

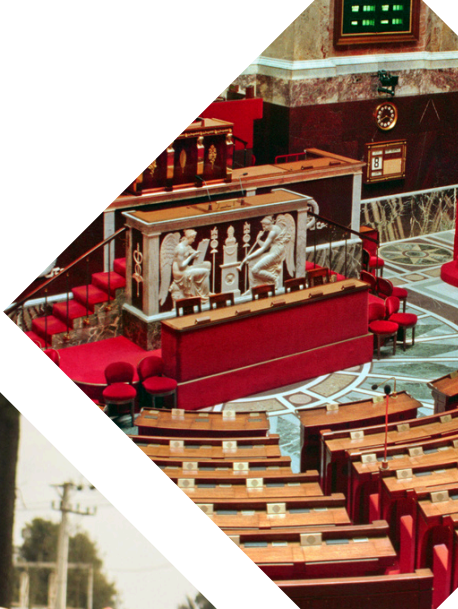
European Centre for Law and Justice



2024

A YEAR TO PROTECT YOUR FREEDOM

“Protect and defend”



WHO WE ARE

A Christian advocacy group promoting natural liberties and freedom for all to live according to the Gospel.



WE TAKE UP YOUR CAUSE TO PROTECT AND DEFEND :



All components of religious freedoms



Respect for human beings, their life and their dignity



An international political order compatible with the Gospel



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I. PROTECT AND DEFEND ALL ASPECTS OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

For the faithful

Protecting the right to become a Christian

For several years, ECLJ has been fighting to protect the right to become a Christian. We have published a report and other documents on the persecution in France and Europe of people from Muslim backgrounds who have converted to Christianity¹. We have also called for the defense of an Iranian Christian, threatened with death for apostasy in his country and who is subject to an obligation to leave French territory².

Defending the rights of the Christians

For the recognition of anti-Christian hatred in Europe

For several years now, ECLJ has been fighting for the right to benefit from all the laws in force for the whole of society, without discrimination. For example, we have denounced the fact that the European Union ignores anti-Christian hatred and still refuses to set up a coordinator for the fight against Christianophobia³. ECLJ also denounced the refusal of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) to rule on the "Eucharist case". We intervened in this case, on behalf of the Spanish Bishops' Conference, to challenge an artistic performance based on 242 consecrated hosts stolen during Masses. The performer's stated aim was to offend Catholics⁴.



For Christian freedom of expression and religion

The ECLJ has been working for years with the European Court of Human Rights to defend Christians. It was in this context that we submitted Written Observations in the case of *Krasimir Dinchev VELEV and others v. Bulgaria*⁵. The aim was to defend the right of missionaries to go door-to-door to present their faith. This is protected by the freedoms of expression and religion⁶. The ECLJ had already defended⁷ at the ECHR the case of a Christian unjustly condemned in Greece for "proselytizing".



For religious freedom worldwide

As a UN-accredited NGO, ECLJ also fights for Christians worldwide. For example, we submitted reports to the United Nations during the 47th session of the Universal Periodic Review, with the aim of identifying violations of religious freedom and acts of persecution against Christians **in seven countries**. ECLJ particularly highlighted the situation in Nicaragua⁸.

In the same context, we also sent a report to the UN recommending that Iraq reform its laws to bring them into line with international human rights standards and its constitutional guarantees.

We also published a submission to the 47th session of the Universal Periodic Review to discuss **the state of human rights in Ethiopia**. This contribution was based on a detailed report on "The silent suffering of the Amhara people in Ethiopia"⁹.

This work presents an in-depth examination of the serious problems and human rights violations facing the Amhara community, while highlighting the persecution of Christians. The report details a number of significant incidents in the country, including a series of attacks on Christians, the Burayu massacre, the Shashemene massacres and multiple targeted killings in the Wollega and Metekel areas.



The report also notes the burning and destruction of more than 30 churches between 2018 and 2019. The schism within the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in January 2023 has exacerbated these persecutions, causing significant losses among believers, and illustrating the entanglement of religious and ethnic tensions in Ethiopia¹⁰.



In Turkey, we intervened in the case of *Mavrakis v. Turkey*. The applicants, two Greek Orthodox priests, Niko Mavrakis and Corç Kasapoğlu, had been elected members of the boards of directors of Greek Orthodox community foundations in Istanbul. These are highly symbolic foundations: those of the Churches of the Virgin Mary and Aya Konstantin, and that of Phanar College, Istanbul's oldest and most prestigious Greek Orthodox school, established in its present form in 1454.



These two priests were removed from the boards of directors by the General Directorate of Foundations, a Turkish public institution under the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, on the grounds that they were ecclesiastics. In November 2024, we intervened in this case as a third party and submitted observations to the Court¹¹.

We also intervened as a third party in November 2024 in the case of Kenneth Wiest, an American Protestant residing in Turkey for 34 years. **Having become a target of this latent repression against Christians, which also affects foreigners, and deported without tangible justification in 2019, he is now fighting before the ECHR (application no. 14436/21) to regain his life and defend a fundamental principle: religious freedom.** The Turkish authorities have invoked article 9 of the law on foreigners, which allows access to Turkish territory to be refused to anyone considered a threat to national security. But no evidence was presented to support these accusations. Worse still, Wiest never had access to the evidence against him, nor to a fair trial to defend himself¹².

