



Assessment Report

Human Rights Legal Education in Bulgarian Universities

2022



UiO Norwegian Centre for Human Rights
University of Oslo



Activity 2: Building the capacity for the introduction of the Human Rights Law in the law faculties of Bulgarian universities

This general report maps and evaluates the availability and forms of human rights legal education at Bulgarian universities offering a law degree.

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Introduction

The aim of this general report is to map and evaluate the availability and forms of human rights legal education at Bulgarian universities offering a law degree. There are nine Bulgarian universities offering a law degree, namely ‘Angel Kanchev’ University of Ruse (UR), Burgas Free University (BFU), New Bulgarian University (NBU), Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv (UP), Sofia University ‘St. Kliment Ohridski’ (SU), South-West University ‘Neofit Rilski’ (SWU), University of National and World Economy (UNWE), University of Veliko Tarnovo St. Cyril and Methodius (UVT), Varna Free University ‘Chernorizets Hrabar’ (VFU).

Before assessing whether there is adequate legal education on human rights, one needs to have an agreed definition on human rights. For the purpose of this report, with international and European human rights law we understand human rights norms and standards based on the core UN and European human rights treaties, with a focus on those treaties which are binding on Bulgaria as a State party. This initial report serves as a first step towards building more knowledge and capacity, and ensuring that qualified scholars teach international and European human rights law at Bulgarian universities with a view to their integration and further development in the national legal system.

The implementation of the project is based on cooperation between the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights (University of Oslo) with the Government Agent’s Office at the Bulgarian Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and the New Bulgarian University (NBU). The report is based on information collected through written consultations with concerned Bulgarian universities and two

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separate questionnaires for students and teaching staff at these universities. These questionnaires were completed by them in the period April-August 2021. First, the report will provide a brief general introduction to human rights legal education, with a special focus in Europe. Then, it will provide information on the questions asked during the mapping exercise, before moving on to assess the availability of programs, of teaching materials, human resources, and continuous trainings on human rights law. The report ends with some concluding remarks and specific recommendations.

Human rights legal education in Europe and beyond

Human rights legal education has developed rapidly, following closely the development of international and regional human rights law. Over time, international human rights law has achieved an important place at the domestic level, most importantly as part of constitutional human rights guarantees. While it is not easy to outline common benchmarks, due to differences in the programs among the European countries, despite the harmonization effect of the Bologna process and the European Higher Education Area, there are several programs at the European and international level that can serve as good examples to follow, with the necessary adjustments to reflect the specificities of the Bulgarian legal system and culture.¹ In this context, one can mention several Master specializations on human rights at different European universities that also include a Human Rights Centre.² From an institutional perspective, it bears mentioning the Association of Human Rights Institutions (AHRI), a network of over 70 member institutions that carries out research and educational activities in the field of human rights.³ When it comes to cooperation in the field of human rights education, though not limited to the legal field, an important structure is the Global Campus on Human Rights.⁴ This is a global network of universities for education in human rights and democracy that has a presence in seven regions of the world. These two institutional mechanisms, as well as specific members, would be relevant partners to Bulgarian universities interested in further developing their educational programs on human rights.

¹ For a long list of over 40 relevant Master programs, see “Masters Programs in Human Rights” at <https://www.humanrightscareers.com/human-rights-masters>.

² See relevant programs at Utrecht University, University of Vienna, University of Oslo, Lund University, and University of Essex, just to mention a few.

³ The member institutions of AHRI are from over 30 different countries. AHRI’s objective is to bring together human rights researchers from across the disciplines, to facilitate the exchange of ideas and collaboration, and to promote research, education and discussion in the field of human rights. AHRI is supportive of PhD researchers and the facilitation of exchange between the different member institutions. For more information visit <https://new.ahri-network.org/our-story>.

⁴ The Global Campus of Human Rights is an inter-disciplinary centre of excellence supported by the EU. This global network of universities has a presence in seven regions of the world, namely Africa, Arab World, Asia-Pacific, Caucasus, Europe, Latin America and Caribbean, South East Europe. For more information visit <https://gchumanrights.org/about-us.html>.

