil, de l'inclusion et de la diversité. L'Irlande soutiendra ces priorités par des engagements financiers clairs. L'augmentation de nos contributions volontaires permettra de soutenir les travaux actuellement menés par la Cour en cette période de troubles, à la suite de la cessation de l'adhésion de la Russie, et de garantir les domaines de compétence existants et diversifiés, notamment le plan

d'action pour l'Ukraine, la lutte contre l'exploitation sexuelle des enfants et la poursuite de la lutte pour l'élimination de toutes formes de violence à l'égard des femmes.

Notre adhésion précoce au Conseil de l'Europe et notre mise en œuvre de la Convention européenne des droits de l'homme (CEDH) ont contribué à consolider l'État de droit dans notre jeune État et nous ont permis de passer de l'isolement à l'intégration. Au cours des sept dernières décennies, les principes fondamentaux du Conseil qui sont la démocratie pluraliste, le respect des droits de l'homme et l'État de droit ont suscité des changements positifs dans notre pays et notre société, façonnant ainsi l'Irlande moderne. Grâce à notre présidence, nous espérons aider le Conseil à protéger et à promouvoir ces principes vitaux à un moment où ils sont le plus nécessaires, les sauvegardant pour les décennies et générations à venir.

Message From Minister For European Affairs Thomas Byrne T.D.

Ireland is proud to be a founding member of the Council of Europe. Our early engagement with the Council set a tone for our still young state to integrate, and lead, within a continent emerging from the ashes of war. In the seventy years since, “the conscience of Europe”, as our President has called it, has spurred us to better serve our citizens.

Our Presidency logo reflects the intertwined and indivisible nature of Ireland’s bonds within Europe -we are connected by frequencies, by the vibrations of our past, the aspirations of our future. The shape of the logo also takes inspiration from the spiral motifs in ancient Megalithic art found at Newgrange in Ireland and across

Europe, reflecting our shared heritage. An island state, ‘Éire’ - the Irish for ‘Ireland’ - sits surrounded by waves , forming with the accent – the ‘fada’ - over the e , itself echoing the Council of Europe’s logo. From those shared origins a tide rises, reaching across the coasts of the wider continent, reverberating in our shared values which the Council of Europe exemplifies.

Ireland’s Presidency occurs at a critical juncture as, collectively, we once again confront the scourge of war. Working with our partners at the Council of Europe and beyond, we are determined to do all we can during our Presidency term to confront the challenge this presents, supporting Ukraine and all those striving to protect human rights, democracy, and the rule of law across our shared continent. In so doing, we draw inspiration from the Council of Europe’s founding texts and from our own history, reflected in the words of the great Seamus Heaney: “But then, once in a lifetime the longed-for tidal wave of justice can rise up, and hope and history rhyme.” Let us hope, and strive, for a great sea-change in the months ahead.



Minister for European Affairs
Thomas Byrne T.D.
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Ireland's Presidency Priorities



© Alban Hefti

- **Our Founding Freedoms**
Reinforcing Human Rights and the Protection of Civilians in Europe'
- **Hear Our Voices**
Promoting participatory democracy and youth engagement
- **Fáilte**
Fostering a Europe of welcome, inclusion, and diversity

Did you know?

The inclusion of “the pursuit of peace” in the preamble to the Statute of the Council of Europe was on the initiative of Ireland’s Foreign Minister Seán MacBride, who, as Ireland’s first chair of the Committee of Ministers, voiced his hope that the Council would “erect above the tumult an ideal around which the conscience of mankind” could rally.

Programme Of Events

Policy Programme

19-20 May, Turin

Committee of Ministers. Beginning of Ireland's Presidency with handover from Italy's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Mr. Luigi Di Maio to Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Simon Coveney T.D.

23-25 May, University College Cork, Cork

Conference on Building a Europe for and with Children, hosted by Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Mr. Roderic O'Gorman T.D.

