Methodology for a Study on the existing mechanisms for execution of the judgments and decisions of the European Court of Human Rights in the member states in the light of CM Recommendation (2008)2



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Abbreviations

| CDDH | Steering Committee for Human Rights |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| СМ | Committee of Ministers |
| Convention | European Convention on Human Rights |
| Court | European Court of Human Rights |
| DEJ | Department for the Execution of Judgments of the European Court of Human Rights |
| Guide for Recommendation (2008)2 | Guide to good practice on the implementation of Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers on efficient domestic capacity for rapid execution of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights (CM(2017)92-add3final) |
| NGOs | Non-governmental organisations |
| NHRI | National Human Rights Institution |
| Recommendation (2008)2 | Recommendation CM/Rec(2008)2 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on efficient domestic capacity for rapid execution of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights |

1. Introduction

The present Methodology has been prepared within the framework of the Council of Europe's Project on "Support to efficient domestic capacity for the execution of ECtHR judgments (Phase 1)". Council of Europe member states have repeatedly acknowledged that a rapid and effective execution of the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights ("Court") is of core importance to enhance the protection of human rights at a national level and to the long-term effectiveness of the European human rights protection system. This was also emphasised by the Committee of Ministers during the 130th Athens Session in November 2020, urging all member states to ensure that Recommendation CM/Rec(2008)2 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on efficient domestic capacity for rapid execution of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights ("Recommendation (2008)2") be given full effect.

Through the implementation of targeted activities, the Project's purpose is to provide institutional support notably regarding the designation and the work of the coordinator of execution of judgments at the national level, both to steer the national execution process and maintain an effective dialogue with the Committee of Ministers. It will build on good practices developed in certain countries and support an enhanced dialogue among national coordinators.

One of the main components of the Project is the carrying out of a **Multi-Country Study** that will focus on the functional relevance of the existing mechanisms for execution of the Court judgments in the member states in the light of Recommendation (2008)2, and identifying good practices and effective national execution mechanisms.

This Methodology will support the carrying out of local studies assessing the systems of executing the judgments and decisions of the Court by the member states of the Council of Europe to support the completion of the Multi-Country Study. It aims to establish the means of collecting and comparing this data from different countries, in order to present it in the most usable and efficient way.

The Methodology first explains its scope, research period, expectations, and terminology. Thereafter, it specifies the research methods to be followed and the criteria for evaluating the execution process. It then sets out the research questions to be addressed and concludes with a checklist to be considered before submitting the answers to the research questions.

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2. Scope, research period and expectations

he research in respect of each Council of Europe member state is expected to provide information relating to: (i) the country-specific situation, (ii) coordination in respect of the execution process within the state (iii) the execution process; (iv) supervision; (v) resources and (vi) evaluation. Certain of information required is purely factual but that sought in connection with certain matters will entail some evaluation of the way in which the process operates and the outcomes achieved.

It is, therefore, expected for the research to give an up-to-date overview and analysis of the capacities and procedures put in place at domestic level to ensure the execution of ECtHR judgments, in light of Recommendation (2008)2 and other relevant documents of the Council of Europe pertaining to the execution process.¹

The recommended research reference period is from January 2013 until December 2023, unless otherwise specifically indicated. This period has been determined with reference to the reforms of the European Convention on Human Rights (hereafter "the Convention") and the adoption of new working methods by the Committee of Ministers for the supervision of the execution.²

^{1.} PACE, 'Resolution 1226 (2000) "Execution of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights'" (2000). See also Resolutions 2494 (2023), 2358 (2021), 2178 (2017), 2075 (2015), 1787 (2011), 1516 (2006) and Recommendations 2110 (2017) and 2079 (2015) on the implementation of judgments of the Court.

^{2.} Information document DGHL-Exec/Inf (2010)1 18 May 2010 prepared by the DEJ. DG-HL. Entry into force of Protocol No. 14: consequences for the supervision of the execution of judgments of the European Court by the Committee of Ministers,; Information document: CM/Inf/DH(2009)29rev, 3 June 2009, Action plans - action reports: Definitions and objectives; Information document: CM/Inf/DH(2010)37, 6 September 2010 Supervision of the execution of judgments and decisions of the European Court of Human Rights: implementation of the Interlaken Action Plan – Modalities for a twin-track supervision system; Information document: CM/Inf/DH(2010)45 final, 7 December 2010 Supervision of the execution of the judgments and decisions of the European Court of Human Rights: implementation of the Interlaken Action Plan – Outstanding issues concerning the practical modalities of implementation of the new twin track supervision system

3. Terminology and style

o facilitate the comparative analysis of the multi-country study, each country-based study should use the relevant terminology employed by the Committee of Ministers in the process of supervision3 and follow the in-house style of the Council of Europe.4

E.g. specific terms such as "case", "action plans/reports", "Article 46 judgments", "classification", "enhanced", and "standard" procedures, are used as defined by the Committee of Ministers' practice. Supervision of the execution of judgments and decisions of the European Court of Human Rights. 16th Annual Report of the Committee of Ministers, (2022) app. Glossary.

^{4.} Council of Europe, *Council of Europe English style guide – 2021 edition* (2021); also available in French (2021).

4. Research methods

he Methodology identifies the tools that should be used for the collection and analysis of information. These methods include desk research, questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, focus groups and case studies.

Desk research will usually constitute the starting point for the collection of information unless otherwise suggested in the relevant part of the Methodology. This is 'a doctrinal step, comprising locating legal sources and then analysing the text'.⁵ It would be suggested that, in the majority of cases, localising the primary legal materials, such as laws, internal regulations, legal practice, will be the first step. These documents might need to be supplemented by academic commentaries and decisions of administrative and judicial bodies.

The use of *questionnaires* and *semi-structured interviews* should seek to explain how the legal framework, established through the desk research, is applied in real life. Semi-structured interviews are "designed to have a number of interview questions prepared in advance, but such prepared questions are designed to be sufficiently open that the subsequent questions of the interviewer cannot be planned in advance, but must be improvised in a careful and theorised way. As regards such semi-structured interviews, they are ones where research and planning produce a session in which most of the informant's responses cannot be predicted in advance and where you as interviewer therefore have to improvise probably half and maybe 80 percent or more of your responses to what they say in response to your initial prepared question or questions".⁶ The transcript of the interview needs to be confirmed with the interviewer to ensure the accuracy of information. The most representative quotes can be used in the country study. The recordings should be kept by the researchers.

