

## Organisation and operation of the Council of Europe

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In accordance with Article 10 of its Statute, the Council of Europe's bodies are the Committee of Ministers and the Consultative Assembly, which are aided by the Secretariat.

The Council of Europe initially consisted of three **statutory** bodies, the Committee of Ministers and the Assembly, both political bodies, and the Secretariat, a purely administrative body.

According to Article 17, the Committee of Ministers may set up advisory and technical committees or commissions for such specific purposes as it may deem desirable. In addition, Article 24 states that the Consultative Assembly may establish committees or commissions to consider and report to it any matter which falls within its competence, to examine and prepare questions on its agenda and to advise on all matters of procedure.

On this basis, the number of bodies set up by the Committee of Ministers and the Assembly has grown rapidly. Some important bodies, referred to as **subsidiary** bodies in relation to the statutory bodies that set them up, include:

- the bodies of the Committee of Ministers, such as the meetings of Ministers' Deputies and subsidiary groups of the Deputies which include the Rapporteur Groups;
- the Parliamentary Committees set up by the Assembly, including the 'Standing Committee' which ensures the continuity of the Assembly's work when it is not in session;
- the Enlarged Joint Committee, the body which ensures coordination between the Committee of Ministers and the Assembly. Following approval from the Committee of Ministers and the Consultative Assembly in August 1950, it was set up by Statutory Resolution of the Committee of Ministers in May 1951;
- the supervisory bodies established under the European Convention on Human Rights;
- the Commissioner for Human Rights, a non-judicial institution which promotes education in, awareness of and respect for human rights;
- the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE), the consultative body which represents local and regional authorities.