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Key information that was collected and analyzed in the assessment report

This report is based on information collected from teachers and students at Bulgarian universities in English. The two questionnaires developed by the three cooperating project partners collected information on the following main issues:

1. Mapping of human rights courses

- Are there any compulsory courses on human rights?
- Are there any elective courses on human rights?
- How many hours of human rights education are offered in other related courses? How many hours of Human Rights Education are offered within the law degree?

2. Mapping of teaching materials on human rights

- Are there dedicated teaching materials in Bulgarian on international and European human rights law?
- What English languages materials are used, if any?
- Is literature on other languages used?

3. Mapping of human resources available

- How many academic staff with human rights expertise and training are currently hired by different universities (the main Bulgarian universities)?
- How many have a doctoral degree from abroad?
- How many have a degree from Bulgaria?
- Are they teaching a human rights course? If not, why not?

4. Mapping of available training on human rights for academic staff, NGOs and practitioners (last five years) organized by the MoJ Bulgaria

- What kind of human rights training is available to academic staff, if any?
- Which specific institutions are working on human rights matters (main institutions)?
- Is there any continuous human rights education or training offered, or this ad hoc?

The collection of information on these four pillars allows us to assess the current situation concerning human rights legal education at the main Bulgarian universities, and it also provides the background for efforts at further improving the situation, in the second part of this project.

We understand that given the academic curricula are prone to regular changes, and that teaching staff might circulate among universities,⁵ or move on to other jobs, the information might

⁵ It should be taken into consideration that we expect this tendency to be limited within the next few years following some legislative restrictions on the accreditation of Law Programs at Bulgarian Universities as of 2020. According to the latter, each university shall have its own academic personnel, carrying out not less than half of the auditorium and practical seminars in each specialty, and the persons with academic rank (professors and associate professors) shall conduct not less than 70% of the lecture courses. Therefore, the accreditation authority will not further acknowledge one teacher for the accreditation of more than one University program of Law any more.

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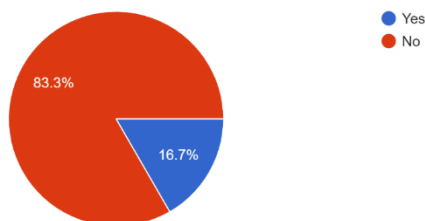
have certain shortcomings. That said, we have collected information through various channels. Thus, information has been collected through the two questionnaires administered in the period **April-August 2021** and through official communications by the MoJ with the concerned universities. We have tried to double-check where information was inconclusive.

Assessment of availability of courses

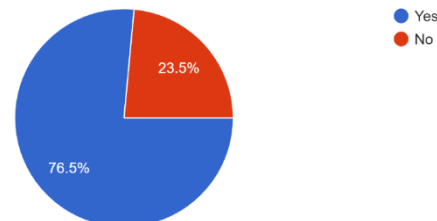
All of the law faculties under assessment have integrated human rights education into their curricula in the form of dedicated courses, specific modules in other related courses, or both. Specifically, all Bulgarian universities teach human rights as part of constitutional law and public international law, which are compulsory courses in all instances. Less frequently, human rights content is found in courses such as European law (UR, NBU, VFU), refugee/asylum law (NBU and VFU), and international criminal law (UR and VFU). Only two universities, UVT and BFU, do not offer any separate course on human rights, while the other seven cover questions of human rights in both separate and related courses.⁶

Of the seven universities with dedicated human rights courses, six offer them as elective subjects exclusively (UR, NBU, UP, SWU, UNWE and VFU). The exception to this is SU, whose

1. Are there any compulsory courses on human rights law at your university?
18 responses



2. Are there any elective courses on human rights law?
17 responses



recently created master's programme 'Protection of Fundamental Rights' offers thirteen separate courses on human rights, seven of which are compulsory subjects. Of all the assessed universities, NBU and SU have the most comprehensive curricula and cover human rights topics in a wider and more specialized variety of subjects, including elective courses on the rights of the child and on the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR).