For other communities

ECLJ worked on the *Mikyas and others v. Belgium* judgment of April 9, 2024, concerning the wearing of the Islamic headscarf in schools. On April 9, 2024, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that the ban was legitimate and proportionate for the purpose of protecting the rights and freedoms of others and public order.



The Court held that the prohibition on pupils wearing visible religious symbols, in the name of educational neutrality, "does not in itself offend" Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights¹³.

ECLJ has analyzed and highlighted **the case of a rabbi arrested in Dublin for performing a circumcision ceremony**. He is accused of "practicing medicine [...] without being a licensed medical practitioner" in Ireland. He faces a fine of €130,000 and five years' imprisonment, under section 37 of the Medical Practitioners Act 2007. Circumcision is first and foremost a religious ritual practice, rather than a simple act of medicine. **Preventing it is a serious infringement of religious freedom, as the United Nations Special Rapporteurs on Freedom of Religion or Belief and the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe have stated**. The ECLJ, in accordance with international law, has called on the Irish Minister of Justice, the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion, and the EU Coordinator for Combating Antisemitism and Promoting Jewish Life to do everything in their power to secure the release of Rabbi Abraham and to drop the charges against him¹⁴.

For the churches

Protecting religious freedom

Protecting religious freedom

ECLJ has been active in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, **supporting Christians discriminated against by governments**. For example, we publicized the situation of Christians in Algeria, defending in particular Pastor Youssef Ourahmane, vice-president of the Algerian Protestant Church, who was sentenced on appeal to 1 year in prison and 100,000 dinars in fines for holding an unauthorized worship service in an unauthorized building¹⁵. ECLJ published a wide-ranging interview with this pastor¹⁶. **In Algeria, restrictions on the freedom of peaceful assembly and of association prohibit Christians from freely exercising their faith**. As evangelical churches are unable to form religious associations or have their buildings recognized for worship, every meeting for worship is forbidden. An article published in *Le Figaro* highlighted this situation.



Only 4 of the 46 churches of the Eglise Protestante d'Algérie (EPA) are still open. The Algerian authorities no longer hide from arbitrarily preventing Algerian Christians from freely exercising their faith, recognizing neither their buildings for worship nor their approval to form religious associations. Every meeting for worship, every Christian assembly in the vicinity of a closed church, is forbidden.

On July 2, 2024, we organized a conference at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva to plead the cause of Pastor Youssef Ourahmane and that of Algerian Christians, persecuted for their faith by the Algerian government. Speakers at the conference included Pastor Youssef Ourahmane, the former French Ambassador to Algeria, Xavier Driencourt, and the UN Special Rapporteurs on Freedom of Religion and Association. Several diplomatic missions to the United Nations have shown particular interest in this cause, including representatives from Belgium, the USA, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland¹⁷.



In November 2024, the ECLJ accomplished a 10 days fact-finding mission to Morocco to meet with Christians in the country, in order to defend the right of Moroccans to be Christians, and to worship. **The ECLJ will prepare a report, meet with officials in the country and act internationally.**



Defending church autonomy

In defense of Turkish churches



ECLJ fights to defend the autonomy of churches from the State. That's why we've turned our attention to the situation of Christians in Turkey. **In this country, attacks targeting Christian sites have risen sharply since 2015. Religious sites are threatened by vandalism, expropriation and neglect.** ECLJ has thus been particularly active before the ECHR in defending the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. In this way, we support Christian communities in recovering their property. Nevertheless, **Turkey's failure to comply with the ECHR's condemnations is very high and remains a subject of mobilization for the ECLJ.**

On March 17, 2021, Dimitri Bartholomeos Arhondoni, better known as His Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomeos I, Primate of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, lodged an application with the European Court of Human Rights against Turkey (application no. 15399/21). At issue: the Turkish government's expropriation of the Greek Orthodox monastery of Saint Spyridon de Halki. This island is home to the Halki seminary, where Greek Orthodox clergy were trained, which has been arbitrarily closed by the Turkish authorities since 1971¹⁸. In April 2024, we intervened as a third party in this case and submitted observations to the Court¹⁹.

For the living heritage of Christianity

Obtaining international condemnation for the destruction of Christian symbols and buildings



Protecting the rights of Armenians

ECLJ works to secure international condemnation for the destruction of Christian symbols and buildings. For example, we have highlighted and analyzed a decision by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on November 17, 2023, which ordered Azerbaijan to allow the "safe, free and speedy" return of Armenians from Nagorno-Karabakh. Baku had organized the ethnic cleansing of this autonomous territory in September 2023, following a lightning offensive. At the time, the European Centre for Law and Justice welcomed the Court's decision, while remaining vigilant as to its actual application²⁰.

ECLJ also requested and welcomed the decision by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) to suspend Azerbaijan's delegation on January 24, 2024.

While the ethnic cleansing of Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh was undoubtedly the trigger for this sanction, Baku's democratic dysfunctions and blatant lack of cooperation do not play in its favor either. Although Azerbaijan remains a full member of the Council of Europe, this is an encouraging sign for the institution's continued credibility. The ECLJ also renewed its invitation to the Assembly to request Azerbaijan's exclusion from the Council of Europe, as it had pledged to consider²¹.



