

European Convention on Human Rights (Child-friendly summary)

Section I: Rights and Freedoms

Article 1, Obligation to respect human rights:

If you live in a country that has agreed to this convention, you have a right to these basic civil and political rights whether you are a citizen or not.

Article 2, Right to life:

You have the right to life, and this right is protected by law.¹

Article 3, Freedom from torture:

Nobody is allowed to torture, harm or humiliate you.

Article 4, Freedom from slavery and forced labour:

Nobody is allowed to treat you as a slave, and you should not make anyone your slave. No-one can make you work by force.

Article 5, Right to liberty and security

You have the right to freedom and safety. No-one is allowed to take away this right except by legal means. If you are arrested, you have many rights, including to understand why you are arrested, to have a prompt hearing and to challenge your arrest,

Article 6, Right to a fair trial:

If you are accused of a crime, you have the right to a fair and public hearing.

Article 7, No punishment without law:

You cannot be punished for doing something that was not considered a crime at the time you did it.

Article 8, Right to respect for private and family life home and correspondence:

You have the right to be protected if someone tries to enter your house, open your letters, or bother you or your family without good reasons.

Article 9, Freedom of thought, conscience and religion:

You have the right to your own thoughts and to believe in any religion. You are free to practise your religion or beliefs and also to change them.

Article 10, Freedom of expression:

You have the right to think what you want and responsibly to say what you like. You should be able to share your ideas and opinions in any way including newspapers and magazines, radio, television, and the Internet.

Article 11, Freedom of assembly and association:

You have the right to meet peacefully with other people, including the right to form and to join trade unions.

Article 12, Right to marry:

When you are legally old enough, you have the right to marry and to found a family.

Article 13, Right to an effective remedy:

If your rights are violated by another person or by the government, you have the right to ask for help from the courts or other public bodies to uphold your rights.

Article 14, Freedom from discrimination:

You have all the rights and freedoms in this convention no matter what your sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social background, association with a minority group, economic status, birth or other status.

Article 15, Derogation in time of emergency:

The government may suspend its duties to uphold these rights and freedoms in time of war. This suspension may not include Article 2, the Right to Life.

Article 16, Restrictions on political activity of aliens:

The government cannot restrict your political activity simply because you are not a citizen of that country.

Article 17, Prohibition of abuse of rights:

No person, group or government anywhere in the world may do anything to destroy these rights.

Article 18, Limitation on use of restrictions on rights:

Your rights and freedoms can only be limited in ways set out in this convention.

Section II: European Court of Human Rights**Articles 19 to 51, The European Court of Human Rights, its mandate and activities:**

The Convention establishes a European Court of Human Rights to deal with cases brought to it by individuals and governments. The Judges are entirely independent and are elected by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

Section III, Miscellaneous provisions**Articles 52 to 59, Application of rights in this convention**

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe oversees how governments respect this convention and fulfill their obligations to promote and protect human rights.

Protocols to the European Convention on Human Rights

Since the ECHR was adopted in 1950, the Council of Europe has made important additions, known as protocols, which add to the human rights of people living in Europe. Among the major rights and freedoms added are these:

Protocol No. 1:**Article 1, Right to property**

You have the right to own property and use your possessions.

Article 2, Right to education

You have the right to go to school.

Article 3, Right to free elections

You have the right to elect the government of your country by secret vote.

Protocol No. 4:**Article 2, Freedom of movement**

If you are in a country legally, you have the right to travel or live wherever you want within it and also to return to your home country.

Protocols Nos. 6 and 13:**Article 1, Freedom from the death penalty**

You cannot be condemned to death or executed by the government either in peace- or wartime.

Protocol No. 7:**Article 2, Right of appeal in criminal matters**

If you have been convicted of a crime, you can appeal to a higher court.

Protocol No. 12:**Article 1, General protection against discrimination**

Public authorities cannot discriminate against you for reasons like your skin colour, sex, language, political or religious beliefs, or origins.

Two additions to the Convention (called protocols) aim at abolishing the death penalty in Europe.