Similarly, the master's programmes at NBU and SU cover the largest amount of hours on human rights content. Specifically, NBU's master's programme in law offers a total of 167 hours of human rights-related education, 90 of which are in separate courses. For its part, the curricula of SU's master's programmes in law, in European Union law, and in the protection of fundamental rights, offer 30, 540, and 75 hours of human rights content respectively. This is followed by the master's programmes in law at UNWE and UR, which respectively involve 45 and 60 hours of human rights instruction through separate courses. In the case of SWU, UP, and VFU, their separate

⁶ According to BFU's website, however, there is an elective course entitled "Legal Defence on the European Convention for Human Rights Protection", offered during the 10th semester of the master's programme in law. For more information, see <https://e-services.bfu.bg/common/plan-view-en.php?id=3508>.

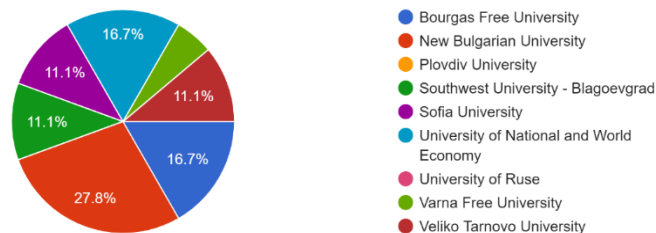
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human rights courses involve 30 hours of education. It is unclear, however, what the number of hours that the human rights component of related courses amounts to at any of the assessed universities.

Assessment of availability of teaching materials in Bulgarian

A total of 18 responses to the questionnaire 'Effectiveness of Human Rights Law education in the Bulgarian universities' were received,⁷ one of which was submitted almost entirely blank. The majority of responses came from NBU (5), followed by BFU (3), UNWE (3), UVT (2), SU (2), and SWU (2). A single response was received from VFU (1), but none at all from UR or UP.

Which university do you teach at?
18 responses



Concerning teaching materials on international and European human rights law, two professors (BFU and VFU) indicated that there are 'plenty' of materials available in Bulgarian, eleven (NBU, SU, SWU, UNWE, and UVT) affirmed that there only 'some', two (BFU and NBU) stated that there are 'none', and three other (BFU, NBU, and UNWE) preferred to leave the question unanswered. Of the two instances in which the availability of materials in Bulgarian was considered to be plentiful, only one of the participants provided a list of titles (BFU). Where only 'some' materials in Bulgarian were considered to be available, seven participants listed specific bibliography (two participants from SWU, three from NBU, and two from UNWE). The most frequently referenced authors between both groups of participants were Atanas Semov (4),⁸ Evgeni Tanchev (3),⁹ Orlin Borisov (3),¹⁰ Tsvetana Kamenova (2),¹¹ Diana Kovacheva (2),¹² and Janusz Simonides (2).¹³

⁷ See Annex 1 – Responses by Teachers.

⁸ Атанас Семов, *Права на гражданите на Европейския съюз - Том I Правен режим на защитата на правата на човека в ЕС* (Университетско издателство "Св. Климент Охридски", 2013).

⁹ Евгени Танчев (ред.), *Основни права на човека* (Юриспрес: Университетско издателство "Св. Климент Охридски", 2002).

¹⁰ Орлин Борисов, *Правата и задълженията на малцинствата според международното право* (Нова звезда, 2007); Орлин Борисов, *Международноправна защита на правата на човека* (Нова звезда, 2007).

¹¹ Цветана Каменова, *Международно хуманитарно право* (София Българска академия на науките, 2011).

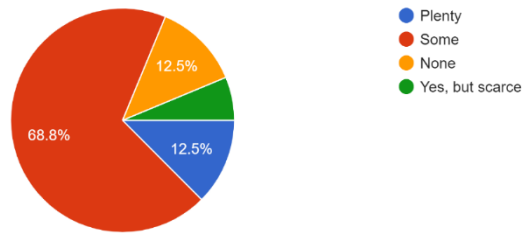
¹² Диана Ковачева, *Индивидът в международното право: Правосубектност на физическите лица в контекста на международното право на защита на правата на човека и международното хуманитарно право* (Сиела, 2018).