Against anti-Christian outrages at sporting events

To defend the living heritage of Christianity, ECLJ also initiated a petition signed by nearly 18,000 people to the attention of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Executive Board. In it, we strongly denounced the outrageous and blasphemous nature of the opening ceremony of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games (OG).

The opening ceremony of the Olympic Games featured a scandalous parody of the Last Supper, a sacred moment for Christians the world over²².



Obtaining national and international legal protection for the living heritage of Christianity

Protecting Armenian heritage from Islam

ECLJ fights for national and international legal protection of the living heritage of Christianity. For example, we are taking action for Nagorno-Karabakh, which is home to Armenian Christian heritage treasures - churches, monasteries, khachkars and other cultural artifacts that bear witness to the faith and culture of the Armenian people. This heritage is threatened by Azerbaijan. We have published a report on "The systematic erasure of Armenian Christian heritage in Nagorno-Karabakh²³". **It seeks to draw attention to the malicious destruction and revisionism of Armenian Christian heritage, assess the international response to date, and provide recommendations for combating the cultural erasure taking place in Nagorno-Karabakh.** On this occasion, we have drawn up an exhaustive list and detailed review of the religious heritage that has been destroyed, damaged or threatened by Azerbaijan between September 2023 and June 2024. **The report also details the cultural revisionism carried out by Azerbaijan.** To achieve complete cultural erasure, Azerbaijan not only destroys Armenian heritage, it also denies its existence.

ECLJ is committed to using all available means to encourage international institutions²⁴ to protect Armenian Christian heritage. We asked PACE members to denounce the destruction committed by Azerbaijan in Nagorno-Karabakh. We also contacted the author of a PACE resolution, entitled "Combating the erasure of cultural identity in times of war and peace", to thank her for her consideration of the destruction committed in Nagorno-Karabakh.

ECLJ's advocacy contributed to an important discussion on cultural erasure in the South Caucasus during the debate on this resolution, with three of the delegates contacted by ECLJ raising the issue of ongoing cultural erasure in Nagorno-Karabakh. ECLJ will continue to draw the attention of international institutions to this issue until the protection of Armenian Christian heritage is assured²⁵.



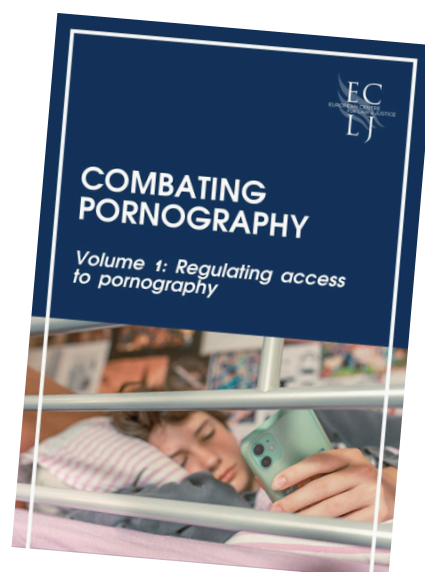
II. TO PROTECT AND DEFEND RESPECT FOR HUMAN BEINGS, THEIR LIVES AND DIGNITY

For victims of human trafficking

Strengthening international instruments restricting pornography

To restrict the activity of pornographic sites

ECLJ is working to strengthen international instruments restricting pornography in order to protect victims of human trafficking. For several years now, we have been developing expertise in this field, in order to understand and respond to the extent and seriousness of the phenomenon. For example, we have alerted Members of the European Parliament to the fact that pornographic sites should be added to the list of "very large online platforms" under the Digital Services Regulation. Indeed, the platforms concerned by this regulation must apply much more demanding measures regarding the protection of minors online.



Five MEPs, including France's François-Xavier Bellamy (EPP) and Spain's Margarita de la Pisa Carrión (ECR), took the issue to the European Commission²⁶. As a result, the Commission has designated *Pornhub*, *Stripchat* and *Xvideos* as very large online platforms. A positive step towards a safer Internet for children.

ECLJ is committed to protecting children online. **In France today, 2.3 million children visit "adult" sites every month²⁷**. We have published a report on how to better regulate access to pornography²⁸. In it, we set out the harmful consequences of pornography for adult and child consumers, and proposed legal measures to regulate access. We presented these recommendations to the European Parliament at a conference on "The Dangers of Exposing Children to Pornography" organized by MEP Margarita de la Pisa Carrión (ECR). **ECLJ also works to inform the public about these issues**. For example, we published an article in *La Croix* newspaper on March 6, 2024 to alert families to the dangers that young people face on their smartphones with regard to pornographic content²⁹.

