



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

**Conference to launch the first non-official language versions
of the knowledge sharing platform of the European Court of Human Rights
(ECHR-KS)**

Speech by Marko Bošnjak

Strasbourg, 27 February 2025

Secretary General,
Minister Margue,
Minister Marinescu,
President Kravchenko,
Deputy Minister Acar,
Ambassadors,
Registrar, Director General,
Dear colleagues,

Let me extend a very warm welcome to all our distinguished participants and guests. We are indeed very honoured to receive you in the Court today for the launch of the first three non-official language versions of the Court's Knowledge Sharing Platform.

Before I introduce the details of this project, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Minister Margue and the Luxembourg Presidency of the Committee of Ministers for co-hosting this important event in the Court's calendar.

Today marks a new step in our journey towards sharing Convention knowledge with our partners. Allow me to briefly recall how we got here.

Some years ago, in 2010, the so-called "Interlaken Process" was initiated by the signing of the Interlaken Declaration of States Parties to the Convention. The aim of this reform process was to define and optimise the subsidiary role of the Court, by stressing "the fundamental role which national authorities play in guaranteeing and protecting human rights at the national level".¹ Since then, the Court has prioritised the effective dialogue with different actors that work with the system of the Convention, such as governments, national courts, parliaments, civil society actors and National Human Rights Institutions, to ensure that the responsibility to protect human rights is a shared one.

I would like to name a few of the steps we in the Court have taken to ensure effective and constructive dialogue that enhances subsidiarity.

¹ High Level Conference on the Future of the European Court of Human Rights, Interlaken Declaration (19 February 2010) https://www.echr.coe.int/documents/d/echr/2010_interlaken_finaldeclaration_eng, pp 6.

In 2018, we launched the Knowledge Sharing Platform internally within our Court, followed by a version which was shared with the Superior Courts Network ('SCN'), a network which now consists of 111 superior Courts across all our 46 Member States, and 3 regional observer courts (the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, African Court of Human Rights, and the Court of Justice of the European Union). The Knowledge Sharing Platform represents a cutting-edge development, as it systematically organises the Court's case-law developments into Convention Articles and Transversal Themes. The Registrar will outline later in more detail the complex creation and development of the Platform.

Just over two years ago, in October 2022, we marked a significant milestone when the Court launched the Knowledge Sharing Platform to the public in both official languages, in French and English. This meant that not only our partners from the SCN, but anyone and everyone in the world working with the European Convention, including judges and lawyers, could access it.

A little over two years later, I am delighted to announce that we have reached another key turning point: the first successful translation of the Platform in three non-official languages of the Court: Romanian, Turkish, and Ukrainian.

The success of this project undoubtedly represents another paradigm shift in facilitating access to Convention case-law and operationalising subsidiarity. With the inauguration of the first three non-official language platforms, the Court tackles language barriers and empowers national actors to protect human rights.

At the Reykjavik Summit in 2023,² Member States affirmed their deep commitment to the Convention, and the Court, as the ultimate guarantors of human rights across our region. However, the role of the Court is not to serve as an "appeal" or "further instance Court"³ – it is for the States Parties and national authorities to ensure the protection of human rights, and for the Court to observe whether they comply with the standards set by the Convention. These principles are restated in Article 1 of Protocol 15, where the Court references its subsidiarity principle.⁴

In this respect, language barriers undermine the machinery of protection established by the Convention. If national authorities do not have effective access to the Convention knowledge, they are prevented to some extent from genuinely understanding the principles and application of the Convention from our extensive case law.

We understand that with tens of judgments being delivered each week by the European Court, navigating the jurisprudence and its developments, can be very challenging. The launching of the non-official language platforms is precisely an attempt to remove these difficulties, bridge our differences, and provide accessible, comprehensive, accessible and up-to-date information on our case law to foster better understanding. With this initiative, the Court empowers national actors to fulfil their primary role. We also aim to ensure, in the long run, that the supervisory role of the Court is enhanced and maintained.

Let me conclude by reiterating how delighted I am that we have reached this milestone - enabling Romanian, Ukrainian, and Turkish speakers to utilise our case interpretation tools, and hopefully, soon enough, we will be able to give other countries the same possibility.

² <https://rm.coe.int/reykjavik-declaration-en/1680aba1c4>.

³ https://www.echr.coe.int/documents/d/echr/COURtalks_Inad_Talk_ENG.

⁴ https://www.echr.coe.int/documents/d/echr/protocol_15_eng.

I would sincerely like to thank our partners for their wonderful work on this project – the European Institute of Romania, the Supreme Court of Ukraine, and the Ministry of Justice of Türkiye. Furthermore, many thanks go to the Human Rights Trust Fund of the Council of Europe, the Representations of France and Ireland – we are extremely grateful to your commitment and contribution to ensuring the progress of the Knowledge Sharing Platform to date.

Last, but not least, the success of this project is a testament to the continuous effort put in by the Court’s Registry, and the dynamism of our Jurisconsult, Anna Austin, who I would like to thank personally, as well as her devoted team of lawyers and assistants.

I also take this opportunity of thanking Director General Esposito, and the Directorate General of Human Rights and Rule of Law, for their concrete partnership in our joint endeavour. This is an excellent example of inter-service cooperation. This additionally would not have been possible without the support and financial contribution of our Member States.

Let us hope that this is just the first Non-Official Languages expansion and that many more are to come.

It now falls upon me, and I am delighted to have this honour, to officially “launch” our three new language versions of the Platform and I do so now. You should now see on the screen above the Romanian language Platform; the Turkish language platform and the Ukrainian language knowledge sharing platforms. Thank you for your attention!