



## ECHR is to test a new practice involving a dedicated non-contentious phase

The European Court of Human Rights has decided to introduce a new practice from 1 January 2019 involving a dedicated, non-contentious phase in respect of all Contracting States. The Court will decide whether to continue this practice at the end of a one-year test period.

The purpose of introducing such a phase is to facilitate friendly settlements.

There are essentially two aspects to this new practice. Firstly, the Court's Registry will usually make a friendly settlement proposal when respondent governments are given notice<sup>1</sup> of applications. Secondly, there will be two distinct phases in the procedure: a 12-week friendly settlement phase (non-contentious), and a further 12-week observations phase (contentious with an exchange of observations).

Currently these two procedures run in parallel; Governments are given 16 weeks to submit their observations on the admissibility and merits of a case. Within the first eight weeks of that period they are also required to inform the Court whether they are prepared to conclude a friendly settlement.

Under the new practice, the Registry will not make a proposal for friendly settlement in each and every case: there are exceptions, for example cases raising novel issues which have never been examined by the Court or cases where for any specific reason it may be inappropriate to propose a friendly settlement.

The Court will continue its current practice of publishing information on the subject-matter of the case on HUDOC when Governments are given notice of applications. The letters sent to the parties at this stage will be revised to explain the new practice.

---

This press release is a document produced by the Registry. It does not bind the Court. Decisions, judgments and further information about the Court can be found on [www.echr.coe.int](http://www.echr.coe.int). To receive the Court's press releases, please subscribe here: [www.echr.coe.int/RSS/en](http://www.echr.coe.int/RSS/en) or follow us on Twitter [@ECHRpress](https://twitter.com/ECHRpress).

### Press contacts

[echrpess@echr.coe.int](mailto:echrpess@echr.coe.int) | tel: +33 3 90 21 42 08

**Tracey Turner-Tretz (tel: + 33 3 88 41 35 30)**

Denis Lambert (tel: + 33 3 90 21 41 09)

Inci Ertekin (tel: + 33 3 90 21 58 77)

Patrick Lannin (tel: + 33 3 90 21 44 18)

Somi Nikol (tel: +33 3 90 21 64 25)

**The European Court of Human Rights** was set up in Strasbourg by the Council of Europe Member States in 1959 to deal with alleged violations of the 1950 European Convention on Human Rights.

<sup>1</sup> In accordance with Rule 54 of the Rules of Court, a Chamber of seven judges may decide to bring to the attention of a Convention State's Government that an application against that State is pending before the Court (the so-called "communications procedure").