T. Peck, 'Interdisciplinary Methodological Approaches to Desk-Based Socio-legal Human Rights Research', (2023) *Law and Method*. See also, T. Hutchinson and N. Duncan, (2012). Defining and describing what we do: Doctrinal legal research. *Deakin Law Review*, 17(1), 83.

T. Wengraf, Qualitative research interviewing: biographic narrative and semi-structured methods (SAGE, 2001) p. 5; For a description of semi-structured interviews see also S. Kvale, InterViews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing, First Edition ed. (SAGE Publications, Inc, 1996); Ian Dobinson and Francis Johns, 'Qualitative Legal Research' in M. McConville and W. H. Chui (eds.), Research methods for law, Second edition ed. (Edinburgh University Press, 2017).

The major advantage of interviews is that the researcher personally communicates with the interviewees; the researcher can elaborate on the questions and ensure the authenticity of the person interviewed. The major disadvantage is that it takes a lot of time to arrange, conduct, and then transcribe interviews. The latter drawback can be rectified by using *questionnaires*.⁷ Questionnaires can provide sufficient data and they are not as time consuming as interviews. Questionnaires are easier to prepare, and they can be shared with stakeholders via online platforms such as *Google Forms*. Having said all that, questionnaires are not as flexible and reliable as interviews. Depending on national regulations, interviews and questionnaires need to undergo ethical approval.

Case studies should be used to illustrate a particular practice or approach,⁸ while *focus groups*⁹ comprised of different stakeholders can enable the facilitator to collect data on their particular perspectives through group interaction.

The subsequent parts of this methodology specify which methods should be used for particular subsections of research questions. An explanation should be given where a specified method cannot be used, or another one is used.

- A. Podgórecki, 'Questionnaire and interview methods' Law and Society, (Routledge, 1974); I Dobinson and F Johns, Legal Research as Qualitative Research in Wengraf, *Qualitative research interviewing*; M. S. Afolayan and O. A. Oniyinde, 'Interviews and Questionnaires as Legal Research Instruments' (2019) 83 *Journal of Law, Policy and Globalization* 51.
- L. Webley, 'Stumbling Blocks in Empirical Legal Research: Case Study Research' (2016) 38 Law and Method 12–14; R. K. Yin, Case Study Research: Design and Methods (SAGE Publications, 2014).
- 9. W. Outhwaite and S. P. Turner, *The SAGE Handbook of Social Science Methodology* (SAGE Publications Ltd, 2007).

5. Research questions

his Section sets out the questions to be addressed by the researcher together with guidance as to the specific methods of doing so and an indication as to how the responses should be presented. The relevant guidance is summarised for each group of questions and, where relevant, explanation on a specific approach required for a particular question follows that question in italics.

5.1 Country overview

This subsection concerns statistical data and is divided into three parts. The first concerns the number of communicated applications, judgments and decisions on friendly settlements issued in respect of the country concerned, as well as the number of judgments and terms of friendly settlement executed or not. The second deals mainly with the average time for execution of judgments and terms of friendly settlements and submission of action plans/reports. Moreover, the subsection is completed by a question concerning the publication of relevant data and information by national sources.

Unless otherwise specified, all information provided under this part should be **disaggregated by year** and concern the indicated **reference period** of ten years.

Responding to the questions below will generally require desk-based research. The sources that can be used for this purpose include statistical reports from the Court's website, information contained in the HUDOC-EXEC database, the website of the Department for the Execution of Judgments of the European Court of Human Rights ("DEJ"), the search engine of the Committee of Ministers, the website of the European Implementation Network and any relevant information from national sources.

1. Please indicate the number of:

a. applications communicated to the government

Communicated applications should be distinguished from communicated cases. An "application" is a complaint recorded in the Court's database under a separate application number. A "case" may be equivalent to one application examined separately, or to a number of applications which have been joined and are examined together (in other words, a single judgment may concern numerous applications).

b. judgments issued which find at least one violation

The researcher should indicate separately the number of judgments examining restored applications after a failure to comply with a unilateral declaration.

- c. decisions on friendly settlements issued
- d. decisions striking out applications based on unilateral declarations
- e. judgments classified as "leading cases" in which the supervision was closed by the Committee of Ministers
- f. judgments classified as "repetitive cases" in which the supervision was closed by the Committee of Ministers
- g. (i) judgments and (ii) decisions pending execution as regards individual or general measures or both of these
- h. judgments classified as "leading" cases in which the execution is pending for more than five years

The researcher should divide these cases into two groups with indication of the periods for which they are pending (first group: 5-10 years, second group: more than 10 years).

i. (i) judgments with indications of relevance for the execution "*Article 46*" of the Convention closed and (ii) the number of such judgments in which the execution is pending

"Article 46" cases are judgments by which the Court seeks to provide assistance to the respondent State in identifying the sources of the violations established and the type of individual and/or general measures that might be adopted in response. Indications related to individual measures can also be given under the section Article 41. j. (i) judgments for which the payment of just satisfaction was made within the deadline (total number) and – separately – (ii) those for which the payment of just satisfaction was made outside the deadline (total number) and (iii) those for which information on payment / and or default interest is awaited (total number)

When the Court awards just satisfaction to the applicant, it indicates in general a deadline within which the respondent State must pay the amounts awarded; normally, the time-limit is three months from the date on which the judgment becomes final.

k. (i) action plans/reports that have been submitted (total number) and, separately, (ii) the number of them which were submitted within the six-month deadline (total number)

Based on this information the researcher should also calculate the percentage of action plans/reports submitted within and outside the deadline. If any significant delay is observed in some instances, this should be specified in the analysis.

2. Please indicate the average time of:

The reference period in this set of question is 5 years, i.e. from January 2019 – December 2023

- a. the execution of a judgment under the enhanced supervision procedure
- b. the execution of terms of friendly settlement under the enhanced supervision procedure
- c. the execution of a judgment under the standard supervision procedure
- d. the execution of terms of friendly settlement under the standard supervision procedure
- e. the execution of a judgment with indication of relevance for the execution "Article 46" of the Convention

3. Is any of the above information and data presented and/ or published by any national source?

If yes, please specify the source and the type of information or/and data.

