

OVERVIEW

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EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS
COUR EUROPÉENNE DES DROITS DE L'HOMME

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Overview 1959-2021

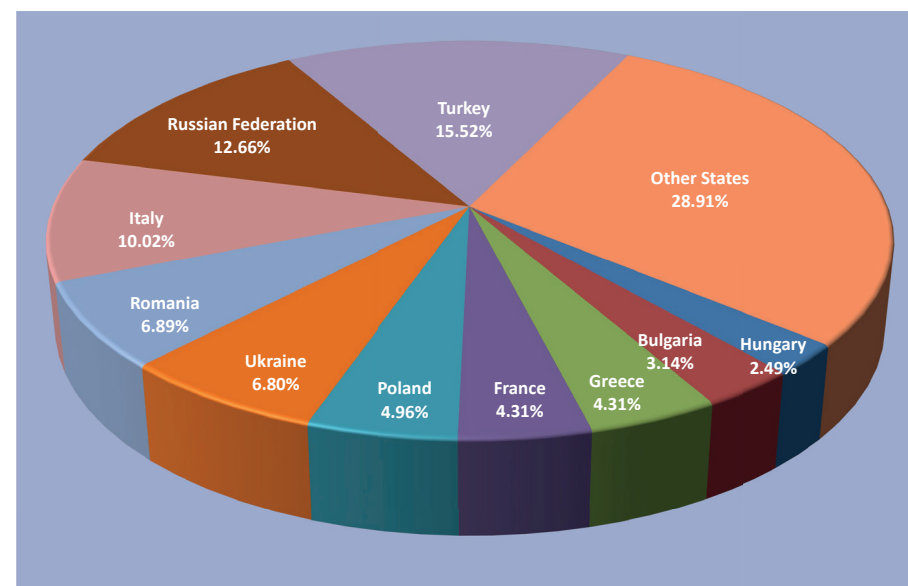
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Statistics 1959 to 2021

Judgments by State

Since it was established in 1959 the Court has delivered 24,511 judgments. Around 40% of these concerned 3 member States of the Council of Europe: Turkey (3,820), the Russian Federation (3,116) and Italy (2,466).

In 84% of the judgments it has delivered since 1959, the Court has found at least one violation of the Convention by the respondent State.



This document has been prepared by the Public Relations Unit, and does not bind the Court. It is intended to provide basic general information about the way the Court works. For more detailed information, please refer to documents issued by the Registry, available on the Court's website: www.echr.coe.int.

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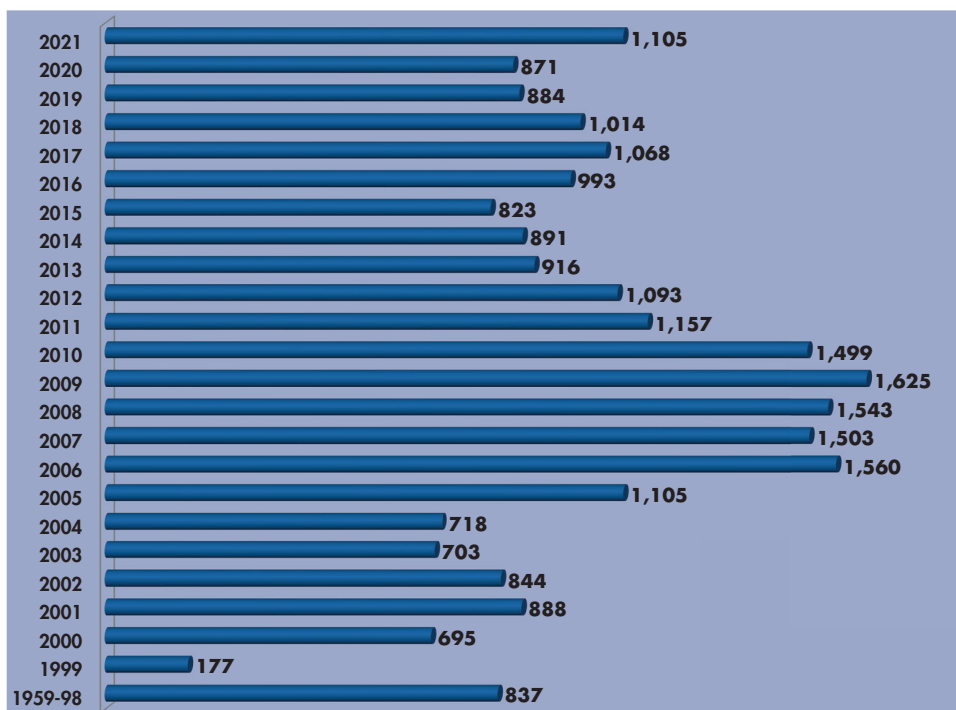
European Court of Human Rights
Public Relations Unit
Council of Europe
F-67075 Strasbourg cedex

