

The European Union and the Council of Europe

A STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP



What are the EU's priorities at the Council of Europe?



Promote and protect human rights



Defend and consolidate democracy



Uphold and strengthen the rule of law

The European Union works closely with and supports the Council of Europe, as part of its efforts to promote effective multilateralism, as well as uphold a rules-based international order.

The European Union is the main institutional partner of the Council of Europe and main contributor to its extraordinary budget.

We both strive to advance our common values, goals and priorities building on our respective strengths and competences, while avoiding duplication and ensuring synergies.

Three pillars of cooperation

Political dialogue

Coordinate general directions and objectives of cooperation



Regular high-level contacts between EU and Council of Europe leaders as well as senior officials



Permanent diplomatic exchange through the EU Delegation in Strasbourg and the Council of Europe Liaison Office in Brussels

Global budget of programmes underway in 2024:
€240.3 million



Joint programmes

Carry out joint actions on the ground



Legal cooperation

Enhance synergies between the legal systems of the European Union and the Council of Europe

The EU participates in a number of Council of Europe conventions and Enlarged Partial Agreements.

Artificial Intelligence



Gender Equality



Fight against Environmental crime & Cybercrime



Data Protection



Holding Russia accountable for its aggression against Ukraine



Through our joint programmes with the Council of Europe, we provide policy and legislative expertise, and assistance with reform implementation and capacity-building to countries in the EU and other regions of strategic importance. Our technical cooperation brings beneficiaries closer to international and European standards on human rights, the rule of law and democracy.

OUTSIDE THE EU

There are three flagship regional programmes:

- the Partnership for Good Governance with Eastern Partnership countries
- the Horizontal Facility with the Western Balkans and Türkiye
- the South Programme with the Southern Mediterranean region

These programmes aim to:

- support administrative and judicial reforms
- strengthen justice and the rule of law
- fight corruption, cybercrime, economic crime and money laundering
- ensure access to digital evidence and support cybersecurity
- promote equality and non-discrimination
- foster gender equality and combat violence against women and children
- promote and protect freedom of expression and the media.

WITHIN THE EU

Technical Support Instrument (TSI)

Structural reform in the Member States on human rights, judicial, institutional and administrative matters, digitalisation, healthcare or the financial sector:

- implementing the Barnahus model/Children's House
- improving the juvenile justice system
- tackling money laundering and terrorism financing
- strengthening access to justice through mediation and legal aid
- implementing recommendations to enhance the capacity of justice systems.

Other thematic joint programmes

Underway in EU Member States include action on non-discrimination and tackling online hate speech, human rights education for legal professionals (HELP), the fight against cybercrime, as well as culture, heritage, youth and sport.

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR UKRAINE

We are committed to ensuring:

- full accountability for international crimes committed in and against Ukraine, particularly the crime of aggression
- reparations for the damage caused by the Russian Federation's war of aggression.

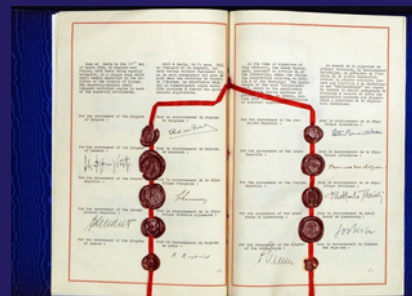
Together, we are working to establish a Special Tribunal for the crime of aggression against Ukraine and an international compensation mechanism for Ukraine.

EU ACCESSION TO THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Accession of the EU to the European Convention on Human Rights has been an objective of the EU for many years, as well as a legal obligation under the Lisbon Treaty.

Negotiations for the accession resumed in September 2020. The European Commission negotiates on behalf of the European Union with the current 46 Member States of the Council of Europe. In March 2023, the negotiators reached a provisional agreement. The completion of the accession process still requires several steps.

Accession will make it possible for the EU to be held accountable for potential violations of human rights, alongside its Member States in situations where an EU Member State implements EU law. Individuals will be able to bring cases before the European Court of Human Rights against the EU. It is a pivotal step in creating a pan-European legal space. Accession will mark an important milestone in the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms of individual citizens across Europe.



European Convention on Human Rights
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