Presenting of the materials

The researcher is expected first to collect all relevant data and to present it in the form of tables that is included in the checklist (Section 7 below). At the point of collection, the researcher should verify and compare the data and information from various sources at the Council of Europe and (if applicable) at national level. On a few occasions, the researcher is also guided to calculate percentages. When information on the average period is requested (see under set of questions no. 2), the researcher should explain whether the indicated result is based on a calculation of all existing instances or the majority of them (in which case the range of the sample should be specified).

The analysis of the information collected over the reference periods should first allow a general indication of any increase/decrease in communicated applications, judgments and friendly settlements, as well as of executed or still pending cases (all research questions should be examined). It is also suggested to indicate any such tendency regarding the length of procedures. In addition, the researcher should indicate any important (more than 10%) increase or decrease in the number of case load, executed cases or in the average time of execution.

Once the researcher describes whether a relatively stable, increasing, decreasing or fluctuating situation can be observed regarding the above data for the reference period, they should then combine this piece of information with information collected under subsections 5.2 – 5.5. Thus, for example, the researcher should compare the information gathered under this subsection with any changes in the regulatory framework, any legislative, or other changes (or lack of changes) regarding the coordination authority or the execution processes, any increase/decrease in the resources (financial, human, material and technical) of the coordination mechanism or any change (or lack thereof) in the practices under the supervision process. While the changes in this data may not necessarily be attributable directly to the contextual factors collected/ assessed under subsections 5.2-5.5, the researchers are expected to explore and explain if such a correlation exists.

Another factor that should be taken into account during the assessment is the type of cases which may (or may not) be executed expediently. As it will be described under Section 6, particular weight should be given to dealing with leading cases and other special cases and any delays that are observed in their execution. The existence or absence of a national source containing some or all the data/ information which are described above is also a factor to be considered and analysed by the researcher.

5.2. Coordination

This subsection concerns the legal and practical arrangements for the coordination of execution of judgments and decisions of the Court.

Responding to the questions below will generally require desk-based research in the form of:

- a) a review and analysis of relevant legislative and related material and
- b) seeking information from the coordination authority, as well as from others who may play a role in this process.

Certain questions only require specific information (such as the title of an institution or of legislation but, where applicable, the relevant web link to the source of information should also be provided). Other questions will first require a Yes or No response, but will then also entail a need to provide certain specified information or explanation relating to the response concerned.

The responses regarding all such information and explanation should, where feasible, be double-checked with several sources, including any National Human Rights Institution ("NHRI") and non-governmental organisations ("NGOs") active in the area of execution of judgments and decisions of the Court. Where this is not possible, or where such secondary sources do not exist, this should be indicated and explained.

4. What is the formal title of the authority or person responsible for coordinating the execution process (hereinafter "the coordination authority")?

Please specify the title.

5. Is this coordination authority the same as the Agent before the Court?

Yes/No

If Yes, is it a discrete unit within the Department of the Agent?

Yes/No

If No, Please explain what reasons have been given for the separation of the coordination authority and the Agent and by whom these have been given.

6. When was this coordination authority assigned its mandate?

Please specify the date.

7. What is the legal basis for the role of the coordination authority?

Please specify the title of the instrument concerned and indicate whether it is a law, a regulation or some other form of arrangement.

8. Are any published criteria applied for appointing the person who heads the coordination authority or holds this position?

Yes/No

If Yes, what are these criteria? Please specify whether they relate to any of the following: a. Legal qualification Yes/No b. Human rights background/experience/knowledge Yes/No c. Other Yes/No (If Yes, please indicate) In all cases where the answer is Yes, please also give details regarding the criteria concerned.

9. What is the legal status of the coordination authority?

Please specify whether it is one of the following:
a. A separate governmental department or office
Yes/No
b. A unit or office within a ministry
Yes/No
c. An autonomous agency (i.e. not part of a ministry or government department or office)
Yes/No
d. Other
Yes/No (if Yes, please indicate)
Please also specify what was the reason for the legal status adopted.

10. Are there any restrictions (guarantees) regarding the removal of the person who heads the coordination authority?

Yes/No

If Yes, Please specify the restrictions (guarantees) and the legal basis for them.

11. Is any duration prescribed for the period that the head of the coordination authority can hold that position?

Yes/No

If Yes, Please specify the duration and whether there can be a re-appointment

12. What competences or responsibilities have been given to the coordination authority

In particular, is it able/required to:

- a. arrange for the translation and dissemination of judgments and decisions of the Court that should be executed Yes/No
- b. request information from the relevant authorities which these must provide Yes/No
- c. define steps needed to be taken for the purpose of execution Yes/No
- d. convene meetings of representatives of public authorities and the legislature to consider or determine such steps Yes/No
- e. set deadlines for relevant authorities to propose measures required for execution Yes/No
- f. propose legislative amendments Yes/No
- g. propose budgetary changes for measures required for execution Yes/No
- h. disburse money for awards of just satisfaction Yes/No
- i. discuss the issues in respect of execution with (i) the applicant
 - Yes/No

(ii) National Human Rights Institution(s) (NHRI)

Yes/No

(iii) non-governmental organisations (NGOs) Yes/No

- j. prepare action plans/reports for submission to the DEJ Yes/No
- k. provide the legislature with a periodic report on issues relating to execution Yes/No
- I. exercise any functions/responsibilities not listed Yes/No
- m. if Yes, please specify them

Please also indicate what were the reasons (if known) for the coordination authority not having any of the foregoing competences or responsibilities.

13. If the coordination authority does not have any or certain of these competences or responsibilities, which government body (if any) exercises them and what is the basis for it doing this?

Please specify the government body (or bodies) concerned, which of these particular competences or responsibilities it (or they) exercise and the reason for that body (or bodies) exercising them. Please also indicate whether there are any of these competences or responsibilities which no government body exercises and, if so, whether any reason has been given for this.

14. Are there meetings of representatives of public authorities and the legislature to consider or determine steps needed to be taken for the purpose of execution, is this a regular/formal part of the execution process?

