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## J07 HOW TO Find European Court of Human Rights Material

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The European Court of Human Rights is based in Strasbourg and was set up in 1959 to rule on applications alleging violations of the European Convention on Human Rights. The United Kingdom became a signatory to the Convention on 4 November 1950.

The ECHR is sometimes confused with the European Court of Justice, but the ECJ is a court of the European Union, a completely separate body.

### Conventions

The Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, known as the European Convention on Human Rights, entered into force on 3 September 1953. The text of the treaty and additional protocols can be found on the European Court of Human Rights website (web address below), and are often reproduced in textbooks, e.g. *Brownlie*, Basic Documents on Human Rights, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., 2005 (in the Law Society library at BAY 15). The library also has a seven volume work by the Council of Europe, European Conventions and agreements 1949-1998. This is kept in store at V67 COU. If you wish to consult it, please ask at the Library enquiry desk.

### Case law

#### Citation of cases

The official format is: name of case, application number, paragraph number, court abbreviation (ECHR), year and volume number, e.g. *Campbell v Ireland*, no. 45678/98, 24 ECHR 1999-II. The application number includes a two digit number in the second part, indicating the year the application was made, e.g. 36822/06 or 24436/94.

#### Case reports (print sources)

*European Human Rights Reports (EHRR)* are Court reports from 1960 onwards, selective only. Volumes from 1993 onwards normally contain Commission Supplement pages at the end of the volume (CD pages) which include admissibility decisions and some reports from the Commission. Available in the Law Society library on *Westlaw* and at BAY 40.

Simor, *Human rights practice* is a loose leaf work containing commentary and case summaries arranged by article of the Convention. The Law Society library holds a copy at BAY 15.

*Systematic guide to the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights 1960-1996* is a digest of cases brought under the articles of the convention and allows a subject approach to your research. The Law Society library holds a copy at V67 KEM (ask staff).

Mensah, *European Human Rights Case Locator 1960-2000* lists all judgments of the European Court of Human Rights from 1960 until 31 July 2000. The Law Society holds a copy at V67 MEN (ask staff).

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### Case reports (electronic sources)

The *HUDOC portal* on the European Court of Human Rights website (web address below) is a free site that aims to provide comprehensive coverage of judgments since 1959. Decisions are comprehensive from 1986 onwards, and selective between 1955-86. The portal provides many options for searching, e.g. case title, respondent state or application number. Helpful user manuals are available on the portal. The *British and Irish Legal Information Institute (BAILII)* (web address below) is a free website that has selected ECHR reports dating back to 1960.

*Westlaw* contains case reports and case summaries of ECHR cases.

*Law Society Library Online* (web address below) contains European Court of Human Rights case references from 1987 onwards where they were reported in UK newspapers, with links to the full text if available on BAILII. Search the English cases database (you need to register for a password to use this). The European Court of Human Rights website (web address below) contains information on pending cases, press releases and webcasts of public hearings.

### Court procedures

*Rules of Court* and *Practice Directions* can be found on the European Court of Human Rights website (web address below), under "Basic Texts".

Leach, *Taking a case to the European Court of Human Rights*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (2005) gives practical advice and guidance on taking cases to the ECHR. The Law Society library holds a copy at BAY 15.

### Useful websites

British and Irish Legal Information Institute: <http://www.bailii.org>

European Court of Human Rights: [http://www.echr.coe.int/echr/Homepage\\_en](http://www.echr.coe.int/echr/Homepage_en)

HUDOC case law portal: <http://cmiskp.echr.coe.int/tkp197/search.asp?skin=hudoc-en>

Law Society Library Online: <http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/libraryonline>

**The Library, 113 Chancery Lane, London WC2A 1PL, DX 56 Lon/Chancery Ln**

**Library Enquiries:** 0870 606 2511

**Library Fax:** 020 7831 1687

**Library e-mail:** [library@lawsociety.org.uk](mailto:library@lawsociety.org.uk)

**Library website:** <http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/library>

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