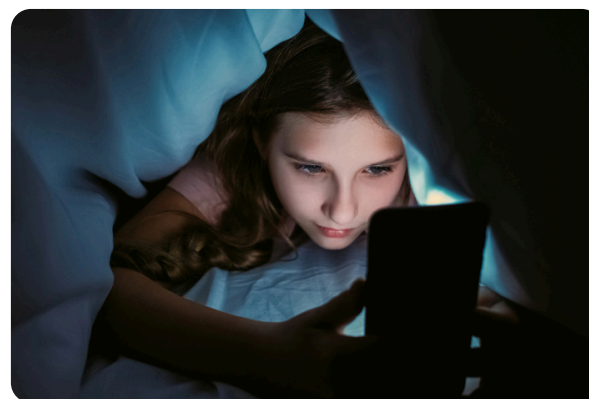
To shed light on the reality of pornography

In this field, the ECLJ has also contributed to several important texts on "Protecting children from online violence" adopted unanimously on April 19, 2024 by the PACE.



Indeed, the Recommendation (n°2274) makes extensive reference to our work in this field in its explanatory memorandum. Our contribution was intended to draw the rapporteur's attention to the need to address children's exposure to pornography, as it relates to online child abuse³⁰. We reminded him that, while pornography is harmful to everyone, children are particularly vulnerable: they view it on a massive scale and suffer serious consequences. We recommended that States take various measures to protect children from this scourge³¹.

ECLJ also addresses the European Commission in this fight. We sent a written contribution against the exposure of children to online pornography. We were responding to the Commission's call for contributions concerning the revision of European Union rules on combating the sexual exploitation and abuse of children.



This contribution is important, as the Commission wants to revise Directive 2011/93 on this subject: this is the text that lays down the minimum penal standards for such crimes. We have recommended that the technology sector be made more responsible for preventing children's access to online pornography. In particular, this means making it a criminal offence to leave this type of online content available to children.

The ECLJ's recommendations also help to ensure the consistency of European policies, particularly following the European Commission's December 2023 decision including three pornographic sites on the list of "very large online platforms" under the Digital Services Regulation³².

Finally, ECLJ looks at the issue of pornography from a more philosophical point of view. In an article, for example, we explained why pornography undermines human dignity. This notion is based on the idea that every person has an equal right to be valued and respected for their own good. **Because it is inherent in every person by nature, human dignity is universal, inviolable and inalienable.** It can neither be given nor taken away by any state or authority. States are therefore bound to respect and protect it. They have both a positive and a negative obligation to prevent anything that might undermine a person's dignity. In addition to the fact that pornography profoundly undermines the dignity of those involved, and constitutes a commodification of the human body, it also valorizes violence against people³³.

Assimilating prostitution and human trafficking in international law

For the abolition of prostitution

ECLJ fights for the abolition of prostitution, and as such wishes to see it assimilated to human trafficking. Following the ECLJ mobilization, on December 5, the Council of Europe Assembly's "Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination" definitively buried the draft resolution recommending the liberalization of prostitution.



For the Victims of Abortion

Strengthen national and international instruments to prevent abortion

To offer arguments against the liberalization of abortion

ECLJ fights to strengthen national and international instruments for the prevention of abortion. To this end, we have circulated legal arguments to Members of the European Parliament against the inclusion of abortion in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. The European Parliament regularly votes on resolutions calling for abortion to be included in the Charter. This has no legal value, but helps to shape the debate on the issue³⁴. On the contrary, ECLJ calls for a policy of abortion prevention. **We affirm that the massive recourse to abortion is a social and public health problem that affects the whole of society and engages our future.** We therefore call on political leaders to make a commitment to implement a genuine abortion prevention policy, particularly for young people. Our petition on the subject has already been signed by 28,500 people³⁵.

It was in this spirit that ECLJ fought against the inclusion of a "right to abortion" in the French Constitution. In particular, we published an article in *Le Figaro*, co-signed by several legal professionals, **alerting senators to the threat this represents to the freedom of conscience of medical staff and to freedom of expression**³⁶.

ECLJ also **provides expertise on the reality of abortion**. For example, we published an article on our website showing that France leads all European countries in the number of abortions. We showed that there are twice as many abortions in France as in Germany, and that abortion is no longer "compensated" by births, and that abortion is caused by poverty³⁷.



In *Valeurs Actuelles*, we also denounced the wokism of the Family Planning organization. Indeed, this organization, **subsidized to the tune of 2.8 million euros per year**, is involved in all far-left battles. In 2022, for example, it created an advertising campaign entitled "At Planning, we know that men can get pregnant too"³⁸.

To help public decision-makers understand the reality of abortion

On February 27-29, 2024, ECLJ organized meetings between women who have had abortions and members of parliament and senators³⁹. Twelve of them were able to present the demands too often ignored by the abortion lobby: **the need for more comprehensive information and stronger support for these women** in a situation of intense stress due to their unplanned pregnancy. Three issues in particular were addressed:

- The issue of the unborn
- The issue of causes and social circumstances of abortion
- The consequences of abortion on women⁴⁰

Following these meetings, several of the women gave their testimony in a series of videos⁴¹.



These meetings with members of parliament received media coverage in France: *Le Monde*, *Libération*, *Valeurs Actuelles*, *France catholique*, *Boulevard Voltaire*, *L'Homme nouveau*; and abroad: *public TV RTP2* (Portugal), *National Catholic Register* (USA), *ACI Prensa* (Peru)...

