Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Doc. 13582
10 July 2014

The European Convention on Human Rights: the need to reinforce the training of legal professionals

Reply to Recommendation[1]: Recommendation 2039 (2014)
Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers welcomes Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 2039 (2014) on "The European Convention on Human Rights: the need to reinforce the training of legal professionals", which it has transmitted to the Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH), for information and possible comments.

2. The Committee of Ministers agrees on the crucial importance of good training for law professionals on the European Convention of Human Rights and the case law of the European Court of Human Rights (the Court). It concurs with the Assembly's call on member States to reinforce the training of legal professionals.

3. The Committee of Ministers recalls its Recommendation Rec(2004)4 on the European Convention on Human Rights in university education and professional training, and notes that the CDDH followed up the initial national implementation of the recommendation, an activity that was concluded in 2006. The declarations adopted at the Interlaken (2010), Izmir (2011) and Brighton (2012) High-level Conferences on the Future of the Court also emphasised this issue. Regarding the proposal to update this recommendation, the Committee notes that this task appears in the terms of reference of the Committee of Experts on the Reform of the Court (DH-GDR) for 2014-2015, subject to the availability of resources.

4. The Committee of Ministers has on several occasions expressed its support for the Council of Europe's HELP programme, which was established specifically to support member States' implementation of the Convention at national level by enhancing the capacity of judges, lawyers and prosecutors to apply the Convention in their daily work. The Committee of Ministers welcomes the development of the HELP programme, for example, to include a focus on training in the Convention's admissibility criteria, considering that this latter aspect may assist in addressing the problem of the Court's caseload of clearly inadmissible applications.

5. The Committee of Ministers notes that the budget of the HELP programme has increased significantly in recent years. It is financed in the Programme and Budget 2014-2015 through the Ordinary Budget on the one hand and voluntary contributions on the other, in particular by the Human Rights Trust Fund (HRTF) which provides the larger part of the financing. The Committee of Ministers will keep the Assembly's recommendation in mind when it considers the Programme and Budget for future biennia.

1. Adopted at the 1204th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (2-3 July 2014).