26-27 May, Galmont Hotel, Galway

Circom (European Association of Regional Television) Regional Conference 2022 and award of the 'Prix Circom', hosted by Circom Regional and TG4

30-31 May, Westin Hotel, Dublin

Bureau and Standing Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)

7 June, Palais de l'Europe, Strasbourg

Seminar on Anti-Muslim Discrimination

14 June, Tralee, Kerry

Meeting of the Bureau of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities

15-17 June, Dublin City University, Dublin

Global Forum on Higher Education Leadership for Democracy, Sustainability, and Social Justice

21-24 June, Department of Health, Dublin

Executive Training on 'Substance use, addictions and online practices', co-hosted by the Department of Health and the Pompidou Group

20-24 June, Palais de l'Europe, Strasbourg

Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)

28 June-1 July, Strasbourg

Democracy Action Week

30 June, Strasbourg

Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP) Network Annual Conference

30 June, Strasbourg

Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP) Network Annual Conference

7-9 July, Dublin Castle, Dublin

Annual Joint Meeting of the Governing Board and the Administrative Council of the Council of Europe Development Bank hosted by Minister for Finance Mr. Paschal Donohoe T.D. and Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Simon Coveney T.D.

August, Strasbourg

Launch of European Heritage Days

1 September, National

University of Ireland, Galway

Lighting the Shade: Effective application of ECHR in Contested European Territories conference

13 September, Strasbourg

Venice Commission conference on New Challenges to the Freedom of Association, with the participation of Minister for European Affairs Mr. Thomas Byrne T.D

14-15 September, Meath

Annual Conference of the Association of Irish Local Government

15 September, National

University of Ireland, Galway

Meeting of the Council of Europe Committee of Experts on Roma and Traveller Issues (ADI-ROM)

16-17 September, National

University of Ireland, Galway

Irish Travellers / Mincéirs and the State 1922 – 2022: the Struggle for Equality conference

29-30 September, RDS, Dublin

Conference of the Ministers of Justice on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence hosted by Minister for Justice, Ms. Helen McEntee T.D.

October

Symposium on Human Rights Defenders

3-5 October, Farmleigh House, Dublin

Intergovernmental conference on The Voice and Determination of the Best Interests of Children in Family Law Proceedings hosted by Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Mr. Roderic O’Gorman T.D.

4 October, Palais de l'Europe, Strasbourg

Centenary of the Irish Civil War: a case study for Europe event

10-14 October, Strasbourg Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)

10-28 October, Palais de l'Europe, Strasbourg

Conserving our Heartland, an exhibition celebrating 40 Years of the Bern Convention in Ireland

20-21 October, Farmleigh, Dublin

Judicial conference between the President and Bureau of the European Court of Human Rights and Senior Irish Judiciary, led by the Chief Justice of Ireland

25-27 October, Palais de l'Europe, Strasbourg

Session of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities

28 October, Iveagh House, Dublin

Meeting of the Council of Europe's working group on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics (GT-ADI-SOGI)

3-4 November, Dublin

European Congress on Global Citizenship Education hosted by Minister for Overseas Development and Diaspora Mr. Colm Brophy T.D.

7-9 November, Palais de l'Europe, Strasbourg

World Forum for Democracy and Presidency handover to Iceland

Cultural Calendar

1 June, Place de la Republique, Strasbourg

Opening Ceremony at Strasbourg City Hall

9 June, Cinéma Star Saint-Exupéry, Strasbourg

Pride month: screening of *The Queen of Ireland* with Director Conor Horgan, preceded by rooftop reception

15 June, Palais de l'Europe, Strasbourg

Jurisprudence of Joyce with Dr Joseph Hassett and *Reverberations: Music and Musings from Joyce's Dublin* with Tale of the Gael

21 June, Pavillon Josephine, Strasbourg

'*New Éire*', a celebration of young Irish musicians

**28 June-28 August, Bibliothèque
André Malraux, Strasbourg**

Exhibition on *Following Ulysses* by
Deirdre Brennan

1-10 July, 5e Lieu, Strasbourg
Irish Poetry Jukebox installation

**7 September, Musée
Tomi Ungerer, Strasbourg**
Celebration of Alsatian artist
and satirist Tomi Ungerer with
Aria Ungerer