Following the constitutionalization of the voluntary interruption of pregnancy (IVG), ECLJ spoke to *L'Homme nouveau* about the consequences. By becoming constitutional, the "guaranteed freedom" of abortion now takes precedence over laws protecting freedom of expression or conscience, due to the hierarchy of norms. **This puts healthcare professionals at risk if they wish to assert their conscience clause. Litigation by associations could lead the French Constitutional Council to declare this clause unconstitutional⁴².** Aware of this threat, ECLJ is already drawing up a strategy to defend the rights of healthcare professionals.



All these MPs were re-elected in the legislative elections, whether from the ex-presidential majority, the LR or the RN, enabling us to pursue the following projects:



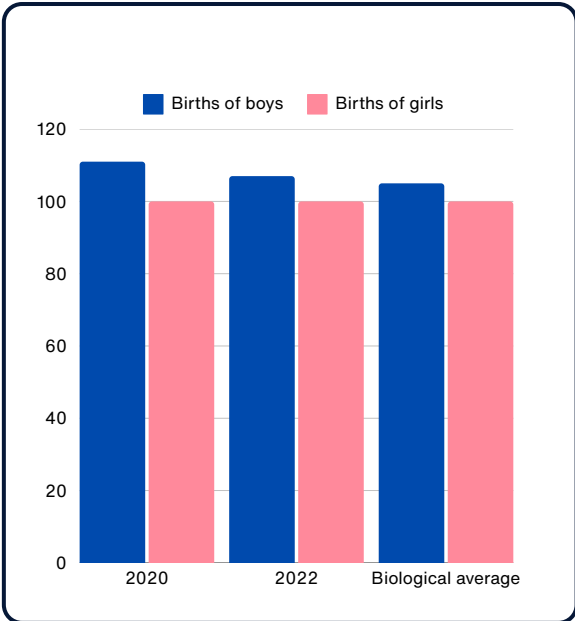
- **Act on the reimbursement by Social Security of the first two ultrasounds**, as they are currently better reimbursed in the case of an abortion (100%) than for a woman continuing her pregnancy (70%);
- **Modify the content of the official “IVG.gouv” website to indicate that abortion often has negative psychological consequences for women;**
- **Initiate a fact-finding mission into the abuses of Family Planning.**

To highlight violations of the right to life around the world



ECLJ continued its action at the UN to protect the right to life. On the occasion of the 7th session of the Universal Periodic Review, **ECLJ presented several reports highlighting flagrant violations of international commitments to protect the unborn child in several countries.** In particular, we highlighted the situation in Albania, Equatorial Guinea and Norway.

Albania, for example, is not effectively combating sex-selective abortion. According to estimates, **over the last 10 years, more than 21,000 girls have been aborted simply because they were girls.**



On October 29, 2022, the ECLJ also proposed that states wishing to protect human life should formulate an "interpretative declaration" concerning the treaties they have signed⁴³. **States can state in such a declaration that they interpret the notion of "person" as applying before birth to the unborn child.** This declaration has several effects, the main one being that it is binding on international courts and tribunals, **which are not authorized to interpret international instruments for the protection of human rights in such a way as to limit or undermine the rights guaranteed in domestic law.** Furthermore, the recognition of the status of the unborn child as a person or human being prevents these bodies from asserting a subjective right to abortion.

ECLJ has reacted to the condemnation of Poland by a UN feminist committee on the subject of abortion. Genoveva Tisheva, Vice-President of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), conducted a confidential investigation in Poland. In her opinion, "the situation in Poland constitutes gender-based violence against women and may reach the level of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment."



CEDAW thus calls on Poland to recognize the right to abortion as a fundamental right. This condemnation is part of a more global strategy by abortion lobbies to exploit the goodwill of members of UN committees to obtain legal advances. **It's a real instrumentalization and privatization of international law bodies.** These lobbies, of which the Center for Reproductive Rights is one of the most active, have been using this method for years with some success. Even if the decisions of these committees are not legally binding, they contribute to creating an environment of "soft law" which ends up exerting considerable influence on States and international courts of justice. Faced with these abuses, ECLJ calls on States to regain power by carrying out audits and initiating work to reform these institutions⁴⁴.

To prevent euthanasia from claiming new victims

Obtain national and international legal protection against euthanasia



To defend the right to life at the ECHR

ECLJ is fighting for **national and international legal protection against euthanasia**. In an article published in *Le Figaro*, we denounced the way in which the European Court of Human Rights is constructing a right to die. The article, co-authored by Javier Borrego, a former judge at the ECHR and the Spanish Supreme Court, denounced the steps taken by the Court to twist the European Convention on Human Rights into an ideological rather than a legal interpretation⁴⁵.



We have intervened in several cases before the Court to reiterate what the protection of life really means. This was the case in *A. and others v. France* (No. 17952/23) on autonomy and the right to suicide⁴⁶ and in *Karsai v. Hungary* challenging the ban on euthanasia and assisted suicide⁴⁷.

In this case, the ECHR ruled in favor of Hungary, **an important victory for the defense of life and against previous ideological excesses. The Court confirms the absence of a right to assisted suicide, subject to future developments in European societies in this area, and for the first time promotes palliative care**, which is presented as "essential to ensure a dignified end to life". We presented this important decision to the general public in an article published in *Valeurs Actuelles*.

