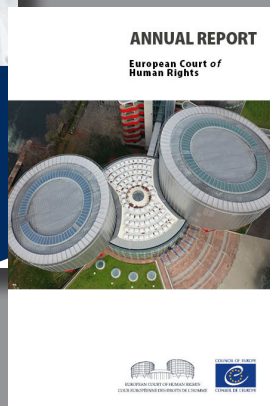
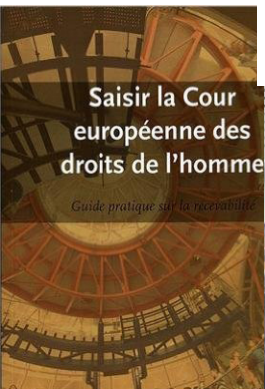


EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Finding and understanding the case-law



Anyone wishing to reproduce and/or translate all or part of this document in print, online or in any other format should contact publishing@echr.coe.int for further instructions.

When citing this document, please acknowledge the source “Finding and understanding the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights, Council of Europe”.

This document is available to download at www.echr.coe.int under Case-Law → [Case-Law Analysis](#)

For publication updates, please follow the Court’s Twitter account at https://twitter.com/ECHR_CEDH

© Council of Europe/European Court of Human Rights, November 2021

Table of content

1. Introduction	4
Translations.....	4
ECHR_CEDH Twitter account	4
Basic texts	4
Other sources.....	5
2. HUDOC database.....	6
3. Official selection of key cases (judgments, decisions and advisory opinions)	7
4. Overview of the Court’s case-law	7
5. Case-Law Information Note	8
6. Admissibility guide	9
7. Case-law guides.....	9
8. Case-law research reports	10
9. European law handbooks.....	11
10. COURTalks-disCOURS.....	11
11. Factsheets	12
12. Country profiles.....	12
13. Suggestions on how to make the best use of the available materials.....	13
1. Search for a precise case	13
2. Search for cases by Article, keyword or theme	13
3. Know the most important cases examined each month.....	13
4. Know the most important cases delivered for each year.....	13
5. Know the admissibility criteria	13

1. Introduction

The case-law of the European Court of Human Rights covers a wide range of subjects arising out of the application of the provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights and its Protocols.

The Registry of the Court publishes a number of materials to assist in understanding the Court's case-law and the official texts.

This guide provides information about the Court's case-law database [HUDOC](#) and the various publications available on the [Court's website](#).

It ends with [suggestions](#) on how to make the best use of the available research materials.

The most recent PDF version of this guide is available at:

www.echr.coe.int/Documents/CLIP_Finding_understanding_case_law_ENG.pdf

It contains hyperlinks to the different materials available on the Court's website.

Translations

To find a translation of an individual case or legal summary, use the language filter in the [HUDOC](#) database.

For an overview of all translations published on the [Court's website](#), select the language [here](#). This menu can be accessed from the home page by clicking on "Other languages" in the Quick Links box in the top left-hand corner.

The [table of pending translations](#) lists all translations of analytical case-law materials currently pending in a language other than English and French (the official languages of the Council of Europe).

Publishers or organisations wishing to reproduce the Court's documents (or a translation thereof) in print or online are asked to contact publishing@echr.coe.int for further instructions.

ECHR_CEDH Twitter account



The Twitter account ECHR_CEDH (https://twitter.com/ECHR_CEDH) allows you to follow the Court's activities in English and French (the two official languages of the Council of Europe) and to stay informed of the Court's latest publications in various languages.

In particular, the account tweets case-law guides and legal summaries of noteworthy cases.

Basic texts

Information on the European Convention on Human Rights is available at www.echr.coe.int → Official texts → [European Convention](#).

This page gives access, *inter alia*, to the official versions in [English](#) and [French](#) of the Convention, various translations into non-official languages, the [Travaux préparatoires to the Convention](#) and the [Council of Europe's Treaty Office](#).