**9 September, Palais de
l'Europe, Strasbourg**
Rentrée: a showcase of Irish music
and dance

**5 October, Palais de
l'Europe, Strasbourg**
World Mental Health Week:
Screening of *Horrible Creature* by
Director Aine Stapleton, a film based
on the life of James Joyce's daughter,
Lucia Joyce

**11 October, Aubette
Place Kléber, Strasbourg**
Sounds of Europe, a concert featuring
the works of Galuppi, Field,
Beethoven, Debussy and Chopin with
Mícéal O'Rourke

**25 October, Palais de
l'Europe, Strasbourg**
Congress of Local and Regional
Authorities culture evening

**27-30 October, Théâtre
du Cube Noir, Strasbourg**
Performances of *She Was Wearing*, a
series of nine especially commissioned
monologues which highlight the issue
of violence against women

**3 November, Eglise Saint-
Pierre-le Vieux, Strasbourg**
End of Presidency *Samhain* céilí and
culture evening

*For further information
please see:*

<https://www.ireland.ie/coe>

*Or scan below for the latest update on
our programme of events:*



Ireland's Permanent Representatives to The Council of Europe

One of Ireland's first female diplomats, Máire Mhac an tSaoi, served as Ireland's Ambassador to the Council of Europe in 1961. She described the establishment of the Council as *"a stage in international progress unimaginable before the last war"*.



© DFA



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In 1970 Ambassador Mary Tinney was Ireland's Permanent Representative to the Council of Europe. She is pictured here with former Secretary General of the Council of Europe Lujo Tončić-Sorinj.

Ambassador Justin Harman was responsible for establishing Ireland's current office, or Permanent Representation, to the Council of Europe in 1999.



© Irish Times



© Council of Europe

Ambassador Breifne O'Reilly is Ireland's current Permanent Representative. Ambassador O'Reilly's duties during the Presidency include chairing the Committee of Ministers.

The Council of Europe



© Council of Europe

The Council of Europe is the leading human rights organisation on the continent. Ireland was one of ten founding members of the Council of Europe in 1949. Ireland established a Permanent Representation to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg in 1999 under Ambassador Justin Harman.

The Council of Europe now has 46 Member States and 5 Observer States. Each of the Member States is a party to the European Convention on Human

Rights (ECHR). Signed by Ireland in 1950, the ECHR was designed to safeguard human rights, democracy and the rule of law and has been the cornerstone of human rights law across the continent for over seventy years. The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), a subsidiary body of the Council, oversees implementation of the Convention across the Council's Member States.

Despite their overlapping use of the symbols, and their similar-sounding titles, the Council of Europe is an entirely separate entity to the European Union. The ECHR is however an important source for the protection

of rights and freedoms within the EU. The Council of Europe counts all 27 EU states as members as well as nineteen additional members, including Ukraine, Turkey, Norway, and the United Kingdom.



© Council of Europe

Did you know?

The Council of Europe first designed, adopted and used the iconic European flag in 1955. It was only in 1986 that the European Parliament recommended that the flag be adopted as the emblem of the European Communities.

The European Court Of Human Rights And The Convention

Rights listed in the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR) are primarily safeguarded through national courts and ultimately guaranteed by the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) in Strasbourg.



© Council of Europe

The Court has faced challenges in recent years, notably due to the enormous increase in the number of pending cases, after membership of the Council of Europe doubled following the accession of a large number of formerly Communist States in the 1990s.

Throughout this process Ireland has been supportive of measures to improve the functioning of the Court, whilst ensuring that its ultimate authority and independence are safeguarded and the rule of law upheld. Former Chief Justice John Murray acted as Chair of an Advisory Panel on the appointment of judges to the

Court until 2017 and Ireland has funded the webcasting of proceedings for a number of years.

The backlog of cases reached a peak of 150,000 in 2012 before reducing to the current number of 50,000 following the adoption of mechanisms such as pilot judgements, where systematic failings are dealt with by determining a single case. These remedial measures commenced in the context of a series of declarations on the reform of the Court and Convention system signed by Member States, beginning with the Interlaken Declaration in 2010 and continuing through Brighton, Izmir, Brussels and Copenhagen in 2018.