To expose the pro-euthanasia lobby

We have published an in-depth study on "The promotion of euthanasia in the twentieth century".

We have also highlighted the work of the Association pour le droit de mourir dans la dignité (ADMD). In an article published on our website, we showed that, while ADMD is currently confining itself to calling for the legalization of voluntary euthanasia for sick adults, its current restraint on the euthanasia of minors, the disabled and the elderly is purely strategic, and comes under the heading of double talk.



ECLJ has also published an analysis of the history of ADMD and Pierre Simon, French promoter of contraception, abortion, euthanasia and surrogacy⁴⁸. Far from the smooth, consensual image it seeks to impose today, ADMD is a direct descendant of the Anglo-Saxon euthanasia and eugenics movements, as well as the "humanist"⁴⁹ international.

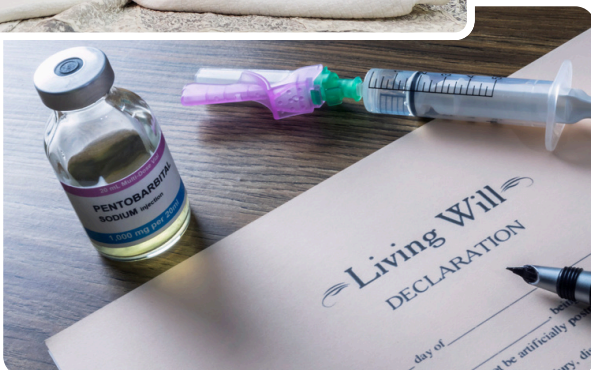


Defending the rights of healthcare professionals

In its fight against euthanasia, the ECLJ has published an article in the newspaper *Le Figaro*, co-signed by some thirty pharmacists, two professors in the Faculty of Pharmacy and some thirty legal experts.

Currently, a pharmacist who prepares or dispenses a lethal substance for ingestion can be prosecuted for complicity in poisoning. The penalty is 30 years' imprisonment. In the context of "aid in dying", however, he would be obliged to cooperate in euthanasia and assisted suicide. **Delivering a lethal substance would thus be transformed from an act condemned by law into an obligation**⁵⁰.

The ECLJ has published an article in *Le Figaro* warning of the danger of ADMD hijacking support homes. These homes are part of the "end of life" bill, and would be an intermediary solution between home and hospital. ECLJ fears that ADMD will take over management of these homes, and that they will become centers for assisted suicide and euthanasia⁵¹.



For parents' right to educate their children

Strengthening national and international instruments for family instruction

For the right to family instruction

ECLJ continues its commitment to defending the freedom of parents to educate their children in accordance with their religious and philosophical convictions, which implies the freedom to choose the school and methods of instruction for their children, or to assume this duty themselves by homeschooling.



The French law of August 24, 2021 has drastically reduced this freedom. ECLJ, in conjunction with other national associations, is lobbying elected representatives to submit written questions and amendments to improve the application of this law, and to table legislative proposals. The aim is for France to return to a legal regime of freedom.

ECLJ took part in a press conference on June 25, 2024 in Paris, to support the referral to the European Court of Human Rights made by a father unjustly deprived of the right to family education for one of his daughters. The ECLJ will be closely monitoring this appeal to ensure that the Court's jurisprudence evolves and that France is condemned on this occasion.

ECLJ published an article in *Valeurs Actuelles* on August 24, 2024, warning against the prevalence of Islamism and violence in public schools. **The multitude of problems facing these schools only further legitimizes parents' concern and the need to be free to make alternative educational choices.**

On October 5, 2024, ECLJ published an article in *l'Homme Nouveau* denouncing the abusive suspension of the Director of a private Catholic school for "undermining secularism". Director for over ten years of the department's largest private Catholic school under contract, which has become one of the best in France, he is explicitly criticized for his educational project, deemed "too Catholic" by the French Ministry of Education. **The administrative proceedings against this director illustrate the general climate in France where the national education system acts against all private and religious initiative in education.**

III. PROTECTING AND DEFENDING A COMPATIBLE INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ORDER WITH THE GOSPEL

Defending institutional integrity and fighting corruption

Getting governments to condemn the privatization of certain institutions

Reforming the ECHR

The ECLJ has been fighting for reform of the ECHR for several years. In this struggle **we achieved a major victory on January 22, 2024, when the Court agreed to institute a procedure for the recusal of its judges in the event of a conflict of interest.** This necessary amendment to the Court's Rules was a direct response to the publication of two ECLJ reports. It is the culmination of a long process accompanying the publication of the reports and initiated by the submission of a petition with 60,000 signatories⁵² to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. ECLJ recommends that the Court pursue its internal reforms, notably by requiring judges to publish a declaration of interests, and above all by finally guaranteeing the transparency of the Court's registry and the impartiality of its members. This implies publishing the list of its members, following the example of the Court of Justice of the European Union or the Inter-American Court of Human Rights⁵³.

