JUST RIGHTS EUROPE
FROM THE SUPREME COURT TO STRASBOURG



PROGRAMME 2 OF 3 · FOR UNIVERSITIES IN EUROPE · EXCEPTIONAL

Grand Chamber Masterclass

For the most advanced

Litigation before the Grand Chamber is the highest level of human rights litigation in Europe. In six months the participant sees from the inside how such a case is built, from the request for referral to the hearing before seventeen judges, under the supervision of counsel who has argued three cases before the Grand Chamber. A university can offer a place to its best and most motivated students, or make the programme its own.

6	6	20	2
MONTHS	TRAINING NOTES, ONE A MONTH	PLACES AT MOST	ROUTES FOR A UNIVERSITY

01

In brief

	PROGRAMME 2 · GRAND CHAMBER MASTERCLASS
FOR WHOM	Participants who know the Convention in depth: graduates of Programme 1 who move up, and advanced graduates and practitioners, by selection
PURPOSE	Litigation before the Grand Chamber, the Court's highest formation
DURATION	Six months
PRACTICAL BOOK	*The Grand Chamber Masterclass*: Training Notes 7 to 12, one for each month
FORM	Online, in English (French possible); every piece of work is reviewed individually
START	January or September 2027, on a date agreed with the University
RESULT	An assessed portfolio and a Litigation Practice Record. Credits and any certificate are decided by the University under its own rules

02

How a university takes part

A university in Europe can take part in two ways. The two routes can be combined.

	TWO ROUTES FOR A UNIVERSITY
ROUTE 1	*A place for the University's best students.* The University offers a place to its best students in human rights or international law: those who excel and are the most motivated. It funds their place, as an award. Once they hold their master's degree, they are admitted by selection, join the group of the Masterclass and work on real cases
ROUTE 2	*The programme as the University's own.* The University takes the Masterclass into its own offer, for a group of its own: under its name, with its own selection, its credits and its certificate. The programme can be certified in full
PLACES	Places are limited: at most twenty participants. The first places go to Route 1; the size of a group on Route 2 is agreed with the University. Once the places are taken, the intake is closed
FEE	No fee is published. It is agreed with the University, according to the route and the number of participants

03

The purpose

The Grand Chamber is the Court's highest formation of seventeen judges, where the standards of the Convention are set. Litigation before it is the highest level of human rights litigation in Europe. A case reaches it by relinquishment (Article 30) or by referral, which a panel of five judges accepts only if it raises a serious question of interpretation or a serious issue of general importance (Article 43). In 2025 the Court disposed of 38,573 applications; the Grand Chamber decides only a small number of cases each year.

Participants learn to litigate at that level and see from the inside how such a case is built, from the request for referral to the hearing, under the supervision of counsel who has argued three cases before the Grand Chamber. To our knowledge, no university offers a programme devoted to litigation before the Grand Chamber today.

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For whom, and the conditions of admission

Participants who know the Convention in depth and want to go to the highest level. First, the graduates of Programme 1 who move up. Then graduates who hold a master's degree or an advanced master's degree in human rights or international law, and practitioners. The programme is exceptional and limited to twenty participants at most. Admission is by selection: very good results in the degree, a piece of writing on a judgment of the Court, and further criteria set with the University.

05

How it works

Real cases. The programme is built around real cases, subject to the stage of the proceedings, the consent of the clients and confidentiality. In the last month the participant sees from the inside how three Grand Chamber cases were built: *M.S.S. v. Belgium and Greece*, *Bouyid v. Belgium* and *Lhermitte v. Belgium*.

The teaching material. The practical book of the programme, *The Grand Chamber Masterclass*, brings together Training Notes 7 to 12: practical, step-by-step guides with worked examples, comparisons of judgments and models. They are handed to participants as the programme advances and are reserved for the programme.

Critical thinking. Participants are not asked to adopt anyone's position. They learn to form their own reasoned view and to defend it.

06

The programme, month by month

MONTH	CONTENT	WHAT THE PARTICIPANT PRODUCES
1	**Litigation before the Grand Chamber.** The written procedure and the role of the parties (Training Note 7).	*A study of a pending Grand Chamber case*
2	**Strategic third-party interventions before the Grand Chamber** (Training Note 8).	*A request for leave to intervene*
3	**Critical reasoning.** The critical analysis of Grand Chamber judgments (Training Note 9).	*A critical analysis*
4	**The oral hearing.** Pleading before seventeen judges (Training Note 10).	*A pleading outline*
5	**Strategy: the RATCHET Method.** Critical and strategic analysis of Grand Chamber case-law (Training Note 11).	*A strategic note*
6	**Behind the scenes.** How *M.S.S. v. Belgium and Greece*, *Bouyid v. Belgium* and *Lhermitte v. Belgium* were built (Training Note 12).	*A complete Grand Chamber file*

SUPERVISION AND REAL CASES

Zouhaier Chihaoui

Grand Chamber and ECHR litigator · Lawyer, Brussels Bar · Just Rights Europe

Every piece of written work is reviewed in detail. Participants work largely on their own, online, and can ask questions at any time. The real cases come through Just Rights Europe, for applicants, and through the Human Rights Litigation Foundation, for third-party interventions.

M.S.S. v. Belgium and Greece
GRAND CHAMBER, 2011

Bouyid v. Belgium
GRAND CHAMBER, 2015

Lhermitte v. Belgium
GRAND CHAMBER, 2016

Miladze v. Georgia
GRAND CHAMBER · LEAVE TO INTERVENE REQUESTED, 2026

Further cases, decided and pending
WWW.JUSTRIGHTS.BE

07

Its place among the three programmes

The Masterclass is the second of three programmes and the end of the path that begins with Programme 1. Graduates of Programme 1 who have completed their six pieces of work are selected on a critical analysis of a judgment of the Grand Chamber.

It can also be taken on its own, by candidates selected on file.



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What is agreed with the University

	TO BE SETTLED WITH THE UNIVERSITY
THE ROUTE	Route 1, Route 2, or both
THE SELECTION	The Masterclass is exceptional. The further criteria of admission are set with the University
THE START	January or September 2027; the date is agreed with the University
THE DURATION AND THE FEE	Six months. The fee depends on the route and on the number of participants
CREDITS AND CERTIFICATE	Whether credits are attached, and how many; the workload per week; whether a certificate is issued, and under which name: all under the University's own rules. The University may add its own assessment

Everything set out here can be adjusted with the University. The financial terms are sent on request.