In addition to managing the backlog of cases, the reform process has sought to ensure high quality judgements, improve the execution of judgements and clarify the role that subsidiarity plays in the justice system.



Judge elected in respect of Ireland
Siofra O'Leary © Council of Europe

The Treaty System

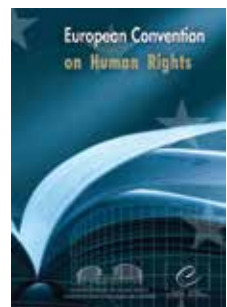


The Council of Europe achieves its mandate of safeguarding human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Europe through 220 international treaties and agreements. The European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) is the core instrument within the Council of Europe for the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms.

Many of the Council's treaties can be acceded to by Non-Member States. Treaties often contain monitoring mechanisms which involve expert level country visits followed by reports and implementation evaluations.



The European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR)
© Council of Europe



Ireland And The European Court Of Human Rights

Ireland has undertaken to secure for everyone within its jurisdiction the rights and freedoms provided for under the European Convention on Human Rights.

The first ever decision delivered by the Court concerned an application against Ireland (*Lawless v Ireland*). When this decision was delivered by the President of the Court, René Cassin, on 1 July 1960, Ireland was just one of 8 parties to the Convention which accepted the binding jurisdiction of the Court in individual applications.

The inter-state case of *Ireland v the United Kingdom* (1978) had a significant impact on the development of the Court's jurisprudence concerning the distinction between torture and inhuman and degrading treatment under Article 3 of the Convention.

Airey v Ireland (1979) remains a landmark case relating to the obligation to provide legal aid in certain civil cases under Article 6 of the Convention.

The case of *Norris v Ireland* (1988) ultimately resulted in decriminalisation of homosexual acts between consenting

adult males. The applicant in this case, Senator David Norris, was a leading figure in the campaign that resulted in the marriage equality referendum held in Ireland on 22 May 2015.



The applicants in both *Airey* and *Norris* were represented by Mary Robinson, a future President of Ireland and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

More recently, the case of *Bosphorus Airways v Ireland* (2005) introduced the presumption that the protection afforded under EU law to fundamental rights is equivalent to that provided for under the Convention.



Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
© Irish Examiner

The implementation of the Court's judgements concerning Ireland continues to act as a catalyst for positive social change in a range of areas, while the Court's case law has profoundly influenced the interpretation of domestic constitutional guarantees for personal rights and fundamental freedoms.



The European Court of Human Rights was established in 1959 and has since delivered more than 100,000 judgements. A judge is elected in respect of each of the 46 member states.
© Council of Europe

Did you know?

Ireland was the first state to recognise the compulsory jurisdiction of the European Court of Human Rights. Ireland was only the second state, after Sweden, to recognise the competence of the Court to receive petitions from any person, NGO or group of individuals claiming to be victim of a violation by one of the contracting parties to the rights set forth in the Convention.

Structure Of The Council Of Europe



The Committee of Ministers

The Committee of Ministers is the Council's decision-making body. Comprising the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of each member state, it meets once a year, typically in May.

The day-to-day functioning of the Council is carried out by the Committee of Minister's Deputies (CM), made up of each member state's Permanent Representative (Ambassador) in Strasbourg.

The CM holds a meeting in Strasbourg most Wednesdays, and its duties include deciding on Council of Europe policy and approving its budget and programme of activities.

Budget contributions are calculated according to an agreed formula that considers national income and population. Ireland will contribute at least €3.7m to the roughly €500m budget in 2022. Ireland will voluntarily contribute an additional €935,000 this year to its priority projects, including support for democratic and judicial institutions in Ukraine.

Four times a year the CM convenes a special meeting on Human Rights - les réunions Droits de l'homme du Comité des Ministres - or CMDH. Ireland chaired the CMDH in the six months leading up to its Presidency.