Against the militant exploitation of UN mandates

LJ fights against the militant exploitation of UN mandates. We investigated the case of Tlaleng Mofokeng, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health since 2020. Indeed, the latter uses her mandate to promote the most extreme struggles. In her annual report to the UN General Assembly, she called for an end to the "war on drugs". Generally speaking, she defends the most libertarian positions. In another report, for example, she asserted that the criminalization of prostitution represented "structural violence". She also campaigns in favor of abortion, which she presents as "a radical act of self-love⁵⁴".

ECLJ also fights against private funding of public human rights institutions. **Whereas small states are local players with limited resources, some foundations and private companies are global players.** Some of these global private actors have an explicit political purpose.



These are large foundations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with considerable resources, high-level expertise and, above all, a generally liberal and global vision of the world. **These three qualities make these private players highly effective instruments of social change, acting in the political and social arena with far greater agility than states, without their administrative and democratic red tape.** A few private players have thus acquired financial and political power far superior to that of many states⁵⁵.

Preventing the capture of institutions by artisans of the culture of death

For the integrity to the ECHR

On June 25, 2024, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe was elected for a five-year term. On Wednesday June 26, three new judges of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) were elected for a nine-year term. The Assembly of the Council of Europe voted on the candidates proposed by governments. The Assembly is made up of parliamentarians from the 46 member states, and met that week in plenary session. **The results of these two elections have an impact on the overall direction of the Council of Europe and on the jurisprudence of the ECHR, which will have repercussions for the next ten years⁵⁶.** Our work on this subject was featured in a *Figaro Magazine* survey⁵⁷.



Against the influence of abortion lobbies in the European Parliament

The ECLJ denounced the European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (EPF) established in 2000 with the support of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF). The stated aim of this lobby is to coordinate European parliamentarians to promote what they call "sexual and reproductive rights". **Several national and European parliamentarians sit on the organization's Executive Committee. Sixteen MEPs are also members of the "MEPs for Sexual and Reproductive Rights" group.** They are the most active supporters of pro-abortion texts in the European Parliament⁵⁸.



Against the WHO's ideological drift on the right to life

In March 2022, the WHO published its "Guidelines for abortion care", drawn up by the Human Reproduction Programme (HRP). **This WHO program, founded in 1970 in response to the UN's economic fear of a demographic explosion, developed most of the methods of reducing human fertility - contraceptives - that exist today. It also created the majority of abortion methods.**

ECLJ has begun work on this subject, the conclusions of which have been published by *Ethics Press* and *L'Harmattan*, in a book prefaced by Professor Giuseppe Benagiano, director of the HRP between 1993 and 1997. We have published an interview on YouTube in which this professor reveals the intentions behind this project to limit population growth, and dispels certain myths that still surround the HRP⁵⁹. To disseminate this information, we have also answered interviews for the *Cercle Aristote*⁶⁰, for example.



Defending political freedoms by proposing an alternative path to the radical left and secularism

Opposing mass immigration and the Islamization of Europe

Defending state sovereignty

ECLJ fights to preserve the sovereignty of States, particularly in the area of immigration. In 2024, for example, we published a study on how the ECHR has given itself the power to suspend deportation procedures⁶¹, which was reprinted in the pages of *Le Figaro*⁶².

Indeed, the ECHR has developed a vast body of case law in support of the rights and freedoms of foreign nationals present in the territory of a State party to the European Convention on Human Rights, or placed under its responsibility, aiming in particular to prevent their expulsion in the event that this might infringe their rights guaranteed under the said Convention. **In order to give effect to the rights of foreign nationals, it has taken on the power to suspend disputed expulsion procedures in progress.** This suspension is effected by means of a procedure known as "provisional measures" or "precautionary measures".



States have never granted the European Court the power to suspend expulsion proceedings. They have only given it the power to rule on them. Indeed, States deliberately omitted to give the Court this power when the European Convention was drafted, and at each subsequent reform of the Court. For a long time, the Court acknowledged in its case law that it did not possess this power, and even considered it impossible to deduce it from the text of the European Convention. But this did not prevent the Court, in 2005, from declaring the contrary and unilaterally attributing this power to itself by declaring compliance with its interim measures to be mandatory⁶³.

Strengthening national and international instruments for freedom of expression

In defense of freedom of expression about Islam

ECLJ fights to defend freedom of expression in the face of international pressure to **restrict criticism of religions**, particularly Islam. In particular, we denounce the growing influence of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and Islamic states, which have been campaigning since the 1990s to introduce concepts such as "defamation of religions" into international law. In response to this trend, in December 2023 the Danish Parliament passed a law prohibiting the inappropriate treatment of religious writings, criminalizing acts such as burning a *Koran*.

This decision is part of a drive to preserve public order in response to growing tensions, but it raises a debate between the protection of religious beliefs and the defense of freedom of expression, a core value of Western democracies. ECLJ took this debate to the Human Rights Council in 2024, denouncing in particular the paradox of countries like Pakistan, which condemn auto-da-fés in Europe while maintaining repressive blasphemy laws in their own country.

Defending conservatives' freedoms in Poland



ECLJ is alarmed **by the threats to freedoms in Poland under the new government of Donald Tusk.** Since his return in December 2023, an aggressive "dePiSation" has targeted not only the public media, but also Christian and conservative organizations. A "blacklist", revealed in January 2024, lists associations and foundations such as Caritas Poland and Ordo Iuris, as well as conservative media, now under scrutiny for their past funding under the PiS government.