Yes/No

If Yes, Please specify:

- a. what is the legal basis for holding such meetings and their composition
- b. which public authorities take part in it, and
- c. whether there is any provision in law or any practice for the participation in them of a NHRI and NGOs and (if so) who decides on their participation
- d. how regular are these meetings
- e. are the results of these meetings kept on record in any specific way, if yes where and how?

If No, Please specify whether there was a specific reason for not holding such meetings of representatives of public authorities and the legislature.

15. If there is no regular/formal basis for meetings of representatives of public authorities and the legislature to consider steps required for execution, are they sometimes held?

Yes/No

If Yes, Please specify:

- a. what have been the reasons for convening them
- b. how frequently has this occurred
- c. what is the legal basis for holding them
- d. who has been responsible for convening them and
- e. what (if any) involvement has there been in them of a NHRI and NGOs
- f. are the results of these meetings kept on record in any specific way, if yes where and how?
- 16. Have there been any ad hoc institutional arrangements for the purpose of executing judgments and decisions of the Court?

Yes/No

If Yes, Please specify:

- a. what have been the reasons for making these arrangements
- b. how frequently has this occurred
- c. what is the legal basis for making these arrangements
- d. who has been responsible for establishing these arrangements
- e. what (if any) involvement has there been in making these arrangements of a NHRI and NGOs?

17. Are there any arrangements for cooperation/exchanges with the authority responsible for coordinating the execution process in other member states of the Council of Europe?

Yes/No

If Yes, Please specify what has been:

- a. the nature of such cooperation/exchanges
- b. the means of achievement
- c. their frequency
- 18. Has there been any review of the arrangements for coordinating the execution process since January 2013?

Yes/No

If Yes, Please specify:

- a. who carried out this review
- b. what (if any) recommendations for change were made
- c. the reasons for any recommendations made
- d. the extent to which any recommendations made were implemented
- e. the reasons given for not implementing any recommendations made

5.3 Execution procedures

This subsection proposes guidelines for collecting information about the execution process and for its further analysis. Under this subsection, the researcher should focus on ascertaining whether the domestic procedures are sufficient to lead to the full execution of the Court's judgment or decision. In this sense, the subsection proposes the researcher to review first the legal framework and the reforms of the execution process and then to study the process of implementation of individual and general measures. The execution of special cases, namely those classified under the enhanced supervision by the Committee of Ministers, requires separate research and analysis. For these reasons, the questions in this subsection have been categorised under

four headings: (i) overview of the execution procedures, (ii) implementation of execution measures, (iii) ensuring the effectiveness of remedies and (iv) execution of special cases.

5.3.1. Overview of the execution procedures

5.3.1.1. Legal framework

19. Is the process of execution governed by special legislation?

Yes/No

If Yes, Describe briefly:

the key provisions of such legislation for an overview (principles, procedures, responsible authorities, etc.)

If No, Describe:

the relevant provisions or the general legal framework regulating the enforcement of domestic courts' decisions if it is applicable to the execution of the Court's judgments

20. What is the legal status of judgments and decisions of the Court at the national level?

Please specify

Are they directly enforceable as domestic writs of execution?

Please specify

21. Does the law recognise friendly settlements or unilateral declarations as titles for the execution?

Yes/No

If No, Please explain:

how they are being classified; do they fall into the same category of enforcement titles as judgments?

22. Does the national law foresee sanctions for non-compliance with the Court's judgments or decisions?

Yes/No

If yes, Please provide details of sanctions, procedure and the examples, if any.

5.3.1.2. Reforms

23. Has the execution process been subjected to reforms throughout the research period, namely in part of changing legislation or practices of execution, other than those concerning the coordination authority?

Yes/No

If yes, Please specify what key changes have been introduced

24. Have these reforms introduced special technical tools facilitating the execution process, other than those reforming the coordination mechanisms (e.g. databases; electronic means of communication; translation engines; digital case-file management; electronic summons etc.)?

Please specify

25. Are there any proposals under consideration by the authorities to reform the execution process, other than those concerning the coordination authority?

Yes/No

If yes, Please specify:

a. what do these proposals contain and what are their prospects?

If no, Please specify:

a. do the authorities envisage reforming or discuss the potential need of reforming the execution process?

5.3.2. Implementation of execution measures

5.3.2.1. Individual measures

Just satisfaction

26. How are issues arising from the payment of just satisfaction resolved? Have the authorities introduced any special mechanisms (e.g., e-banking, special accounts, etc.) or procedures (e.g., administrative complaints, judicial control) for that purpose?

Please specify

27. Does the procedure for payment of just satisfaction differ depending on whether it originates from a judgment, friendly settlement, or unilateral declaration?

Please specify

28. How do the authorities plan the costs for paying just satisfaction? Is there any special financial planning for that purpose?

Please specify

Re-examination

29. Does the law provide the possibility of re-examination¹⁰ of administrative, civil, criminal, disciplinary or other cases?

Yes/No

If yes, Please specify whether there is a possibility for re-investigation of criminal, administrative, or disciplinary cases.

30. Can the coordination authority intervene in the process of re-examination?

Yes/No

If yes, Please specify in what capacity (e.g. direct intervention, on behalf of an applicant, as a third-party intervener, amicus curiae, etc.).

31. Can the coordination authority initiate re-examination?

Yes/No

If yes, Please specify, on what grounds?

32. Within what timeframes and by what procedure may the coordination authority initiate a re-examination?

Please specify, in relation to:

- reopening of judicial cases and re-investigation of closed criminal cases, separately;
- modalities of initiating re-examination by the coordination authority (e.g. forwarding the Court's judgements, adopting a decision, lodging official requests or applications for review, third-party interventions or amicus curae, etc.);
- possibility to initiate re-examination quickly, at early stages of the Court's proceedings, to avoid time-baring;
- time limits for the authorities to examine the request for re-examination and give feedback to the coordination authority.
- 33. Can it initiate re-examination only on behalf of the applicant or by its own motion?

Please explain

^{10.} The Methodology uses "re-examination" as the generic term which includes reopening of court proceedings.

34. Can cases be exceptionally re-examined after the elapse of prescription period?

Please explain

Other measures of individual relief

35. Have there been cases in which the authorities implemented forms of individual relief other than paying just satisfaction and re-examination (e.g. revocation of expulsion orders, restoration of child-parent contacts, custody, public apologies, amnesties and pardons, return of property, deletion of DNA profiles or criminal records, early release from prison, assurance not to expel a foreign national and other diplomatic assurances, etc.)?