¹³ Януш Симонидес (ред.), *Права на човека: Международна защита. Мониторинг. Въвеждане в действие* (БСУ, 2006).

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7. Are there dedicated teaching materials in Bulgarian on international and European human rights law?

16 responses

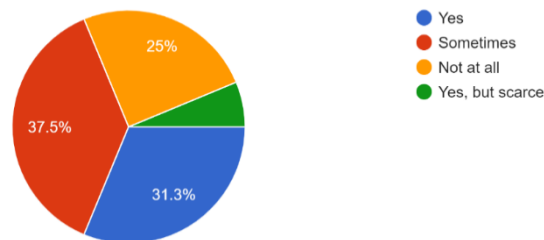


For their part, of the 68 responses to the survey ‘Effectiveness of Human Rights Law teaching in the Law Faculties in Higher Education in Bulgaria’,¹⁴ only sixteen students affirmed to be aware of the existence of teaching materials on European or international human rights law in Bulgarian language. Among students’ responses, the commentary on the European Convention of Human Rights by O’Boyle *et al*¹⁵ was the most recurrently referenced source, with four mentions in total and coinciding with the response of one professor. In addition, three authors mentioned in the students’ responses also overlapped with those referenced by professors, namely Evgeni Tanchev,¹⁶ Tsvetana Kamenova,¹⁷ and Orlin Borisov.¹⁸

When asked if teaching materials in English language are used, five professors responded affirmatively (from BFU, SU, SWU, UVT, and VFU), six other declared that they are only used sometimes (from NBU, SU, SWU, and UNWE), four stated that not at all (from BFU, NBU, and UVT), and three did not provide any answer (from BFU, NBU, and UNWE). Among those that provided a positive answer (‘yes’ or ‘sometimes’), only three professors offered a list of materials (from BFU and SWU).

9. Are English language teaching materials being used?

16 responses



¹⁴ See Annex 2 – Responses by Students.

¹⁵ Дейвид Харис, Майкъл О’Бойл, Колин Уорбрик, Ед Бейтс, Карла Бъкли, *Право на Европейската конвенция за правата на човека* (Сиела, 2015).

¹⁶ Евгени Танчев (ред.), *Основни права на човека* (Юриспрес: Университетско издателство "Св. Климент Охридски", 2002).

¹⁷ Емилия Друмева и Цветана Каменова, "Права на човека" в *Основни права на човека* (Юриспрес: Университетско издателство "Св. Климент Охридски", 2002).

¹⁸ Орлин Борисов, *Правата и задълженията на малцинствата според международното право* (Нова звезда, 2007); Орлин Борисов, *Международноправна защита на правата на човека* (Нова звезда, 2007).

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The referenced titles varied among such group and there was no agreement on any of the sources mentioned, which included books¹⁹ and web links.²⁰ Students' responses were also varied, with some listing book titles,²¹ and others mentioning conventions and regulations as part of their curricula.²² The only source that was cited in both students' and professors' responses was the Council of Europe's *Introduction to the European Convention on Human Rights*.²³

Moreover, two of the surveyed professors affirmed that they use teaching materials in languages different than English (SU and VFU), six stated that they do so only sometimes (from BFU, NBU, SU, SWU, and UVT), five answered that they use none at all (from NBU and UNWE), one is uncertain (UVT), and the remaining four did not answer the question (from BFU, NBU and UNWE). Among those who answered affirmatively, the use of teaching materials in German (1, SU), French (1, SWU),²⁴ and Russian (1, SWU)²⁵ was confirmed.

¹⁹ Olivier de Schutter, *International Human Rights Law. Cases, materials, Comentary* (1st edn, Cambridge University Press 2011); Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann (ed), *Human Rights in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge University Press 2011); Robert Schütze, *European Constitutional Law* (1st edn, Cambridge University Press 2012); Council of Europe, *Introduction to the European Convention on Human Rights - The Rights Guaranteed and the Protection Mechanism* (Human Rights Files No. 1) (2005); Thomas Hammerberg, *Human Rights in Europe: No Grounds for Complacency* (Council of Europe Publishing Editions 2011); Council of Europe, *Human Rights of Roma and Travellers in Europe* (Council of Europe Publishing Editions 2012); Anthony Arlidge and Igor Judge, *Magna Carta Uncovered* (Hart Publishing 2014).

