



Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer:

A small step for the legal profession,
a giant leap for the rule law

The **Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE)** represents the bars and law societies of 46 countries, and through them more than 1 million European lawyers.

On 12 March 2025, in an historical decision, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted the Convention on the protection of the profession of lawyer. This landmark decision is the culmination of a long negotiation process that began in 2018 and has been strongly supported by the CCBE.

For the Convention to become effective, States must now sign and ratify it. The Convention should be officially opened for signature as of mid-May 2025.

What do signature and ratification mean?



Signature

A country agrees to the terms of an international convention and shows its intent to be bound by it in the future.



Ratification

The country formally agrees to be legally bound by the convention, often after getting approval from its government or legislature.

Both steps are needed for the Convention to enter into force, which means that it can be applicable to those who signed it.

Who can sign and ratify the Convention?

- **Member States of the Council of Europe**
- **Non-Member States** that participated in the drafting of the Convention
- **The European Union**

Additionally, after the Convention has entered into force, **other non-Member States of the Council of Europe** may join under certain conditions specified in the Convention.


How many signatures and ratifications are needed?

The Convention will enter into force three months after **at least eight signatories**, including **at least six member States of the Council of Europe**, have signed and ratified it.

What can you do to support?

In order to safeguard a world governed by the rule of law and democratic values, where everyone's rights are protected, **encourage your country to sign and ratify this Convention without delay**. Let's ensure that lawyers can work freely and independently, upholding justice and protecting fundamental rights for all.

For more information

 **Explanatory note** (for the Bars, lawyers, and the public interested in more details)

 **General note** for the public

Follow all the news on the Convention on **LinkedIn** and **ccbe.eu**.

