



Stricter conditions for applying to the European Court of Human Rights now in force

Rule 47 of the Rules of Court, which introduces stricter conditions for applying to the Court, came into force on 1 January 2014. It is designed to enhance the Court's efficiency and to speed up the examination of applications. This amendment to the Rules introduces two major changes which are immediately applicable and will determine whether an application is rejected or allocated to a judicial formation.

The first major change concerns the application form, a simplified version of which has now been published on the Court's website ([link to the "Applicants" pages](#)) and can be downloaded. Any form sent to the Court will now have to be completed in full and accompanied by copies of the relevant supporting documents. Any incomplete application may be rejected by the Court.

The second major change concerns the interruption of the period within which an application must be made to the Court, that is, within six months of the final decision of the highest domestic court with jurisdiction. For the period to be interrupted, the application will now have to fulfil all the conditions set out in Rule 47. Accordingly, a duly completed application form accompanied by copies of the relevant supporting documents must reach the Court within the time-limit laid down by the Convention. Incomplete applications will no longer be taken into consideration for the purpose of interrupting the running of the six-month period.

In order to inform potential applicants and/or their representatives and make them aware of the conditions for lodging an application, the Court has launched a wide information campaign among civil society organisations and the main actors working for European protection of Human Rights.

As part of this campaign the Court is expanding its range of information materials assisting applicants with the procedure, not only in the official languages of the Council of Europe (French and English) but also in those of the States Parties to the Convention. Accordingly, a video explaining how to correctly fill in the application form has been produced by the Court ([link to the video](#)). The video currently exists in English, French, Romanian, Russian, Turkish and Ukrainian. A document explaining how to fill in the application form and comply with the new conditions is available in 35 languages ([link to information documents](#)). Lastly, a new pamphlet giving details of how to lodge an application and how the application will be processed has just been published by the Court ([link to "Your application to the ECHR"](#)).

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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.