

2020 HELP NETWORK E- CONFERENCE

‘Marking 70 years of the ECHR in critical times’

Speaking points

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Chers membres du réseau HELP, chers participants et collègues,

C'est un grand plaisir pour moi de prendre la parole encore une fois pendant une Conférence HELP. Autant que je regrette profondément de ne pas pouvoir échanger avec vous tous en personne, je suis heureux que la technologie nous ait permis de nous réunir virtuellement.

Je voudrais tout d'abord remercier chaleureusement nos partenaires de la République Hellénique. Comme vous savez, la Conférence est organisée dans le cadre de la Présidence grecque du Comité des ministres du Conseil de l'Europe.

I will now turn to English:

Following Eva's announcement of the HELP strategy for the next year, I would like to briefly **recapitulate the developments** in the HELP Programme that you have heard and position them vis-à-vis the **CoE human rights policy**:

- 1) The **new courses** developed by HELP in the past year were presented to you. As you know they are developed jointly with the relevant content colleagues, in order to inbuild the Council of Europe in-house expertise. I will only remind of the Module on **Execution of Judgments of the ECtHR** produced jointly with the relevant CoE Department, or the course on **Alternatives to Immigration Detention**, based on an analysis and practical guide produced by the Steering Committee on Human Rights of the CoE. Similarly, for the courses being developed or updated in this period: the new version of the **Labour Rights** course is being produced jointly with the colleagues from the European Social Charter. And HELP is working on a course on Judicial Ethics, also building upon the CoE standards set by CEPEJ, and the Consultative Councils of European Judges and Prosecutors, respectively.

- 2) The existing **36 HELP courses** are free and available for all users of the HELP platform in more than **250 language versions** and this number is growing on a daily basis. We are immediately starting to work on **2 new courses** this summer: 1) Cybercrime and 2) Human rights in the armed forces. A third one on Anticorruption will follow. The HELP Platform at this moment now counts more than **66.000 users**.

- 3) The **projects** implemented by HELP and the plans for the future:
 - a. As you have heard, the implementation of both **HELP in the EU** and **HELP in the Western Balkans Projects** is being supported by the EU and is going well.
 - b. During last year's Conference we expressed our hope for EU support for a second phase of **HELP Radicalisation Prevention**. I am very glad to say that this hope materialised and the Project has started its second phase, also covering judicial responses to fighting terrorism and international cooperation on criminal matters.
 - c. In future we will be focusing on continuing and increasing the work with our partners from the **Russian Federation** and from the **Eastern Partnership** countries, for which we will need strong political but also financial commitment.
 - d. A thematic **Project on Refugees and Migrants, including Children**, has ended in 2019, but we are very much hoping to continue it in a second phase, in line with the implementation of the next CoE Action Plan on Refugees and Migrant Children.

- 4) **HELP, universities and OCEAN**: HELP's efforts to increasingly work with Universities will be given new impetus with the important initiative to which this afternoon is dedicated: the Open Council of Europe Academic Network (OCEAN). I am sure you will see the possibilities of creating synergies between HELP and OCEAN.

I would now like to reiterate three **key messages**:

1) The first one is the **transversality** of HELP's work:

As mentioned, when developing the courses, HELP works directly with colleagues from different CoE entities, including the European Court of Human Rights, and benefits from their expertise. This is paramount in the European legal area. You saw the concrete results of this expertise transformed into courses on topics such as **freedom of expression, protection of journalists, environment and human rights** and **alternatives to immigration detention**.

In addition, the transversality of HELP's work means that HELP courses are embedded in many **other cooperation projects of other CoE entities**. This increases the possibilities for your institutions and legal professionals to benefit from HELP courses.

Last but not least, this transversality enables us to have excellent coordination and co-operation with the different international partners. We have already had a few successful examples of combining efforts and resources with other international organisations. On this, I would just like to reiterate the appreciation for the co-operation with the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN), the Council of Bar and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE), the UNHCR, the OSCE/ODIHR and FRA, among others.

2) The second message is **flexibility**:

A very strong point of the HELP Methodology is its flexibility. HELP courses can be implemented in various modalities: entirely online or in a blended mode, with or without a physical event etc. In critical times like the present ones, HELP has opened up and adapted its working methods to be able to effectively respond to the requests of national and international partners.

Some of our partners (national training institutions for judges, prosecutors and lawyers) are already successfully introducing HELP courses in their national curricula and/or in their own e-learning platforms. Some of them are translating at their own initiatives and taking over these

implementation of HELP courses on their own funds. These are practices that we warmly praise, and we strongly encourage you to replicate in your respective countries.

3) And finally I would like to finish with the third key message: **support**.

When it comes to HELP, support is a reciprocal, two-way concept.

HELP is there to support you in your training endeavors, within our capacities, even more so in critical times like these. HELP courses are a resource that can be easily taken over by the institutions for training judges, prosecutors, lawyers, and even some other categories of professionals.

But in turn we count on your support as well. The HELP Programme functions with limited financial and human resources, and taking over the HELP courses in a more autonomous way by you and your institutions will be one way to support us. This goes in line with our repeated call that national training institutions integrate the HELP courses in their training curricula.

With this, I would like to greet you once again and leave you follow the part dedicated to the OCEAN initiative in the afternoon.

I sincerely hope that next year we will be able to interact in person.

Thank you for your attention!