Please explain

36. Have such requests for relief been rejected and, if yes, on what grounds?

Please explain

5.3.2.2. General measures

Substantive analysis of general measures is not required; only procedural aspects should be researched.

Dissemination and publication

37. How the judgments against the member state under consideration are translated, made public, and sent to the relevant authorities responsible for execution?

Please explain

38. Are judgments against other member states disseminated?

Yes/No

If yes, Please specify: to whom?

39. Are the Committee of Ministers' resolutions and decisions concerning execution disseminated?

Yes/No

If yes, Please specify: to whom?

Changes in legislation and practices

40. Have judgments and decisions of the Court led to changes of legislation, investigative, prosecutorial, administrative practices and the case-law of courts?

If yes, Please specify:

how these changes have been initiated?

41. Does the coordination authority analyse changes in legislation, in practices and case-law in general and in particular following the Court's judgments?

If yes, please explain and clarify whether the coordination authority also makes any assessment as to their impact for the purpose of execution

42. Has it exerted influence over the process of changes?

Please explain

43. Does any other authority, other than the coordination authority, analyse these changes?

Please explain

44. Have any studies been carried out concerning the need of changes in legislation, practices and case-law following the execution of the Court's judgments?

If yes, Please explain:

what was their impact?

5.3.3. Ensuring the effectiveness of remedies

The research should primarily overview the procedures of introducing (or improving) remedies following pilot and *"Article 46"* judgments, but it may cover other similar situations.

45. What are the most noticeable examples of introducing (or improving) remedies following the Court's judgments?

Please explain

46. What was the role of the coordination authority in the process of introduction or improvement of such remedies?

Please explain

5.3.4. Execution of special cases

47. Does the execution process distinguish and prioritise judgments or decisions for special execution procedures, such as those cases classified under the enhanced supervision by the Committee of Ministers?

If yes, Please explain what are the criteria used for this purpose.

48. Do the authorities take account of the criteria for classifying cases under the enhanced supervision by the Committee of Ministers?¹¹

Please explain

49. Do the authorities prioritise cases older than five years or have any tools for closer scrutiny of such cases?

^{11.} For these criteria, see, Procedure and working methods for the Committee of Ministers' Human Rights meetings, Rapporteur Group on Human Rights, 30 March 2016.

If yes, please explain

* The research methods proposed for collecting information under this subsection are similar to the methods to be used for subsection 5.4.

5.4. Supervision process

This subsection focuses on the process of oversight of execution of judgments. This process is looked at from two interconnected angles: one concerned with supervision at the national level (by executives, legislature and courts) and the other relating to the interrelation between national supervisors and the Council of Europe, looking predominantly at the DEJ.

5.4.1. Domestic supervision of execution

50. What are the mechanisms (executive and/or legislative) that supervise and review execution of judgments and decisions of the Court?

Please explain

51. At what level is the supervision taking place (Ministers, their Deputies, department leads, the legislature, the ombudsperson or NHRI)?

Please explain

52. Does this involve a process of internal periodic reporting within the executive branch? Are these reports published?

Please explain

53. Are there legally or conventionally prescribed reporting requirements regarding the execution process before the legislature? If yes, who should present such a report?

Please explain

54. Does the legislature have a special structure in its composition to supervise the process of execution (a committee/sub-committee)?

Please explain

If yes, is this structure dedicated exclusively to the execution of the Court's judgments or does it also have other functions?

55. If the execution of a judgment requires a legislative change, are there special arrangements to propose such changes before the legislative body/bodies? If yes, what are they?

Please explain

56. Can the lack of progress in execution of judgments be reviewed by national courts or other State bodies?

Please explain

57. Are there any other internal mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of the execution at domestic level and follow-up, if it is found to be insufficient?

Please explain

58. What, if any, role does civil society play in supervision of execution of judgments and decisions?

Please explain

5.4.2. Cooperation with the Council of Europe in supervision of execution

59. Is there technical cooperation between the domestic bodies responsible for execution and the Council of Europe? If yes, how is it organised and what perceived effect does it have?

Please explain

60. What is the nature of cooperation between the DEJ and national authorities during the reporting period?

Please explain

61. How often do the coordination authority or other high-ranking officials (e.g., ministries, secretary of States; etc.) participate at the DH-meetings? How efficient is this participation?

Please explain

62. What are the effects and outcomes of the Committee of Ministers' decisions and interim resolutions adopted in the concrete cases?

Please explain

The methods listed below are expected to be used to answer the questions in this subsection; if some of these methods are impossible to use, the reasons for that should be briefly articulated by the researcher.

Desk research

Desk research should identify, describe and explain the legal framework of the supervision of execution of the judgments of the Court at the domestic level; it will also provide the key 'players' in the field and relations between them. Ordinarily, the supervision of execution of judgments is done by the parliament, ministries of justice or foreign affairs, office of the prosecutor, judiciary, ombudsperson and NHRIs. However, the researcher might include other bodies depending on national particularities. The legal competences of these state bodies should be described, for instance, what remedies and sanctions they might resort to if they find the execution ineffective. The researcher might want to look into the internal regulations of the Court's judgments or decisions and judgments of international bodies and describe their working methods. The researcher might wish to compare the competences of different bodies in this area and consider whether the competences are properly allocated.

The desk research in relation to the cooperation between the national authorities and the DEJ should include the review of the documents submitted to the DEJ and those which are uploaded to HUDOC-EXEC. The researcher might also examine national decisions by the relevant bodies implementing the judgments if they are available.

Semi-structured interviews

The researcher might wish to interview the key 'players' in the area of supervision of judgments. The aim of these interviews would be to test how the legal framework, established through the desk research is applied in real life. The researcher might wish to interview relevant representatives of the national parliament, office of the prosecutor, judiciary, ombudsperson, NHRIs and civil society if relevant. The researcher needs to justify the number of interviewees, how and why they were selected. However, the interviews are time-consuming and therefore it is not expected that the researcher will conduct many of such interviews. The questions asked should reflect the research questions identified above. A lot of aspects of the cooperation between the domestic bodies and the DEJ are practice based and therefore semi-structured interviews are crucial for this part of this project. The relevant stakeholders can be asked questions related to the nature of their collaboration with the DEJ and other relevant departments of the Council of Europe. The particularities of this collaboration should also be examined in these interviews, focus group meetings or questionnaires.