²⁰ The web links indicated are: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/>; <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/Pages/HumanRightsBodies.aspx>; <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/Commun/ListeTraites.asp?CM=8&CL=ENG>.

²¹ Antonio Reis Monteiro, *Ethics of Human Rights* (Springer 2014); Dinah Shelton (ed), *The Oxford Handbook of International Human Rights Law* (Oxford University Press 2013); Jill Marshall, *Personal Freedom through Human Rights Law?: Autonomy, Identity and Integrity under the European Convention on Human Rights* (Brill 2008); Moll Land and Jay Aronson (eds), *New Technologies for Human Rights Law and Practice* (Cambridge University Press 2018); Norman Weiß and Jean-Marc Thouvenin, *The Influence of Human Rights on International Law* (Springer 2015); William Schabas, *The European Convention on Human Rights: A Commentary* (Oxford University Press 2015); Ilias Bantekas and Oette Lutz, *International Human Rights Law and Practice* (Cambridge University Press 2019); Costas Douzinas, *Human Rights and Empire: The Political Philosophy of Cosmopolitanism* (Routledge-Cavendish 2007); Conor Gearty and Costas Douzinas (eds), *The Cambridge Companion to Human Rights Law* (Cambridge University Press 2012); Council of Europe, *Introduction to the European Convention on Human Rights - The Rights Guaranteed and the Protection Mechanism* (Human Rights Files No. 1) (2005).

²² Regulation (EU) No 1215/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2012 on jurisdiction and the recognition and enforcement of judgments in civil and commercial matters.

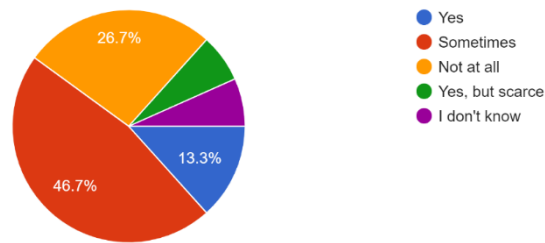
²³ Council of Europe, *Introduction to the European Convention on Human Rights - The Rights Guaranteed and the Protection Mechanism* (Human Rights Files No. 1) (2005).

²⁴ Olivier de Schutter, Jean-Yves Carlier, *La charte des droits fondamentaux de l'Union européenne. Son apport à la protection des droits de l'homme en Europe* (Bruylant 2002)

²⁵ Манукян В. И. ЕСПЧ: право, прецеденты, комментарии, Киев, 2006; Региональные системы защиты прав человека (под ред. Абашидзе) 2012; Международная и внутригосударственная защита прав человека 2011.

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10. Is literature on other languages used?
15 responses



Based on the above information, it can be concluded that the availability of human rights materials at the universities under assessment can and needs to be improved. Most of the sources in the Bulgarian language that were referenced in the questionnaires are more than a decade old and cover very specific aspects of international human rights law. Because human rights law is subject to continuous development, textbooks need to be updated every 3-5 years. The quality of materials in English language was good and of a more general nature, covering both international and European aspects of human rights law. Also for the English language materials, there too is a need to continuously check and use updated materials. Moreover, there is an evident, and to some extent understandable, orientation towards the study of the European human rights framework. While the ECHR and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights are very important for the Bulgarian legal system, it is crucial for human rights legal education that important international aspects are also covered, given that Bulgaria is a State party to the main international human rights treaties.²⁶ Similarly, the list of materials in languages other than Bulgarian and English was very limited and focused mainly on the regional aspects of human rights protection.

