

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

HELP ONLINE COURSE

Duration : 6 hours

Available for free on the CoE HELP e-learning platform

Statement of Accomplishment

START COURSE

Council of Europe
Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP) Programme
2025

Background

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is an evolving field that **holds immense potential** to transform many sectors, including law. The integration of AI systems in our daily lives **brings numerous benefits**, such as supporting the efficiency of judicial systems and increasing innovative technical solutions. However, it is also **crucial to understand its implications on human rights, democracy, and the rule of law**.

The deployment and use of AI technologies may pose several human rights related risks. AI systems often rely on large datasets (which can include personal information), with a need for a balance between AI use and privacy rights as outlined in the Council of Europe European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (CETS No. 108) and its Protocols, and the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

AI algorithms can inadvertently perpetuate biases, leading to discriminatory practices. Legal professionals must be equipped to identify and address such biases to ensure compliance with the ECHR and EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. Additionally, AI's potential impact on access to justice raises concerns about transparency, accountability, and fairness, necessitating adherence to human rights standards to maintain public trust and the integrity of legal systems.

The Council of Europe (CoE) has been consistently working on AI and has identified it as one of its key strategic priority in the Digital Agenda 2022-2025. A landmark achievement includes the adoption by the Committee of Ministers, on 17 May 2024, of the Council of Europe of the Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law.

This pioneering global treaty is the first of its kind, with binding legal standards aimed at guaranteeing that AI upholds fundamental standards in human rights, democracy, and the rule of law, while mitigating potential risks that could compromise these values. It aims at ensuring that activities within the lifecycle of AI are fully consistent with human rights, democracy and the rule of law, while supporting technological advancements and innovation.

In 26 February 2025, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe approved the HUDERIA Methodology, which sets out a structured approach to risk and impact assessment of AI systems from the point of view of human rights, democracy and the rule of law and offers a flexible methodology for identifying, assessing, and mitigating risks of AI systems. The Council of Europe continues intergovernmental work on development of the specific guidance (HUDERIA Model) and supporting materials to aid effective implementation of risk and impact assessment of the AI systems.

The complexity of AI means that many people, including legal professionals, may not fully understand the legal challenges AI poses. It is crucial for legal practitioners to grasp the basics of AI, including its limitations and implications, to effectively address and navigate the legal issues that arise from its use. **Risk and impact assessments** are thus essential mechanisms for ensuring that AI systems are deployed responsibly, in alignment with the legal and ethical standards.

About the HELP course

The **HELP course on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights** aims to enhance the understanding of AI technologies and some of their human rights implications. Its objective is to assist professionals in navigating the relevant legal and regulatory landscape, while fostering ethical decision-making, supporting assessment and management of potential adverse impacts related to activities within the lifecycle of the AI systems.

The course provides information about the most important instruments at international and European level, and their practical implementation across Europe and beyond, focusing on the Council of Europe and the European Union frameworks. Developed using the HELP methodology, the topics are explored in a practical way by using presentations, interactive screens, knowledge tests and reflective exercises, enabling the users to apply the gained knowledge and skills.

This HELP course was initially **developed in 2024 and updated in 2025** by the Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP) Programme of the Council of Europe, and the Digital Development Unit (DDU) / CAI Secretariat of the Directorate General Human Rights and Rule of Law (DGI), Council of Europe, as well as the Registry of the European Court of Human Rights.

The course also benefitted from contributions from the project **Foster Transparency of Judicial Decisions and Enhancing the National Implementation of the ECHR (TJENI)**, funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Regional Cooperation.

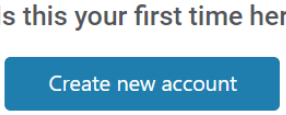
Target audience

The course is primarily addressed at **legal/justice professionals** (judges, prosecutors, lawyers), competent supervisory authorities, AI providers and users. It can also be useful for professionals from the IT sector, staff of civil society organisations, academia, university students, scholars, CoE/EU staff and anyone wishing to enhance their knowledge on AI.

How to access the course

The course is freely available in self-learning format on the CoE HELP e-learning platform. The overall length of the course is **six hours** and those who complete it in self-learning format can obtain an electronic '**Statement of accomplishment**'.

To access the course, you need to have a HELP account. If you haven't created one yet, you can sign up here - it only takes a few minutes.



Course outline

The course has an Introductory module and 5 substantive modules:

	Introductory module (15 minutes) • About the course and the Council of Europe HELP Programme • For whom and by whom • Learning objectives • Resources • Course structure
1	**Introduction to Artificial Intelligence (90 minutes)** • What is AI? • Basic concepts • The history of AI • Current limitations of AI • AI in the world • Summary and knowledge check
2	**European and International Frameworks and Their Principles on AI (60 minutes)** • Introduction • Council of Europe • Other frameworks • Key AI principles • Summary and knowledge check
3	**AI Regulation in Europe (75 minutes)** • Introduction • The CoE Framework Convention • The EU AI Act • Knowledge check
4	**Transversal Issues on AI and Human Rights (60 minutes)** • Introduction • AI and privacy • AI and non-discrimination • AI and freedom of expression • Knowledge check
5	**AI and Justice (60 minutes)** • Introduction • Societal implications of AI • Implications for justice • Relevant principles • Summary and knowledge check