



EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS
COUR EUROPÉENNE DES DROITS DE L'HOMME

Updated: October 2022

Note explaining the mode of citation of the case-law of the Court and the Commission

Over the years, the Convention institutions' case-law has been reported in a number of different printed collections (Collection of Decisions, Yearbook, Decisions and Reports, for the Commission, and Series A, *Reports of Judgments and Decisions*, ECHR Reports, for the Court). In addition, from the establishment of the “new” Court in November 1998,¹ a massive store of unreported case-law has been built up in the Court's case-law database HUDOC.² This has led to the emergence of a number of different patterns of case-law reference as described below. If in doubt, you may refer to the “[Court's case-law references](#)”, which is a master list (updated weekly) of all judgments delivered by a Grand Chamber or Chamber, all advisory opinions and any related decisions as well as all decisions in key cases.

Judgments, decisions and advisory opinions of the “new” Court (as from 1 November 1998)

The form of citation for judgments and decisions follows the pattern:

- name of case (in italics),
- application number,³
- paragraph number if necessary,
- abbreviation of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR), year and number of volume,⁴ for cases published from 1999 until 2015, or
- date of judgment or decision for unreported cases.

1. The “new” Court was set up on 1 November 1998, after the entry into force of Protocol No. 11 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. This Protocol brought about a simplification of the supervision machinery by doing away with the European Commission of Human Rights and turning the Court into a single and permanent court.

2. All judgments, advisory opinions and decisions of the Court (with the exception of single-judge decisions) are available in HUDOC, which is accessible at: <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int>.

3. For grouped/joined applications with up to 2 application numbers, they should both be written out. If there are more than 2 application numbers, the citation should read “nos. 16064/90 and 2 others” (3 application numbers), “and 6 others” (7 application numbers), etc.

4. From the beginning of 2008 to the end of 2015, the volume number is no longer cited: ECHR plus the year of the case should be used.

Unless otherwise indicated, the cited text refers to a judgment on the merits delivered by a Chamber of the Court. Any variation from that is added in brackets after the name of the case: “(dec.)” for a decision, “(just satisfaction)” for a judgment concerning only just satisfaction, “(revision)” for a judgment concerning revision, “(striking out)” for a judgment striking the case out, “(friendly settlement)” for a judgment concerning a friendly settlement, etc. “[GC]” indicates that the case was heard by the Grand Chamber of the Court, and “[Committee]” that the judgment or decision has been given by a three-judge Committee.

Examples of judgments and decisions published in the ECHR Reports (1999-2015)

Malhous v. the Czech Republic (dec.) [GC], no. 33071/96, ECHR 2000-XII

Van der Ven v. the Netherlands, no. 50901/99, ECHR 2003-II

Sequeira v. Portugal (dec.), no. 73557/01, ECHR 2003-VI

Iatridis v. Greece (just satisfaction) [GC], no. 31107/96, § 33, ECHR 2000-XI

Broniowski v. Poland (friendly settlement) [GC], no. 31443/96, § 37, ECHR 2005-IX

Verein gegen Tierfabriken Schweiz (VgT) v. Switzerland (no. 2) [GC], no. 32772/02, ECHR 2008

M.S.S. v. Belgium and Greece [GC], no. 30696/09, §§ 216-222, ECHR 2011

Examples of judgments and decisions not published in the ECHR Reports, including those selected as key cases⁵ from 2016 onwards

*Cerăceanu v. Romania (no. 1)*⁶, no. 31250/02, §§ 54-59, 4 March 2008

Stefanetti and Others v. Italy (just satisfaction), nos. 21838/10 and 7 others, 1 June 2017

D.D. v. France (striking out), no. 3/02, § 27, 8 November 2005

Pello v. Estonia (dec.), no. 11423/03, 5 January 2006

Tatuyev v. Russia [Committee]⁷, no. 3333/08, 21 July 2020

Bayraktar and Ayri v. the Republic of Moldova (dec.) [Committee], nos. 13289/19 and 13292/19, 25 June 2020

Examples of advisory opinions

Advisory opinion on certain legal questions concerning the lists of candidates submitted with a view to the election of judges to the European Court of Human Rights [GC], 12 February 2008⁸

Advisory opinion concerning the recognition in domestic law of a legal parent-child relationship between a child born through a gestational surrogacy arrangement abroad and

5. **Key cases** are an official selection of judgments, decisions and advisory opinions which make a significant contribution to the development, clarification or modification of the Court’s case-law.