Assessment of human resources

The information concerning the amount of academic staff members with human rights expertise and/or training that are currently employed by the institutions under assessment was wide-ranging. The answers provided to the questionnaire varied across institutions, but six of the seven institutions represented in the results from the survey have at least one staff member with human rights credentials or experience. The highest numbers could be detected in the answers from SWU, in which one of the two participating staff members affirmed that ten of their peers possess human rights expertise or have received related training, but the other left the question in blank. Similarly, the answers from one participant from UNWE revealed that there are four staff members with human rights qualifications, while the other two participants did not provide an answer to the question. A

²⁶ See for more information <https://www.ohchr.org/en/countries/bulgaria>. Some of the latest concluding observations are by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (2020); Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (2019); Human Rights Committee (2018); Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2018); Committee against Torture (2017); Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (2017); Committee on the Rights of the Child (2016).

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comparable situation occurred in the case of BFU, where one participant calculated that ‘one or two’ staff members are educated in human rights, another affirmed that none is, and the other did not answer.

Moreover, the responses received were also inconsistent among participants sharing the same institutional affiliation. For instance, NBU presented four different answers from its five participants, who placed the total number of staff members with human rights knowledge in a range of 1-5. Likewise, the two participants from UVT considered that the number of such staff members in their institution oscillates at around 3-5. Noticeably, the most evident discrepancy came from SU, in which one of the two staff members participating in the survey claimed that ‘everyone below the age of 45’ possesses human rights expertise and/or training, while the other declared that there are ‘few, if any.’

When asked about how many of such staff members possess a doctoral degree from abroad, one participant from NBU answered ‘five’, and one participant from UNWE affirmed that only two. However, neither of them provided further details. The remaining 16 participants either answered that none of their peers have obtained human rights training in a foreign country or did not answer at all.

In contrast, the results from the survey revealed that most of the professionals with doctoral education in human rights obtained their degrees in Bulgaria. It should be noted, however, that there is currently no accredited doctoral program on human rights in Bulgaria, but it is possible to obtain a doctoral degree in law (Constitutional Law, Public International Law, or European Union law) based on a successful dissertation concerning a human rights topic. Moreover, as with previous questions, there were significant inconsistencies in the answers submitted by the participants. Based on the information received from SWU, for instance, it can be estimated that the number of staff members with doctoral human rights education from Bulgaria is somewhere between one and ten. Similarly, the responses from SU placed the total number of such professionals amid the extremes of ‘all’ and ‘few.’ A narrower range was identified in the answers from NBU, setting the number at around 3-4 staff members. Individual participants from UVT and UNWE stated that four of their colleagues at their respective institutions possess a doctoral degree in human rights from Bulgaria, while one participant from BFU claimed that there is none. A total of seven participants (from BFU, NBU, UNWE, and UVT) did not provide an answer.

Lastly, the results from the survey evidenced that the overwhelming majority of staff members with human rights education or training currently teach human rights courses (elective or compulsory). Indeed, ten out of the eighteen participants (from NBU, SU, SWU, UVT, UNWE, and VFU) provided affirmative answers and only one answered negatively (BFU). On the other hand, three participants (SU, SWU, and UVT) claimed that they do not know and four other (from BFU and UNWE) did not answer. Notably among those who answered ‘yes’, all five participants from NBU were consistent in their answers, confirming that all of their colleagues with human rights knowledge or credentials teach in such field. The single participant who answered ‘no’ (BFU), however, did not provide any explanation as to why that might be the case. Nevertheless, based on

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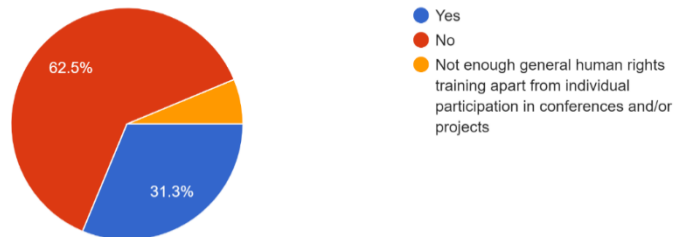
his previous responses, it can be reasonably assumed that he believes that no one with human rights knowledge or training currently teaches at BFU because there are no dedicated courses in this field.

The general perception is, thus, that the participants are not necessarily well informed on their peers' educational background and that obtaining human rights credentials abroad is not a common practice. However, it is evident that knowledge in the field of human rights is a prerequisite for teaching at the universities with dedicated courses or that have integrated such content to related subjects.