Judgments delivered by the Court

In recent years the Court has concentrated on examining complex cases, and has decided to join certain applications which raise similar legal questions so that it can consider them jointly.

Although in some years the number of judgments delivered each year by the Court has decreased, more applications have been examined by it.

Since it was set up, the Court has decided on the examination of around 957,300 applications through a judgment or decision, or by being struck out of the list.



Throughput of applications 1959* - 2021

	Applications allocated to a judicial formation	Applications inadmissible or struck out	Applications declared or judgment delivered	Applications in which judgment was delivered	Total number of applications decided
	1959-2021	1959-2021	1959-2021	1959-2021	1959-2021
Albania	1 591	1 052	136		1 188
Andorra	109	98	9		107
Armenia	4 078	2 584	179		2 763
Austria	8 958	9 524	444		9 968
Azerbaijan	6 978	4 331	565		4 896
Belgium	4 884	5 233	338		5 571
Bosnia and Herzegovina	13 212	11 974	641		12 615
Bulgaria	18 515	17 092	942		18 034
Croatia	17 491	16 540	530		17 070
Cyprus	1 348	1 175	112		1 287
Czech Republic	14 016	13 612	287		13 899
Denmark	1 925	1 935	68		2 003
Estonia	3 807	3 682	82		3 764
Finland	5 890	5 689	193		5 882
France	35 258	33 064	1 243		34 307
Georgia	6 489	5 834	139		5 973
Germany	27 755	31 426	400		31 826
Greece	10 892	8 156	1 348		9 504
Hungary	25 352	23 775	931		24 706
Iceland	359	291	38		329
Ireland	1 085	1 119	39		1 158
Italy	50 538	41 623	3 468		45 091
Latvia	5 496	4 950	165		5 115
Liechtenstein	184	175	10		185
Lithuania	7 624	7 157	280		7 437
Luxembourg	724	715	51		766
Malta	534	329	141		470
Republic of Moldova	15 940	14 146	693		14 839
Monaco	120	104	6		110
Montenegro	3 594	3 276	93		3 369
Netherlands	11 593	11 536	203		11 739
North Macedonia	6 518	5 991	204		6 195
Norway	2 131	2 048	75		2 123
Poland	75 599	72 164	1 246		73 410
Portugal	4 668	3 712	544		4 256
Romania	87 964	78 572	3 732		82 304
Russian Federation	191 965	167 488	7 214		174 702
San Marino	136	95	25		120
Serbia	34 858	32 786	880		33 666
Slovak Republic	9 576	8 910	448		9 358
Slovenia	10 136	9 634	392		10 026
Spain	14 099	13 742	278		14 020
Sweden	10 554	10 481	155		10 636
Switzerland	7 908	7 794	221		8 015
Turkey	129 040	107 527	6 498		114 025
Ukraine	104 783	74 731	18 599		93 330
United Kingdom	23 197	23 296	1 869		25 165
TOTAL	1 019 471	901 168	56 154		957 322

