

Narrative Report

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My research topic is the study of Russia's membership in the Council of Europe (CoE). I am particularly interested in how Russia's adherence to the European Convention on Human Rights can be viewed within the theoretical framework of Europeanization. The evolving internal political processes in Russia can be brought to light in such a study, especially focusing on Russia's blocking of Protocol 14 ratification. This protocol was extremely important for the urgently needed reform of the European Court of Human Rights and could enter in force only with the ratification by all countries, members of the CoE. The analysis of the events and happenings surrounding this time period in the history of Russia's membership in the Council is my primary focus of interest.

The Travel/Research Grant from CES provided me with a unique opportunity to travel to Strasbourg, France, the headquarters of both, the Council of Europe and the European Court of Human Rights. I was lucky to secure the informed consent from several Court officials to be interviewed regarding my topic of interest. The in-depth interviews in Strasbourg allowed me to gain much better understanding of the workings of the Court, including Russia country files. The officials I talked to did not only answer my questions, but also referred me to a number of invaluable sources of relevant information I was unaware of prior to the interviews. In addition, it was a distinct privilege for me to be able to attend in person the proceedings of a rare state against state court case, Georgia vs Russia, which will undoubtedly become an important contribution to the international human rights case law.

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