Questionnaires

If arranging the interviews is seen as impractical or too time consuming, the information can be retrieved through the questionnaires which can be shared among the relevant stakeholders.

Case studies

In the context of this subsection the researcher might take a particularly successful example of supervision of execution at the domestic level and present it in their report. This example can relate to the execution of a particular case or a line of case-law. It can also look at specific techniques of execution from a particular body that can be used as an example of good practice, or practice that can be improved.

Presenting of the materials

It is suggested that the material in this subsection is presented in a form of narrative while dealing with the specific questions listed above. The researcher should start by describing relevant legislative framework. The researcher can then include the most representative citations from the stakeholders or refer to case studies. For example, if in response to questions in subsection 5.4.2, the researcher would like to use a case study of a particularly successful way of collaboration between the DEJ and the domestic bodies responsible for execution they can briefly explain the context of collaboration and highlight the reasons why this collaboration led to positive results. So, the answers will be mostly descriptive with some assessment of possible successes or challenges related to specific questions in their country of study.

5.5. Resources

This subsection proposes a set of questions concerned with certain factors essential for the effective functioning of the coordination authority. The questions concern the staff of the coordination authority, their funding, and the material and technical conditions in which they function. The answers to these questions should be put in context with all the other information collected under the previous subsections.

5.5.1. Human resources

63. How many persons work in the staff of the coordination authority?

Please specify

- a. The total number of persons
- b. The number of persons who work full-time
- c. The number of persons who work part-time (whether or not they have other responsibilities in the Agent's office or some other government body)
- d. The number of persons who work without remuneration (e.g., interns)
- e. Whether these persons work exclusively in issues related to the execution of ECtHR judgments and decisions and if not what other duties they have
- 64. Does the administrative assistance for the coordination authority come from its own secretariat or from one belonging to some other body (e.g., from the secretariat of a ministry)?

Please specify

65. Who decides on (a) the level of staffing of the coordination authority and (b) the allocation of resources for its operation?

Please specify

66. Who decides on the appointment of staff to the coordination authority, and how is this done?

Please specify, including by indicating what hiring criteria are applicable to those who work on execution.

67. What (if any) provision is there for training the staff working on execution for the coordination authority?

Please specify in particular

- a. whether there is a legal requirement/process for training of staff working on execution
- b. whether they undergo initial training before starting their work
- c. whether in service training is regular and, if so, at what intervals does it occur
- d. who decides on the curricula of this and how is this done?

68. Has the head of the coordination authority or any of its staff ever been seconded to the DEJ?

Yes/No

If yes, Please specify

a. the duration of any such secondments in the last five years occurred b. the number of such secondments in the last five years

69. Have there been secondments within the last five years of the coordination authority or any of its staff to (a) the State's permanent representation before the Council of Europe, (b) human rights bodies within the Council of Europe (such as the Commissioner for Human Rights and the CPT) and (c) other international human rights bodies (such as OSCE/ ODIHR and the UNHCHR)?

Yes/No

If Yes, Please specify the number in each case

70. How many vacancies arose during the reference period and how long it took to fill them?

Please specify

71. Were any vacancies remained unfilled at the moment of research and if so, how many?

Please specify

5.5.2 Financial resources

72. Who decides on the annual budget for the operation of the coordination authority (i.e., staff salaries, accommodation, travel expenses)?

Please specify

(a) the process for determining the annual budget for the operation of the coordination authority and

(b) the criteria (e.g., is it related to the number of cases to be dealt with?) by which this determination is made.

73. Does the budget adequately cover all the needs of the coordination authority?

Yes/No

If No, please specify the grounds for considering the annual budget to be inadequate.

74. Are the salary/wages levels of the coordination authority's staff satisfactory for recruitment purposes (in comparison to median and minimum rates per economy)?

Please specify

75. Does the coordination authority participate in the financial planning of its budget?

Please specify

76. Are there any extrabudgetary funds available (e.g. funding from the Council of Europe cooperation projects, EU development projects, foreign sponsorship, private donations, etc.)?

Yes/No

If yes please specify the purposes for which they are used.

5.5.3 Technical and material resources

77. Does the coordination authority have a case management system and is it computer based?

Please specify

78. How does the coordination authority keep records of its activity to ensure handover of the cases, transitioning, and institutional memory?

Please specify

79. Does the coordination authority have its own web page and who is responsible for updating it?

Please specify

80. Are there any other practices in place aiming to facilitate the functioning of the coordination authority and its staff (e.g. special supply contracts, technical or IT assistance, special software or hardware, etc.)?

Please specify

81. Does the coordinating authority have an office that is separate from other official bodies?

Please explain by clarifying where it is located.

82. Who is responsible for allocating an office to the coordination authority?

Please specify

83. Is the office of the coordination authority capable of accommodating all its staff?

Yes/No

If Yes, would that office be capable of accommodating any additional staff that might be required in the future?

If No, from where do the staff who cannot be accommodated in it work?

* The research methods proposed for collecting information under this subsection are similar to the methods to be used for subsection 5.4.

6. Evaluation methods

Sections 4 and 5 of the Methodology set up research questions and corresponding methods for collection and description of information under specific topics structured in subsections 5.1-5.5. Both the questions and the methods have been already formulated to include criteria for assessing the efficiency of the execution mechanisms. For example, questions pertaining to the country overview (subsection 5.1) may lead to conclusions about the results and time of execution, while those in the subsection concerning the institutional organisation of coordination mechanisms (5.2) and the resources destined for their functioning (subsection 5.5) could help evaluating whether the national authorities are autonomous and well-equipped to deal with the workload of cases. The assessment of the execution process (subsection 5.3) and supervision (subsection 5.4), on the other hand, retains certain specific criteria, which should be deducted from Recommendation (2008)2 and its Guide,¹² as well as other relevant documents adopted by the Council of Europe bodies.

