



## Entry into force of Protocol No. 16 to the European Convention on Human Rights

On 1 August 2018 [Protocol No. 16](#) to the European Convention on Human Rights came into force in respect of the 10 member States that have signed and ratified it: Albania, Armenia, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Lithuania, San Marino, Slovenia and Ukraine.

Protocol No. 16 enables the highest national courts and tribunals, as designated by the member States concerned, to request the Court to give advisory opinions on questions of principle relating to the interpretation or application of the rights and freedoms defined in the Convention or the Protocols thereto. The advisory opinions, which will be delivered by the Grand Chamber, will contain reasons and will not be binding.

Requests for advisory opinions will be made in the context of cases pending before the national court or tribunal concerned. The Court will have discretion to accept a request or not.

The President of the European Court of Human Rights, Guido Raimondi, stated: *“The entry into force of Protocol No. 16 will strengthen dialogue between the European Court of Human Rights and the highest national courts. This is a fundamental step in the history of the European Convention on Human Rights and a major development in human rights protection in Europe. It also represents a new challenge for our Court.”*

Ten further countries have signed the Protocol but have yet to ratify it: Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Greece, Italy, the Republic of Moldova, the Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Slovakia and Turkey.

[Link](#) to table of signatures and ratifications.

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**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.