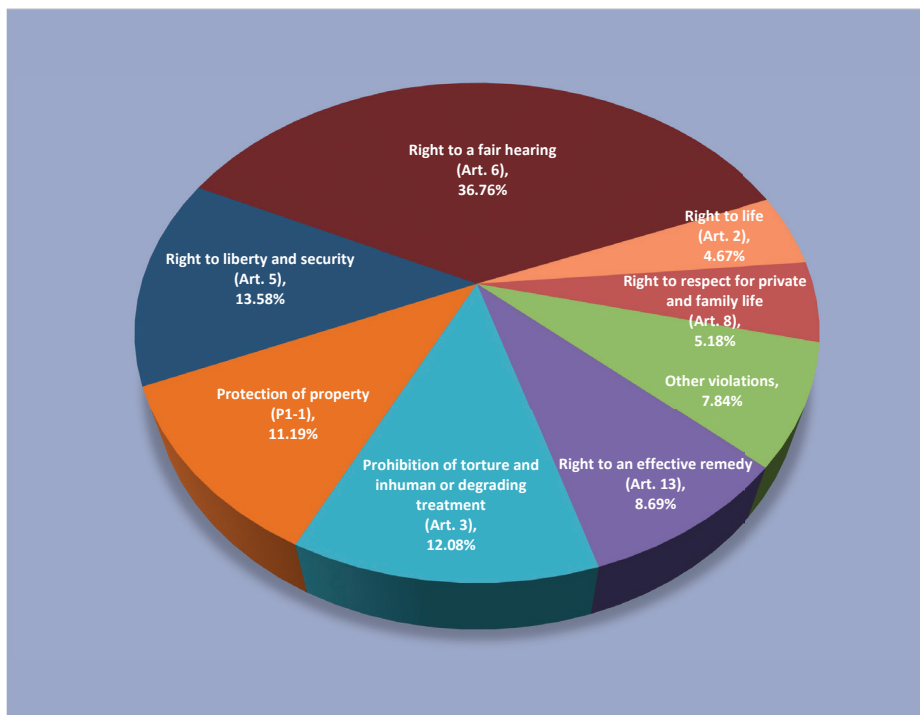
* This table includes cases dealt with by the European Commission of Human Rights prior to 1959.

Subject-matter of the Court's violation judgments (1959-2021)

Nearly 40% of the violations found by the Court have concerned Article 6 of the Convention, whether on account of the fairness (16.55%) or the length (18.28%) of the proceedings.

The second most frequently found violation has concerned the right to liberty and security (Article 5).

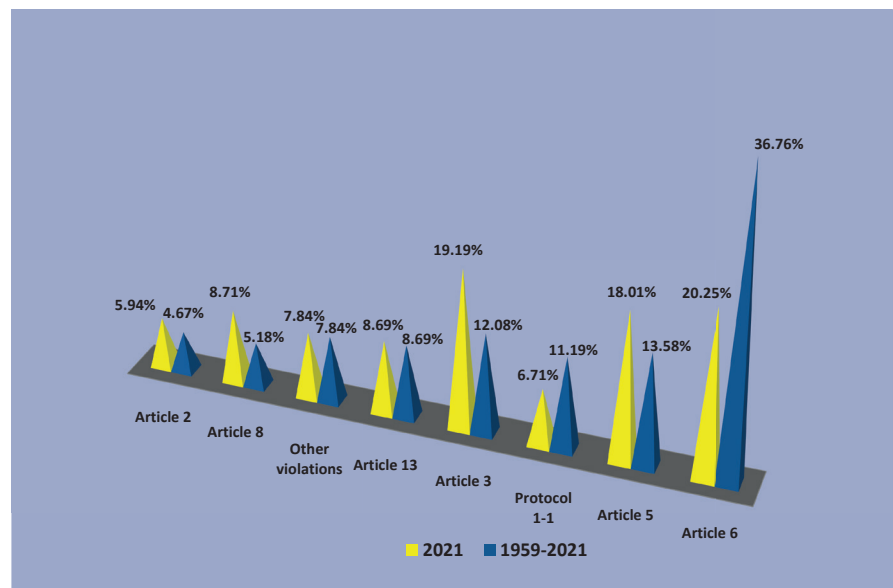
Lastly, in more than 16% of cases, the Court has found a serious violation of the Convention, concerning the right to life or the prohibition of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment (Articles 2 and 3).