6. Since 1 January 2010 “(no. 1)” no longer appears in the name of a judgment which is subsequently followed by a second or several other judgments brought by the same applicant, which will be called “(no. 2)”, “(no. 3)”, etc.

7. Committee cases apply well-established case-law and therefore should not be cited as authority on points of principle.

8. Advisory opinions issued by the Court under Article 47 of the Convention.

the intended mother [GC], request no. P16-2018-001, French Court of Cassation, 10 April 2019⁹

Judgments of the “old” Court (from 1960 until 31 October 1998)

All judgments delivered by the “old” Court were reported in an official collection: in Series A between 1960 and 1995 and in *Reports of Judgments and Decisions*¹⁰ from 1996 to October 1998. The form of citation for judgments delivered by the old Court follows the pattern:

- name of case¹¹ (in italics),
- date of judgment,
- paragraph number if necessary,
- name of the official collection and number.

Examples:

Plattform “Ärzte für das Leben” v. Austria, 21 June 1988, Series A no. 139

Delta v. France (Article 50), 30 January 1990, § 38, Series A no. 191-A

*The Sunday Times*¹² *v. the United Kingdom* (no. 2), 26 November 1991, § 54, Series A no. 217

Katkaridis and Others v. Greece, 15 November 1996, § 51, *Reports of Judgments and Decisions* 1996-V

Gustafsson v. Sweden (revision), 30 July 1998, § 28, *Reports of Judgments and Decisions* 1998-V

Decisions, reports and opinions of the Commission (from 1955 until 31 October 1999)

Decisions and reports of the Commission

The form of citation follows the pattern:

- name of case (in italics),
- application number,
- date preceded by “Commission decision of” or “Commission’s report of”,
- name of the official collection if the decision or report has been reported, or
- “unreported” if the decision was not published in a printed collection.

Examples:

Moreira de Azevedo v. Portugal, no. 11296/84, Commission decision of 14 April 1988, *Decisions and Reports* 56

Baumgartner v. Austria, no. 15154/89, Commission’s report of 16 February 1993, *Decisions and Reports* 74

9. Advisory opinions issued by the Court under Protocol No. 16 to the Convention.

10. Note that, unlike Series A, *Reports of Judgments and Decisions* is in italics.

11. It may be followed by “(Article 50)” for a judgment concerning only just satisfaction, “(preliminary objections)” for a judgment concerning only preliminary objections, “(revision)” or “(interpretation)” for judgments concerning revision or interpretation.

12. “The Sunday Times”, which as the name of a newspaper is usually in italics, appears in roman in this context.

Garnieri v. Italy, no. 22256/88, Commission decision of 18 May 1992, unreported

Borrelli v. Italy, no. 1706/62, Commission decision of 4 October 1966, Collection of Decisions 21

Ward v. the United Kingdom, no. 1850/63, Commission decision of 29 March 1966, Yearbook 9

Opinions of the Commission

They are to be found appended to most judgments published in Series A and *Reports of Judgments and Decisions*; a few are to be found appended to judgments in the early volumes of ECHR. They are referred to as follows:

Stocké v. Germany, 19 March 1991, opinion of the Commission, § 167, Series A no. 199

Neigel v. France, 17 March 1997, opinion of the Commission, § 29, *Reports of Judgments and Decisions* 1997-II

Caballero v. the United Kingdom [GC], no. 32819/96, opinion of the Commission, §§ 65-66, ECHR 2000-II