Committee of Ministers' Deputies room
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These rigorous, three-day meetings examine judgements handed down by the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) that have not yet been implemented by the respondent states. The CMDH takes action, as required, to ensure that judgements are implemented.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) is composed of parliamentarians from each member state. It holds plenary sessions four times per year, normally in January, April, June and October, where it discusses reports prepared by its nine committees. The plenary sessions are

also the democratic forums for debates on topical issues, presentations on monitoring missions to Member States and votes stemming from the findings of its reports.



Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)
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Head of PACE Delegation
Senator Fiona O'Loughlin
© Conor McCabe

"Ireland is proud to be a founding member of the Council of Europe, and through our Presidency we will reaffirm our commitment to the European spirit of inclusivity, shared values and respect. Democratic values cannot be taken for granted. They must be protected and defended- this is a cornerstone of our presidential priorities. Ní neart go cur le chéile (there is no strength without unity)" - Head of the Irish PACE Delegation Senator Fiona O'Loughlin

The PACE also elects the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, the Human Rights Commissioner and the judges on the European Court of Human Rights. National delegations must conform to the proportion of elected representatives in their national assemblies, and consider gender balance. The Irish national delegation may be appointed for the duration of a Dáil, or on an annual basis.

The current Irish delegation consists of four members - Senator Fiona O'Loughlin (Chair), Deputy Dara Calleary, Senator Paul Gavan and Senator Joe O'Reilly - and four substitute representatives - Senator Lynn Boylan, Senator Róisín Garvey, Deputy Emer Higgins and Deputy Thomas Pringle.

The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities

The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities is responsible for strengthening local democracy in the Council's 46 Member States. It brings together over 600 elected officials representing more than 150,000 local and regional authorities. Its main activities are the monitoring of local elections and promotion of the Council of Europe's conventions at a local level.

Representatives are appointed for a five-year term in accordance with each Member State's own procedure. Like PACE, Ireland is represented at Congress by four representatives - Councillors Jimmy Moloney (Head of Delegation), Gobnait Ni Mhuimneacain, Anne Colgan and John Crowe - and four substitute representatives - Councillors Alan Cheevers, Aisling Moran, Deirdre O'Donovan and Tom Welby.



"I am delighted to reinforce Ireland's strong identification with the European values of democracy and the rule of law. Such characteristics essential to a civilised society are lived out every day in the service of local authority elected members throughout the member states of the Congress. The Irish delegation with its particular perspective from the western periphery of the continent is determined to play its part in supporting Ireland's Presidency of the Council of Europe at a time when champions of European values were never more needed."

- Head of the Irish Delegation to the Congress of Local & Regional Authorities Councillor Jimmy Moloney

The Council of Europe Development Bank

The Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) is a multilateral development bank with an exclusively social mandate. Through the provision of financing and technical expertise for projects with a high social impact in its member states, it actively promotes social cohesion and strengthens social integration in Europe. Officials from the Department of Finance, led by Minister for Finance and President of the Eurogroup Paschal Donohoe, sit on the Bank's Administrative Council.



Secretary General of the Council of Europe,
Marija Pejčinović Burić
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“Ireland is a founding and much-valued member of the Council of Europe. It assumes the Presidency of our Committee of Ministers at a difficult moment for our continent: a time in which our values are under attack. So, I welcome the priorities that Ireland has chosen for its Presidency. These will help ensure our further impact for the benefit of our 46 member states.”
- Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Marija Pejčinović Burić

The Secretary General

The current Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Marija Pejčinović Burić, took up office in September 2019, having been elected by PACE the previous June. She was formerly Croatia’s Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign and European Affairs.

The Commissioner for Human Rights

The Commissioner for Human Rights promotes human rights reform and protection in Council of Europe Member States. Dunja Mijatović, a national of Bosnia-Herzegovina, who twice held the position of OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, was elected as Commissioner for a six-year term in January 2018.



Human Rights Commissioner Dunja Mijatovic
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Notes

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Presidency of Ireland
Council of Europe
May - November 2022

Présidence de l'Irlande
Conseil de l'Europe
Mai - Novembre 2022



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