Subject-matter of the Court's violation judgments (Comparative Graph 1959-2021 & 2021)

The violation most frequently found by the Court concerns Article 6 (right to a fair hearing), particularly with regard to the excessive length of the proceedings. In 2021 almost a quarter of all violations found by the Court related to this provision.

For a number of years, however, other violations of the Convention have been found increasingly frequently. In 2021 this was particularly the case with regard to the prohibition of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment (Article 3) as well as the right to liberty and security (Article 5).



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1. Other judgments: just satisfaction, revision, preliminary objections and lack of jurisdiction.
2. Figures in this column may include conditional violations.
3. Cases where the Court found there would be a violation of Article 2 and/or 3 if the applicant is removed to a State where he/she is at risk. Figures in this column are available only from 2013.
4. Seventy-nine judgments are against more than one respondent State.

History of the Court's reforms

Since the Court was set up in 1959, the member States of the Council of Europe have adopted a number of protocols to the European Convention on Human Rights with the aim of improving and strengthening its supervisory mechanism.

In 1998 Protocol No. 11 thus replaced the original two-tier structure, comprising the Commission and the Court on Human Rights, sitting a few days per month, by a single full-time Court. This change put an end to the Commission's filtering function, enabling applicants to bring their cases directly before the Court.

A second major reform to address the considerable increase in the number of applications and the Court's backlog was brought about by the entry into force of Protocol No. 14 in 2010. This Protocol introduced new judicial formations for the simplest cases and established a new admissibility criterion (existence of a "significant disadvantage" for the applicant); it also extended the judges' term of office to 9 years (not renewable).

Since 2010, several high-level conferences on the future of the Court have been convened to identify methods of guaranteeing the long-term effectiveness of the Convention system. These conferences have, in particular, led to the adoption of Protocols Nos. 15 and 16 to the Convention.

Protocol No. 15, adopted in 2013, inserted references to the principle of subsidiarity and the doctrine of the margin of appreciation into the Convention's preamble; it also reduced from 6 to 4 months the time within which an application must be lodged with the Court after a final national decision. It entered into force on 1 August 2021.

Protocol No. 16 entered into force in 2018, allowing the highest courts and tribunals of a State Party to ask the Court to give advisory opinions on questions of principle relating to the interpretation or application of the Convention rights and freedoms.

Working methods

The Court has reformed its working methods in order to increase its efficiency.

The Court has developed the pilot-judgments procedure to cater for the massive influx of applications concerning similar issues, also known as "systemic or structural issues" – i.e. those that arise from the non-conformity of domestic law with the Convention as regards the exercise of a particular right.

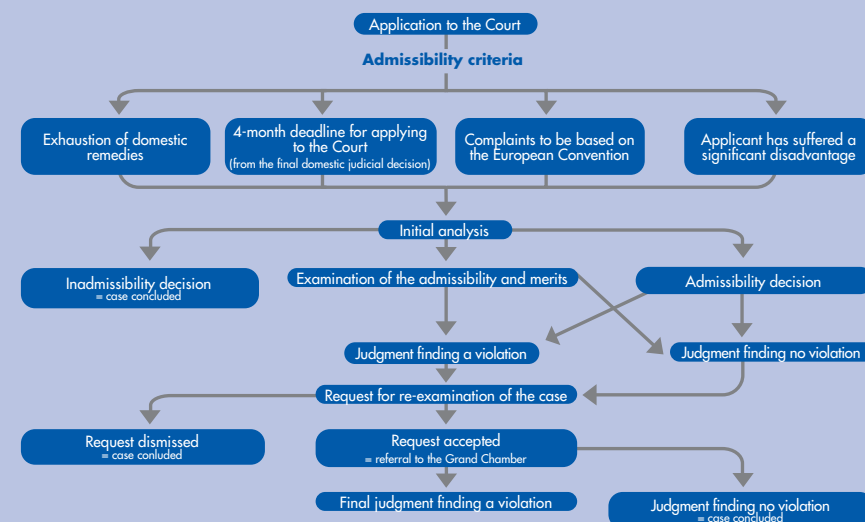
The Court has also adopted a priority policy so as to take into consideration the importance and urgency of the issues raised when deciding the order in which cases are to be dealt with.