For example, in Recommendation (2008)2, the Committee of Ministers referred to the 'rapid execution' and developed ten recommendations to ensure an efficient execution, mentioning co-ordinators, execution measures, dissemination, synergies, visibility and promoting acquittance, etc. The Steering Committee of Human Rights ("CDDH"), following this lead, identified six guiding themes to evaluate good practices of the execution, ranging from status and role of coordinators to the means of resolving persistent problems.¹³ The Parliamentary Assembly has also referred to a number of issues, which, in the end, could be considered as criteria for assessing the efficiency of execution and parliamentary oversight.¹⁴ Accordingly, the execution processes in the countries can be evaluated with reference to a variety of criteria.

^{12.} Committee of Ministers and CDDH, 'Guide to good practice on the implementation of Recommendation (2008)2 of the Committee of Ministers on efficient domestic capacity for rapid execution of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights (CM(2017)92-add3final)' (2017).

^{13.} Committee of Ministers and CDDH, 'Guide for Recommendation (2008)2', para. 10.

^{14.} PACE, 'Resolution 1226 (2000) "Execution of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights'" (2000); PACE, *National parliaments as guarantors of human rights in Europe. Handbook for parliamentarians* (Council of Europe Pub., 2018). See also Resolutions 2494 (2023), 2358 (2021), 2178 (2017), 2075 (2015), 1787 (2011), 1516 (2006) and Recommendations 2110 (2017) and 2079 (2015) on the implementation of judgments of the Court.

The present Methodology compiles all these criteria in a coherent way to ensure their consistent use in the country studies. But, first and foremost, it proposes to assess the efficiency of the national execution mechanisms with close reference to the topics of the research questions classified in the respective subsections of Section 5.

The information gathered under the **country overview** subsection should be used for a general understanding of the context in which the execution system functions in a particular country. The statistical data collected answering the questions from subsection 5.1 ensure an overall vision about the caseload and pressure over the system of execution and the coordination mechanisms. The researchers may wish to cross-refer to these data while they will be evaluating information collected under other three subsections.

In addition, the researchers are invited to evaluate the efficiency of the execution mechanisms in view of the following questions:

- a. If appointed by the country concerned, has the coordination authority been conferred with necessary powers and authority to:
 - ► acquire relevant information,
 - liaise with persons or bodies responsible at the national level for deciding on the measures necessary to execute the judgment and
 - ▶ take or initiate relevant measures to accelerate the execution process?

Insofar as the answer is No, the researches should inquiry whether this is actually significant in practice and, if so, indicate the most pertinent shortcomings.

b. How the authorities implement recommendations of the Committee of Ministers formulated in Recommendation CM/Rec(2021)4 on the publication and dissemination of the European Convention on Human Rights, the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights and other relevant texts, especially the Committee of Ministers' resolutions and decisions adopted in the execution process?

The dissemination activity is one aspect to which both the Committee of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly paid particular attention in the context of evaluating the efficiency of the execution process.

Insofar as the answer is No, the researchers should indicate what is the most significant impediment to ensuring that this occurs.

c. Have the *vademecum* prepared by the Council of Europe on the execution process, as well as the database of the Council of Europe with information on

the state of execution in all cases pending before the Committee of Ministers, been disseminated to relevant actors and has their use been encouraged?

- Insofar as the answer is No, the researches should indicate whether this is because of:
- Linguistic obstacles;
- Doubts about their usefulness;
- Some other reason (to be specified).
- d. Are the relevant actors in the execution process sufficiently acquainted with the Court's case-law as well as with the Committee of Ministers' relevant recommendations and practice?

Insofar as the answer is No, the researches should indicate the factors that lead to not having such an acquaintance.

e. How timely do the authorities react, identify and implement measures necessary to execute judgments and decisions?

The "**timely execution**" can be evaluated using similar methods of assessing the reasonability of the length of any proceedings but taking into consideration the specificity of the execution process of the Court's judgments, as follows:

- firstly, determining the reference period (dies ad quo and dies ad quem)¹⁵; if the legislation sets up some time-limits, whether these are respected and if not, then why;
- secondly, drawing priorities in the execution of certain cases or groups of cases classified by the Committee of Ministers under the enhanced or standard supervision procedures (e.g. the enhanced supervision cases needing urgent implementation of individual cases require speedy execution, while cases classified by the Committee of Ministers as involving complex issues may need more time for implementation);
- ▶ thirdly, evaluating the behaviour of the actors involved in the process;
- fourthly, assessing the expediency of the preparation of action plans, including whether the authorities envisage indicative timetables and whether they comply with the time limits recommended by the Committee of Ministers for the preparation and updating of action plans (e.g., "6 months" or "before the Committee of Ministers' DH-meetings");

^{15.} Since it takes time for the Committee of Ministers to process the action reports of the member states, the *dies ad quem* should be determined with reference to the date of implementation of general and individual measures.

► fifthly, observing the degree of compliance with the timeframes that the authorities set up for themselves in the action plans, as well as with the time-limits set up by the Committee of Ministers' decisions and by the Court's judgments (e.g. time-limits for implementation of urgent individual measures and payments of just satisfaction, introduction of remedies following pilot-judgments or "Article 46 judgments").

f. How diligently do the authorities give effect to the judgments in terms of implementing individual and general measures?

In the context of the present Methodology, the standard of diligence means the use of all reasonable measures required by the judgment or decision of the Court. The following non-exhaustive questions are recommended to evaluate the diligence:

- Whether, in practice or by law, national authorities, including coordinators, differentiate between individual and general measures during the execution process? Do they accept that general execution measures may be necessary following a judgement, given that the Court is typically seen as a court that delivers individual justice?
- ► Have the authorities shown the so-called principled resistance¹⁶ in some cases? If yes, what where the reasons?
- Whether there are some particular execution measures that could be evaluated as being particularly challenging for the country concerned (e.g. reexamination of cases, payments of just satisfaction, introduction of remedies or changing of practices, etc)? If yes, then explain what practices and why.
- Have the execution cases ever been classified into leading and repetitive, or grouped by the problems they raise, like in the Committee of Ministers' supervision proceedings?
- g. How do the authorities address special cases of resolving persistent and complex problems with the execution, classified under enhanced supervision by the Committee of Ministers?