Reforms on abortion and contraception are also being promoted. A new law allows minors as young as 15 to access the morning-after pill without a prescription, undermining parental rights and encouraging early sexuality. In addition, a bill threatens doctors' freedom of conscience, forcing public hospitals to perform abortions, despite moral objections⁶⁴.

ECLJ also expressed its deep concern at the authoritarian drift of Donald Tusk's government.

IV. THE ECLJ IN FACTS

Our Written Observations submitted to the ECHR:

Karsai v. Hungary (N°32312/23) challenging the ban on euthanasia & assisted suicide

Hamza Azeem Thamer Al-Habeeb v. Denmark (N°14171/23) concerning the expulsion of an offender

Dimitri Bartholomeos ARHONDONI and others v. Türkiye (N°15399/21), on confiscated Christian property

Niko Mavrakis v. Turkey (N° 12549/23) on the autonomy of religious communities and their board members

Kenneth Arthur Wiest v. Turkey (No. 14436/21), concerning a foreign pastor banned from returning to Turkey

Orhan Demirci and others v. Hungary (N° 48302/21) on the expulsion of foreign criminals

A. and others v. France (No. 17952/23) on personal autonomy and the right to suicide

Krasimir Dinchev VELEV and others v. Bulgaria (N°56007/21) on the prohibition of proselytizing

F.D. and I.M. v. France concerning the wearing of the hijab in sport (No. 38506/23 and 3 others)



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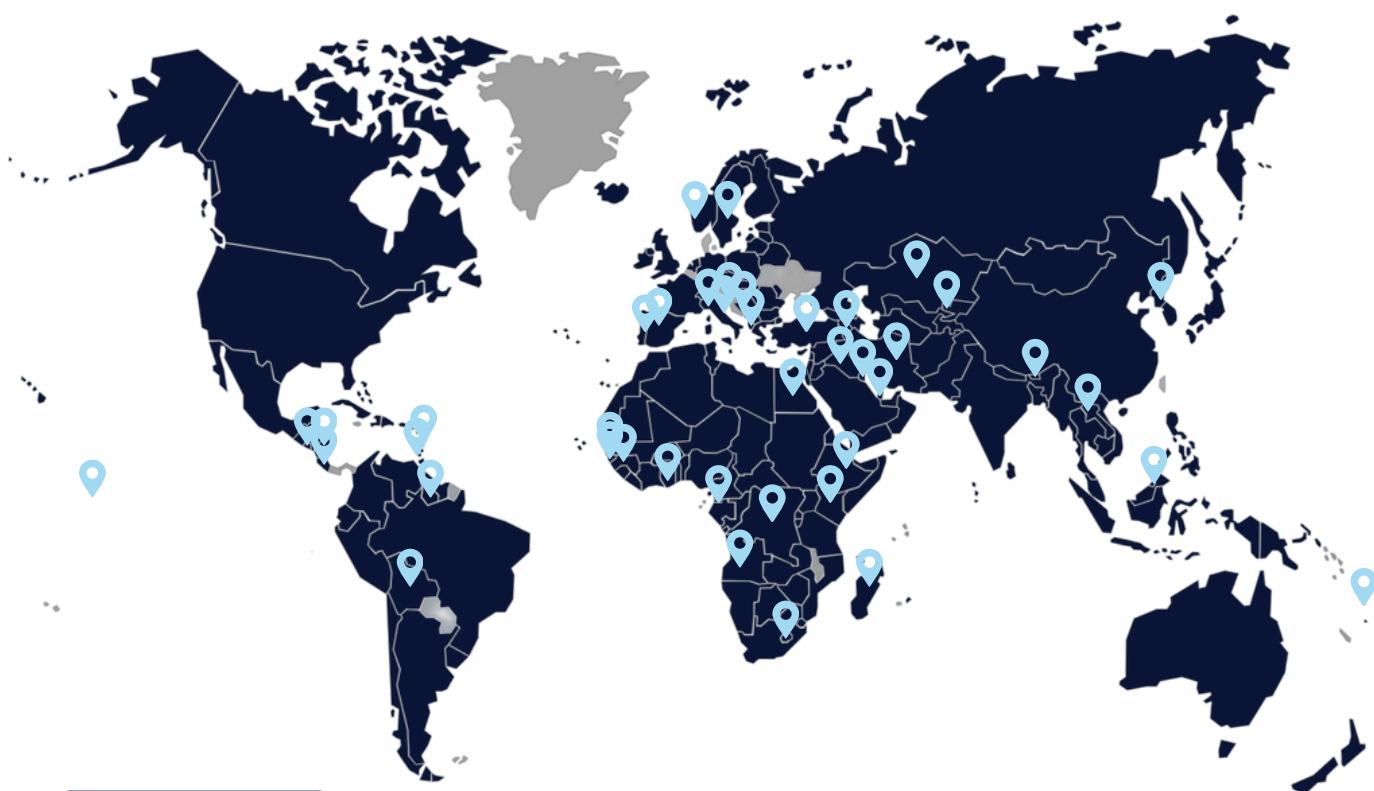
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Footnotes

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