

Practice Directions

Processing of applications in the event of a mass influx¹

(Individual applications under Article 34 of the Convention)

I. Introduction

1. Over the past years, the Court has increasingly been faced with a mass influx of applications, which commonly result from various structural or systemic problems² or specific factual developments³ affecting a large number of persons in a State Party. It is clear that a mass influx of applications may affect the Court's ability to fulfil its mandate set out under Article 19 of the Convention, unless special measures are taken to manage the processing of such applications from the moment of their arrival to the Court and prior to their assignment to the Sections in accordance with Rule 52 of the Rules of Court.

II. Special measures that may be resorted to following the receipt of a large number of applications

2. In the event of an influx of a large number of similar applications, the Registrar, under the authority of the President of the Court, may decide, in the interests of the proper administration of justice, to suspend provisionally the registration of some or all of these applications, pending a decision by a judicial formation in one or more leading cases on how the relevant applications are to be processed.

3. Where the applications concerned are based on similar facts and/or involve similar complaints, the Registrar may, if necessary, request the presentation of the applications to be coordinated at national level and the re-submission of grouped applications within a fixed time-limit, in a particular format⁴. Further instructions may be given by the Registrar, in accordance with the Rules of Court and other relevant Practice Directions, as to steps required to facilitate the effective and speedy processing of applications.

4. The failure to re-submit an application as directed may result in the application not being examined by the Court.

III. The date of introduction of the application

5. The date of introduction of the application for the purposes of Article 35 § 1 of the Convention would, in principle, be the date of the submission of the completed application form in accordance with the conditions set out in Rules 45 and 47 of the Rules of Court or the further instructions given by the Registrar.

6. However, as per Rule 47 § 6 (b) of the Rules of Court, the Court may decide that a different date shall be considered to be the date of introduction, where it finds it justified.

¹. Practice Direction issued by the President of the Court in accordance with Rule 32 of the Rules of Court on 25 August 2022.

². See, for instance, *Burmych and Others v. Ukraine* (striking out) [GC], nos. 46852/13 et al., §§ 8-44, 12 October 2017.

³. See, for instance, *Zambrano v. France* (dec.), no. 41994/21, §§ 4-11,20, 36 and 37, 21 September 2021.

⁴. For further instructions on the submission of grouped applications and multiple applicants, see the Practice Directions on Institution of Proceedings.

IV. Communication with the applicants

7. The Court may decide to communicate information regarding these applications via press releases, instead of corresponding with individual applicants or responding to individual queries.