In terms of the present Methodology, this means that the execution system might develop special procedures for special cases requiring a particular attention beyond regular execution process. These exclusive cases are being supervised by the Committee of Ministers under enhanced procedures.

- h. Whether the authorities assign special attention to some high-profile cases, pilot judgments or "*Article 46 judgments*"? Do they make a clear distinction between these and other regular cases?
- i. If the authorities introduced specific remedies or adopted special measures, exceptional from other regular cases, please describe and analyse them separately.
- j. Have there been any particular obstacles to ensuring that the necessary remedial action is being taken including at a high, political level to address a significant persistent problem in the execution process?
- k. Does the state retain good practices for an efficient execution?

As the CDDH explained, 'what is considered as a good practice in a specific State may not be applicable to another State, due to the diversity of legal, constitutional and political systems'. 17 It however, provided some guidance as to how to classify an action or a measure as "good practice" by answering, in principle, the following set of questions:

Whether an action or a measure:18

- was endorsed by the Court, the Committee of Ministers and/or the Parliamentary Assembly?
- ▶ strengthens the authority of the actors in charge of the execution?
- enables the enhanced involvement of all relevant actors in the execution process at national level?
- ensures the visibility of and promoting sufficient acquaintance with the execution process?
- > promotes the co-operation with the Committee of Ministers and the DEJ?
- ▶ helps to overcome a difficulty in the execution process at national level?

The CDDH avoided describing and defining negative practices, for which reason the choice of whether to indicate them in the country study rests at the researcher's discretion. The research, however, seeks to identify positive practices first and foremost. If researchers, nevertheless, decide to analyse a negative practice, the researcher should first determine whether describing such a negative practice allows to draw general lessons and helps find positive solutions.

^{16.} M. Breuer, 'The Concept of "Principled Resistance" to ECtHR Judgments: A Useful Tool to Analyse Implementation Deficits?' (2021) 12 *Journal of International Dispute Settlement* 250–70.

^{17. &#}x27;Guide for Recommendation (2008)2', para. 12.

^{18. &#}x27;Guide for Recommendation (2008)2', para. 11.

I. Have any useful measures been adopted to develop effective synergies, in particular:

- between relevant actors in the execution process either generally or in response to a specific judgment?
- between the coordination authority and the Committee of Ministers and the DEJ, to ensure an effective dialogue and prompt exchange of information?
- m. Is the parliament being involved or kept informed of the situation concerning execution of judgments and decisions of the Court and the measures being taken in this regard?

7. Checklist

his Section serves primarily to remind researchers to make sure that they have followed all indications, steps and methods specified in the Methodology and to ensure a harmonised collection, analysis and presentation of information.

7.1. Collection and analysis of information

| 1 | Do the collected and analysed data and information cover the entirety of the reference period, namely January 2013 until December 2023 (unless otherwise specified)? | |
|---|--|--|
| 2 | Do the collected and analysed data and information cover all research questions? | |
| 3 | Did you verify the accuracy of collected data by comparing it, where possible, with other (international and/ or national) sources as indicated by the Methodology? | |
| 4 | Are the data sufficient for you to describe thoroughly and conduct a substantive analysis of the mechanisms for execution under all five key subsections? | |
| 5 | Did you use the research methods (desk research, questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, focus groups, case studies) specified by the Methodology for the particular topics or issues? | |
| 6 | Did you respect the indications given for the application of each research method (e.g. were the questions of semi-structured interviews sufficiently open, are all interviews anonymised, did the interview questions reflect the research questions, was the transcript of the interviews confirmed with the interviewer, etc.)? | |

| 7 | Did you use all sources and material indicated in the Methodology for the desk research? | |
|----|--|--|
| 8 | Where indicated, did you seek information from other stakeholders who may play a role in the execution process? | |
| 9 | Where indicated, did you check the responses you received with relevant NHRI and/or NGOs? | |
| 10 | If you did not use the research methods specified for particular topics or issues, did you provide an explanation as to why the specified method cannot be used, or why another method is used instead? | |
| 11 | If addressing all questions specified by the Methodology is not possible, or if it seems appropriate to ask additional questions, did you indicate the relevant reasons? | |

7.2. Presentation of information

Structure of the presentation

| Use the your stu | following template for the presentation of udy: | |
|---------------------|--|--|
| I. | Abbreviations | |
| II. | Introduction | |
| III. | Purpose, scope and reference period of the research | |
| IV. | Analysis of key themes | |
| | A. Country overview | |
| | B. Institutional context | |
| | C. Execution procedures | |
| | D. Supervision process | |
| V. VI. | Evaluation of the existing mechanism List of sources used | |
| | | |

General guidelines



For the presentation of statistics under the country overview subsection (5.1 above) please use the following table

Please provide the numbers of:

| | Year | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |
|----|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| a. | Applications communicated to the government | | | | | | | | | | | |
| b. | Judgments with at least one violation | | | | | | | | | | | |
| c. | Decisions on friendly settlements | | | | | | | | | | | |
| d. | Decisions striking out applications based on unilateral declarations | | | | | | | | | | | |
| e. | Leading cases closed by the CM | | | | | | | | | | | |
| f. | Repetitive cases closed by the CM | | | | | | | | | | | |
| g. | (i) Judgments pending execution | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | (ii) Decisions pending execution | | | | | | | | | | | |

Please indicate the total number of leading cases in which execution is pending for:

| 5-10 years | more than 10 years |
|------------|--------------------|
| | |
| | |
| | |

Please provide the numbers of:

| | article 46" cases closed by the CM "Article 46" cases pending | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| ma (ii) . ma (iii) on | Judgments for which payment was ade within the deadline Judgments for which payment was ade outside the deadline Judgments for which information payment / and or default interest awaited | | | | | | |
| (ii) | Action plans/reports submitted hin the deadline Action plans/reports submitted tside the deadline | | | | | | |

Please provide the average time of:

| Year | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|
| Execution of a judgment under the enhanced supervision procedure | | | | | |
| b. Execution of terms of friendly settlement under the enhanced supervision procedure | | | | | |
| C. Execution of a judgment under the standard supervision procedure | | | | | |
| d. Execution of terms of friendly settlement under the standard supervision procedure | | | | | |
| e. Execution of a judgment with indication of relevance for the execution of "Article 46" of the Convention | | | | | |

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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.