Human rights trainings

The question concerning the availability of human rights training for academic staff received varied responses. Of the eighteen professors participating in the survey, five affirmed that they are aware of the existence of such courses (NBU, SWU, UVT, and VFU), ten were not (BFU, NBU, SU, UNWE, and UVT), and three left the question in blank. Complete agreement was reached only between the participants from SWU, as both of them answered 'yes.' The single participant from VFU also provided an affirmative response, but the answers from NBU and UVT were more divided. Specifically, only one of the participants from NBU answered 'yes', while the remaining four tilted the scale to the opposite direction. Likewise, one of the participants from UVT claimed to be aware, but the other had no knowledge of the availability of such kind of training.

17. Are you aware of any relevant professional human rights training that is available to academic staff?
16 responses



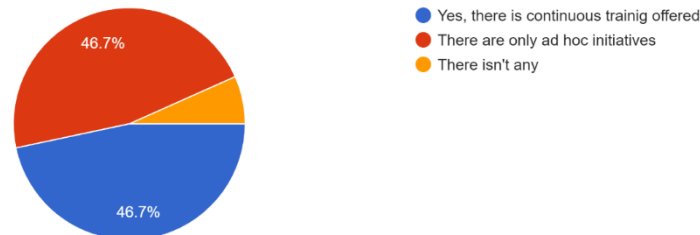
Concerning the main institutions that are currently working on human rights matters, nine participants submitted answers (BFU, NBU, SU, SWU, UNWE, and UVT), while the other half left the question unanswered. The institutions most frequently alluded to by the participants were the Ombudsman of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Bulgarian Helsinki Committee, and the Bulgarian Lawyers for Human Rights foundation, with three mentions each. Institutions with single mentions were the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, the European Network of Equality Bodies, the Academy of European Law, the European Commission, and Bulgaria's ministries of Justice, of Foreign Affairs, and of Interior. General references were also made to courts, non-governmental organisations, and lawyers.

On the question of whether or not continued human rights education or training is offered by their universities, seven participants confirmed that such kind of instruction is indeed available (NBU, SU, SWU, UNWE, and VFU), five asserted that it is available only through *ad hoc* initiatives

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(BFU, NBU, and UNWE), three believe that it is not available at all (BFU and UVT), and the remaining three did not answer the question (UVT, UNWE, and VFU).

19. Is there any continuous human rights education or training offered, or is this based on ad hoc initiatives?
15 responses



Of the twelve participants that affirmed that human rights training is offered by their institutions (through *ad hoc* initiatives or otherwise), only four elaborated on their answers. Specifically, one of the three participants from BFU explained that ‘trainings on human rights were conducted for students, young lawyers and attorneys, as well as for magistrates’ in the context of specific projects, but that none has been ‘aimed at teachers’ so far. Moreover, one participant from SU stated that such kind of training has been provided by the Academy of European Law, while the other confirmed that related trainings are ‘periodically organized’ at their university. Similarly, two participants from NBU concurred in that, since 2016, their university has hosted an annual, interdisciplinary forum on human rights that offers ‘seminars and lectures by academics and practitioners from Bulgaria and abroad.’

In that sense, there seems to be a significant deficiency in the availability of human rights training for the surveyed participants. Most initiatives appear to be external and are not specifically tailored to the needs of professors in the field of human rights. The information on the periodicity and content of such opportunities is also limited, leading to the assumption that continued education opportunities on human rights are almost nonexistent at the universities under assessment.

