

Rights and Responsibilities

European Convention on Human rights and the UK Human Rights act

Task – Case studies

- Research true-life accounts of human rights abuses.
- You can use any appropriate sources, e.g. human rights watch, Amnesty international academic journals (<http://ajph.org> is one example)
- Link your case study to the appropriate human right.
- Share your story with your group members.
- Discuss and decide which one will go forward to the rest of the cohort and why.
- Consider the following factors:
 - The importance of the human right
 - How many people the breach could affect
 - The severity of the breach
 - The age of the breach

Task – Highlighting HR Abuse

- This is a subjective task, there is no right or wrong answer
- Which case study highlights the worse human rights abuse?

Outcomes

- These rights and freedoms – based on core principles like dignity, equality and respect – inspired a range of international and regional human rights treaties.
- For example, they formed the basis for the **European Convention on Human Rights** in 1950. The European Convention protects the human rights of people in countries that belong to the Council of Europe. This includes the United Kingdom.

When? Where? and What?

- On 10 December 1948 in Paris, the General Assembly of the United Nations (<http://www.un.org/en/>) adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).
- The Declaration was the first international recognition that all human beings have fundamental rights and freedoms and it continues to be a living and relevant document today.

European Convention on Human Rights

What do you know?

- "In the centre of our movement stands the idea of a Charter of Human Rights, guarded by freedom and sustained by law."
- Winston Churchill, (The Hague, 7th May 1948)

Some of the myths about the court

- the court is another "European" institution interfering with the UK's sovereignty
- the court is incompetent
- The European court micromanages the UK's legal system
- The court is over worked

(Hersch 2011)

Some myths about judgements

- The UK government loses most of the cases brought against it
- A convicted killer from Italy was allowed to stay in the UK after serving his sentence
- The European Court has banned whole life sentences
- A serial killer was given hard core porn in prison because of his human rights
- A man was allowed to stay in the UK because of his pet cat

The facts

- [What has the European Convention ever done for us?](#)
- Inspired by the Universal declaration on human rights
- International treaty drafted in 1950
- Designed to prevent the atrocities of WW2 being repeated
- 47 members
- Based in Strasbourg

What are the Articles?

- <https://rightsinfo.org/the-rights-in-the-european-convention/>
- What are the key articles?
 - How do they differ from the universal declaration on human rights?

Human Rights Act 1998

- An Act to give further effect to the rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights; to make provision with respect to holders of certain judicial offices who become judges of the European Court of Human Rights; and for connected purposes.

What does it do?

- Lets individuals defend their rights in UK courts
- Compels public organisations to treat everyone equally
- Any new laws must be compatible with the Human Rights Act

What actions can I take?

- Write to the public body
- Go to court

To clarify

TASK

- Read the document provided and decide if you agree/disagree
- In groups write up a Bill of Rights for modern day UK. What would you include? What would you exclude? Are there any priorities?