Other sources

Through its [collections](#) and [catalogues](#) (available at www.echr.coe.int → [Library](#)), the Court's Library provides information on human rights publications from around the world.


You can find a selection of free Council of Europe publications on various subjects related to human rights at www.echr.coe.int → Case-Law → Other publications → [Publications of the Council of Europe](#).

2. HUDOC database

<http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng>

The screenshot shows the HUDOC database search results page. At the top, there is a search bar and navigation links. Below that, the search criteria are displayed as '64526 Results Found'. The main content area shows a list of case results, including 'CASE OF DAREKIZB LTD v. ARMENIA', 'CASE OF BARSEGHYAN v. ARMENIA', 'CASE OF KEREM ÇİFTÇİ v. TURKEY', 'CASE OF MILOŠAVLJEVIĆ v. SERBIA (No. 2)', 'CASE OF ALIYEVA AND OTHERS v. AZERBAIJAN', 'CASE OF WILLEMS AND GORJON v. BELGIUM', 'CASE OF CARTER v. RUSSIA', and 'CASE OF BĒRZINS AND OTHERS v. LATVIA'. Each result includes a brief description, the date of the judgment, and links to 'Case Details', 'Legal Summary', 'Press Release', and 'Related' documents. On the left side, there are filters for 'DOCUMENT COLLECTIONS' and 'FILTERS'.

- The HUDOC database provides access to
 - ✓ Grand Chamber, Chamber and Committee judgments and decisions, communicated cases, advisory opinions, legal summaries and [press releases](#) of the European Court of Human Rights
 - ✓ decisions and reports of the European Commission of Human Rights
 - ✓ resolutions of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe
- Characteristics:
 - ✓ Interface in English, French, Bulgarian, Georgian, Russian, Spanish, Turkish and Ukrainian
 - ✓ Search filters
 - ✓ Advanced Search option
 - ✓ Keywords enabling to find a group of documents with similar legal content
 - ✓ Conclusions linked to Articles and keywords
 - ✓ Unlimited results, possibility to save and print them
 - ✓ Results linked up to the legal summary of the case if it was selected for the Case-Law Information Note
 - ✓ Translations of judgments, decisions, advisory opinions and legal summaries into non-official languages (NOL) of the Council of Europe
- **List of keywords, user manual** and **tutorials** available at www.echr.coe.int under Case-Law → Judgments and Decisions → [HUDOC database](#)

You can subscribe to [HUDOC judgments and decisions RSS feeds](#)  to know the new documents published on the HUDOC database. A [tutorial](#) helps you subscribe to these feeds.

3. Official selection of key cases (judgments, decisions and advisory opinions)

Available at www.echr.coe.int → Case-Law → Judgments and Decisions → [Selection of key cases](#)

- Official selection of judgments, decisions and advisory opinions (approximately 30 cases per year) which make a significant contribution to the development, clarification or modification of the case-law.
- Until 2015, cases published in the *Reports of judgments and decisions* in full text or extracts, classified by Article, keyword and key notions and preceded by a headnote and a summary, annual index
 - ✓ Bilingual publication in English and French
 - ✓ e-Reports can be downloaded in PDF version
- Since 2016, cases published in the annual list of key cases, classified by articles, alphabetically by applicant and by respondent State, links to legal summaries



- In HUDOC, key cases, either represented by **Key Case** or by **Published in Case Reports**, are listed in the importance level “Key cases”.

4. Overview of the Court’s case-law

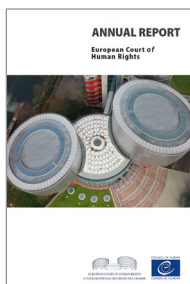
Available at www.echr.coe.int → Case-Law → [Case-Law Analysis](#) → [Overview of the case-law of the ECHR](#)



- The Jurisconsult’s chapter in the Court’s Annual Report, highlighting judgments and decisions which raise new issues or important matters of general interest, establish new principles or develop or clarify the Court’s case-law.