The life of an application

Proceedings at national level



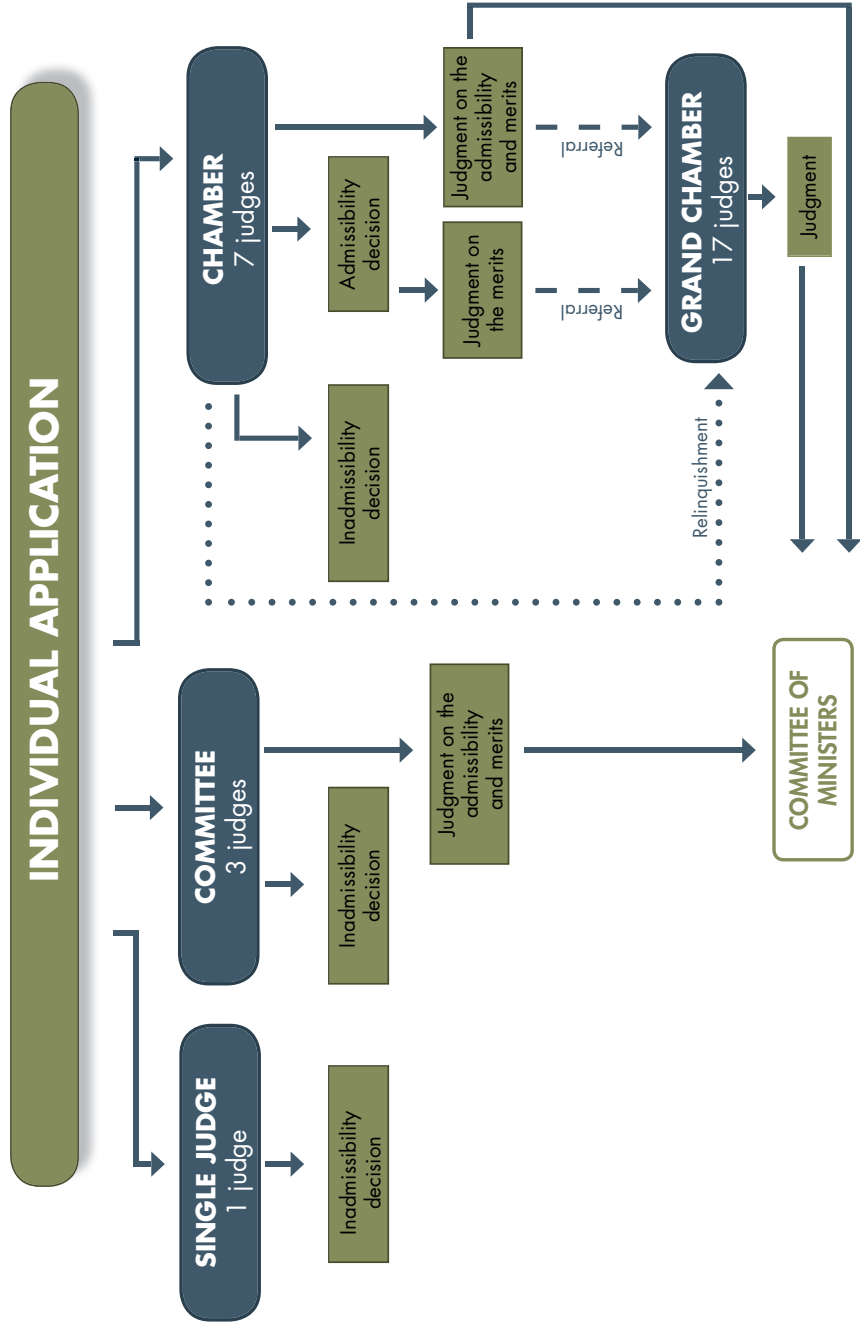
Proceedings before the European Court of Human Rights



Execution of judgment



Simplified flow chart of case-processing by the Court





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