

Abolition of the Death Penalty



Protocol 13, Article 1 of the Human Rights Act

Abolition of the Death Penalty is one of the 16 human rights (also called Articles) in the Human Rights Act.

The death penalty is when someone working for a public service, such as a judge or the police, decides that a person should die as punishment for something they have done.

This is also sometimes called capital punishment.



Abolition, or abolishing something, means stopping something from happening.



The Human Rights Act abolished the death penalty in the UK.

This means that nobody who works for a public body is allowed to decide you should die because of something you have done, even if you have done something very bad.



This right also protects you from being sent to a different country if you could be given the death penalty when you get there.



Abolition of the death penalty is an absolute right. This means it is never lawful for staff working in public services to decide you should die because of something you have done.



The death penalty is wrong because everyone has the right to life (Article 2) and the right to be free from serious harm (Article 3).

These are other rights in the Human Rights Act which must be respected and protected.

What do staff in public bodies have to do about this right?



They have to **respect** your right.

This means not killing you, or deciding you should die, because of something you have done.



They have to **protect** your right.

This means taking action to protect you from getting the death sentence if they know this could happen. For example, if you are going to another country where the death penalty is allowed and it could be given to you.



They have to **fulfil** your right.

This means that if this right is not looked after, they should find out why so they can stop this from happening again.

The Death Penalty in Real Life



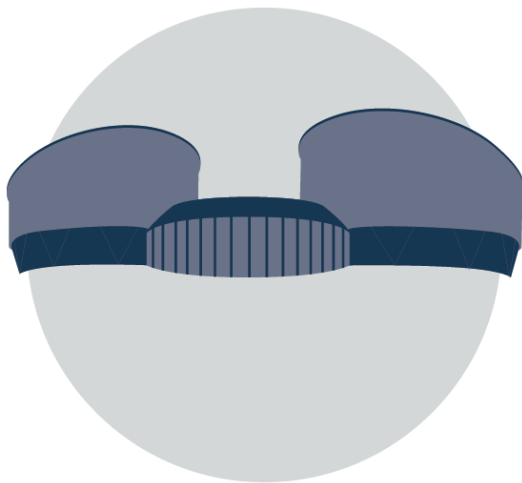
Nobody has been given the death penalty in the UK for a very long time.

The last time this happened was on 13 August 1964.



In some countries, people are still given the death penalty for things they have done.

This might be when people have committed a very serious crime, but not always.



The UK belongs to a group of 47 countries called the Council of Europe.

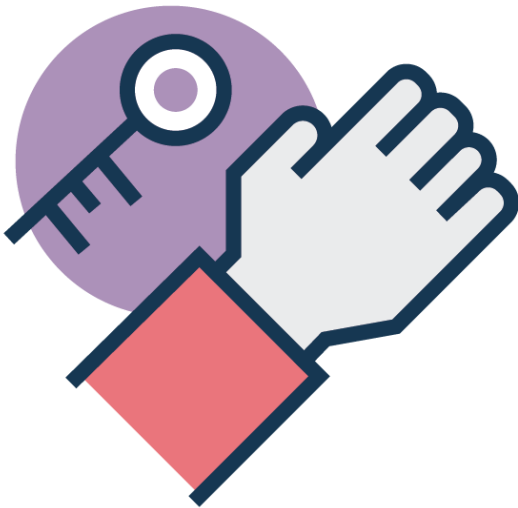
The Council of Europe wants to make sure people's human rights are looked after.



The Council of Europe does not allow countries to join the group unless they have agreed to stop giving people the death penalty.



[Click here](#) to find out more about your right to life (Article 2).



[Click here](#) to find out more about your right to be free from serious harm (Article 3).