Finding and understanding the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights

- Published in English, French and other non-official languages of the Council of Europe
- Full Annual Report available at www.echr.coe.int → The Court → [Annual reports](#)




5. Case-Law Information Note

Available at www.echr.coe.int, either from the “Quick Links” box of the home page or under Case-Law → [Case-Law Analysis](#) → [Case-Law Information Note](#)



- Legal summaries of cases considered to be of particular interest:
 - ✓ concise presentation of facts and law with emphasis on the legal reasoning of the Court
 - ✓ cases classified by Articles and keywords with descriptive headnotes
- Monthly publication
- Annual index updated monthly
- Content in English and French
- Users wishing to search individual summaries may do so by selecting the “Legal summaries” box of the Document collections in the [HUDOC database](#) and using all the available search criteria and filters, or by clicking on the link “Legal Summaries” in the results list
- Legal summaries in non-official languages are available in HUDOC in the tab “[NOL Legal summaries](#)” under the “Document collections”

You can subscribe to the [Case-Law Information Note RSS feed](#)  to know the newly published notes or indexes. A [tutorial](#) helps you subscribe to this feed.

6. Admissibility guide

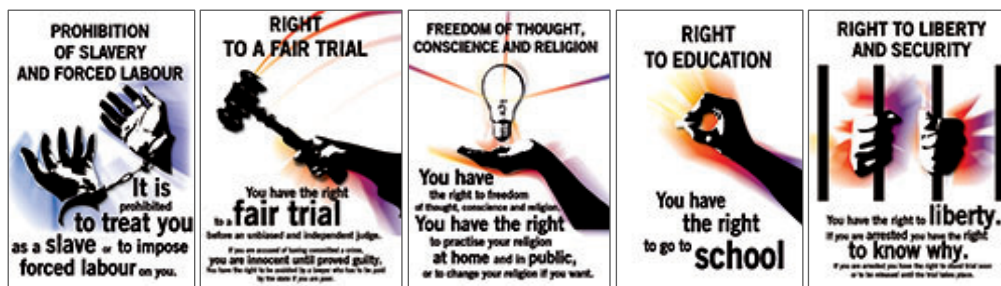
Available at www.echr.coe.int → Case-Law → [Case-Law Analysis](#) → [Admissibility guide](#)



- Describes the conditions of admissibility which an application must meet such as:
 - ✓ individual application (Article 34), time-limit to lodge an application (Article 35 § 1), exhaustion of domestic remedies (Article 35 § 1)
 - Available in English, French and various non-official languages of the Council of Europe
 - English and French versions regularly updated

7. Case-law guides

Available at www.echr.coe.int → Case-Law → [Case-Law Analysis](#) → [Case-law guides](#)



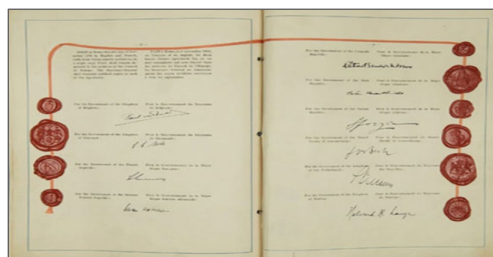
- Guides by Article of the Convention and its Protocols
 - ✓ Article 1 – Obligation to respect human rights
 - ✓ Article 2 – Right to life
 - ✓ Article 4 – Prohibition of slavery and forced labour
 - ✓ Article 5 – Right to liberty and security
 - ✓ Article 6 – Right to a fair trial (civil limb and criminal limb)
 - ✓ Article 7 – No punishment without law
 - ✓ Article 8 – Right to respect for private and family life
 - ✓ Article 9 – Freedom of thought, conscience and religion
 - ✓ Article 10 – Freedom of expression

Finding and understanding the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights

- ✓ Article 11 – Freedom of assembly and association
 - ✓ Article 12 – Right to marry
 - ✓ Article 13 – Right to an effective remedy
 - ✓ Article 14 and Article 1 of Protocol No. 12 – Prohibition of discrimination
 - ✓ Article 15 – Derogation in time of emergency
 - ✓ Article 17 – Prohibition of abuse of rights
 - ✓ Article 18 – Limitation on use of restrictions on rights
 - ✓ Article 46 – Binding force and execution of judgments
 - ✓ Article 1 of Protocol No. 1 – Protection of property
 - ✓ Article 2 of Protocol No. 1 – Right to education
 - ✓ Article 3 of Protocol No. 1 – Right to free elections
 - ✓ Article 2 of Protocol No. 4 – Freedom of movement
 - ✓ Article 3 of Protocol No. 4 – Prohibition of expulsion of nationals
 - ✓ Article 4 of Protocol No. 4 – Prohibition of collective expulsions of aliens
 - ✓ Article 1 of Protocol No. 7 – Procedural safeguards relating to expulsion of aliens
 - ✓ Article 4 of Protocol No. 7 – Right not to be tried or punished twice
- Guides on transversal themes
 - ✓ Immigration, Environment, Terrorism, etc.
- Available in English, French and various non-official languages of the Council of Europe
 - English and French versions regularly updated

8. Case-law research reports

Available at www.echr.coe.int → Case-Law → [Case-Law Analysis](#) → [Case-law research reports](#)



- Reports on certain transversal themes, particular Convention provisions and the use of other international instruments in the Court's case-law
- Available in English and/or French and various non-official languages of the Council of Europe
 - No regular updates

9. European law handbooks

Available at www.echr.coe.int → Case-Law → Other publications → [Joint publications by the ECHR and FRA](#)



- Handbooks on various subjects:
 - ✓ non-discrimination
 - ✓ data protection
 - ✓ access to justice
 - ✓ asylum, borders and immigration
 - ✓ the rights of the child
- Published jointly by the [European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights \(FRA\)](#), the Council of Europe and the Court
- Available in many languages

10. COURTalks-disCOURS

Available at www.echr.coe.int → Case-Law → [Case-Law Analysis](#) → [COURTalks-disCOURS](#) and also at www.youtube.com/user/EuropeanCourt



- Three videos produced in cooperation with the Council of Europe [HELP Programme](#) and providing an overview on admissibility criteria (2015), asylum and terrorism (2016).
- Videos in English subtitled in various languages available on the Court's [YouTube channel](#) and its [website](#)
- Transcripts of the talks and lists of relevant case-law available on the Court's website

11. Factsheets

Available at www.echr.coe.int → Press → Press service → [Factsheets](#)



- Factsheets summarising the case law of the Court and the pending cases on a wide range of subjects:
 - ✓ Detention, Health, Taxation, Internet, etc.
 - About 80 factsheets
 - Links to the press releases
 - Available in English, French and various non-official languages of the Council of Europe

12. Country profiles

Available at www.echr.coe.int → Press → Press service → [Country Profiles](#)



- Statistics and noteworthy adjudicated or pending cases in respect of each of the 47 Council of Europe member States

13. Suggestions on how to make the best use of the available materials

1. Search for a precise case

- ❖ [HUDOC database](#), using Case Title or Application Number

2. Search for cases by Article, keyword or theme

- ❖ [HUDOC database](#)
- ❖ [Case-law Information Note](#), its annual Index and all legal summaries uploaded in the HUDOC database
- ❖ [Case-law guides](#)
- ❖ [Case-law research reports](#)
- ❖ [European law handbooks](#)
- ❖ [Factsheets](#)
- ❖ [Publications of the Council of Europe](#)
- ❖ [COURTalks-disCOURs](#)

3. Know the most important cases examined each month

- ❖ [Case-law Information Note](#)

4. Know the most important cases delivered for each year

- ❖ [Selection of key cases](#)
- ❖ [Overview of the Court's case-law](#)
- ❖ [Annual Index of the Case-law Information Notes](#)

5. Know the admissibility criteria

- ❖ [Admissibility guide](#)
- ❖ [COURTalks-disCOURs](#)