

The Republic of Serbia became a member of the Council of Europe (<http://www.coe.int/>) on 3 April 2003. The Republic of Serbia has its Permanent Mission to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg (<http://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/serbia>).

The main objectives of the Council of Europe are the protection of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. Numerous reform processes have been taking place in our country, in cooperation with the CoE and with its assistance, first and foremost in the domains of legal and institutional organization of the State, implementation of reforms in the field of justice, and in other fields in which the CoE is active, in accordance with its mandate.

Serbia's cooperation with the Council of Europe has a special significance in the context of Serbia's European integration, having in mind that the CoE activities are also based on the so-called Copenhagen criteria, in regard to the stability of institutions, rule of law, human rights and the respect for and protection of national minorities.

Chairmanship of the CoE Committee of Ministers (May-November 2007) was particularly important for our international affirmation, being seen as demonstration of its commitment to European values, respect for human rights and the rule of law.

Out of more than 200 conventions and protocols of the Council of Europe, R. Serbia has ratified 82 Council of Europe conventions so far, and signed 7. The Republic of Serbia is a member of twelve partial Council of Europe agreements, which are an optional form of bringing together states that have expressed special interest in a specific field of CoE activity: Group of States against Corruption - GRECO, European Pharmacopoeia, CoE Development Bank, European Support Fund for the co-operation and distribution of creative cinematographic and audio-visual works - EURIMAGES, European Commission for Democracy through Law – Venice Commission, Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sports, North-South Centre, European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement (EUR-OPA), European Centre for Modern Languages, Co-operation Group to Combat Drug Abuse and Drug Trafficking (Pompidou Group), Youth Card, Cultural Routes.

The Committee of Ministers is the highest decision-making body of the Council of Europe. The sessions of the Committee of Ministers are generally convened annually at the Ministerial level.

The delegation of the Republic of Serbia to [the CoE Parliamentary Assembly](#) is comprised of seven members and seven deputies, who are Members of the National Assembly of R. Serbia.

[The CoE Congress of Local and Regional Authorities](#) is a body consisting of representatives of local and regional authorities. Its role is to promote local and regional democracy, improve local and regional governance and strengthen local self-governing authorities. It pays particular attention to application of the principles laid down in the European Charter of Local Self-Government. The Republic of Serbia has been assigned seven seats and seven deputies in this body.

[The European Court of Human Rights](#) is an international court applying the European Convention on Human Rights by examining complaints ("applications") lodged by individuals or,

sometimes, by states, concerning violations of rights under the Convention. Judgments of the Court are binding, and countries concerned are under an obligation to comply with them. Prof. Branko Lubarda, PhD, is a Judge of the European Court of Human Rights from the Republic of Serbia

[The CoE Commissioner for Human Rights](#) is an independent body of the CoE charged with preparing periodic reports on the record of human rights in CoE member States.

Cooperation with the Council of Europe also takes place via the CoE Office in Belgrade, which started to operate on 16 March 2001 and which works together with the Government of Serbia and other competent institutions, being concerned in particular with the reforms in the field of the administration of justice, support to the functioning of Parliament and local self-government, improvement of the system of higher education, strengthening the capacity of institutions in combating serious crimes and other fields.