Concluding remarks

The results of the questionnaires and the information collected from publicly available resources shows that human rights legal education in Bulgaria has developed over the years, with specific elective or compulsory courses on human rights, or with human rights issues included in other courses. That said, the general perception is that such developments remain insufficient when assessed against international standards. Indeed, the availability of programs varies significantly, and besides the SU Master program, there is no other similar program at the other universities. The teaching materials in Bulgarian are in need of improvement both in terms of breadth and depth but also in making them more up-to-date. In that regard, there is an evident need for more specialized literature on human rights law in Bulgarian language that covers a wider range of topics and engages with contemporary issues at a larger scale. Teaching materials in English are used, but they would

Activity 2: Building the capacity for the introduction of the Human Rights Law in the law faculties of Bulgarian universities

also need to be regularly updated. Over the years, human resources for teaching human rights have been developed, with academic staff obtaining a PhD degree on issues related to human rights, although under PhD programs in Constitutional Law, Public International Law, or EU law, since there is no official PhD program in Human Rights Law. When it comes to continuous trainings on human rights law, there are several actors involved, but there is no coordination among the universities, or the other actors concerning the scope and topics to be discussed. Each of these actors seems to be Law providing training on issues relevant to their expertise or interests, depending also on the funding available. A yearly or biannual event on human rights teaching or legal education, with a section on human rights teaching, which is organized as a cross-university event might be a useful forum to continue to discuss relevant issues and even to provide training, especially for young academics.

Recommendations

Based on the information collected and assessed in preparing this general report, the following recommendations are made for their consideration to the Bulgarian universities and the Bulgarian higher education authorities:

- Include human rights legal education as a compulsory part of the curriculum at Bulgarian universities offering law degrees.
- Develop teaching materials in Bulgarian to cover the breadth and depth of international and European human rights law and ensure they are kept up-to-date through revision every 3-5 years or at other suitable regular intervals.
- Develop a PhD program on human rights law.
- Provide continuous training for human rights teachers and other professionals engaged with the higher education system.
- Organize an annual or biennial forum to ensure regular engagement with human rights teaching matters.

Activity 2: Building the capacity for the introduction of the Human Rights Law in the law faculties of Bulgarian universities

Glossary

UR – ‘Angel Kanchev’ University of Ruse

BFU – Burgas Free University

NBU – New Bulgarian University

UP – Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv

SU – Sofia University ‘St. Kliment Ohridski’

SWU – South-West University ‘Neofit Rilski’

UNWE – University of National and World Economy

UVT – University of Veliko Tarnovo St. Cyril and Methodius

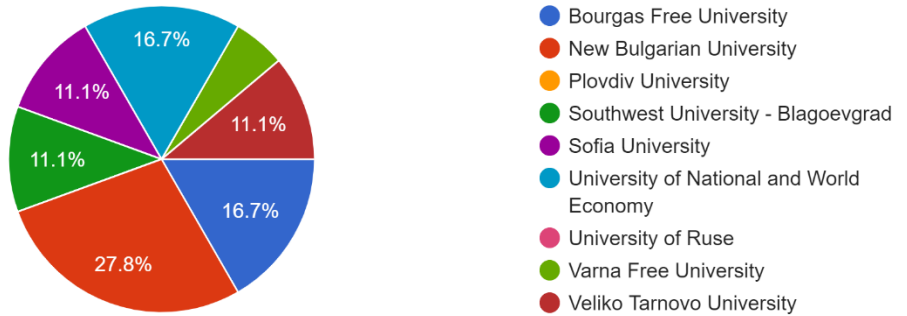
VFU – Varna Free University ‘Chernorizets Hrabar’

Activity 2: Building the capacity for the introduction of the Human Rights Law in the law faculties of Bulgarian universities

Annex 1: Teachers' Responses to the survey 'Effectiveness of Human Rights Law education in the Bulgarian universities'

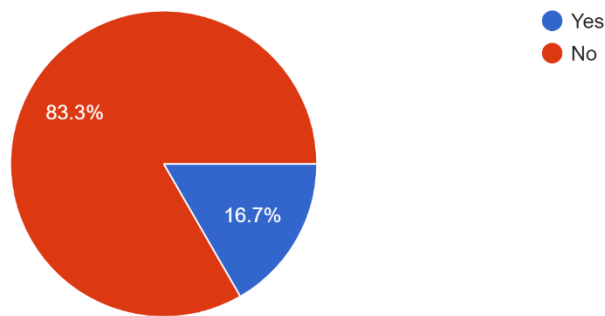
Which university do you teach at?

18 responses



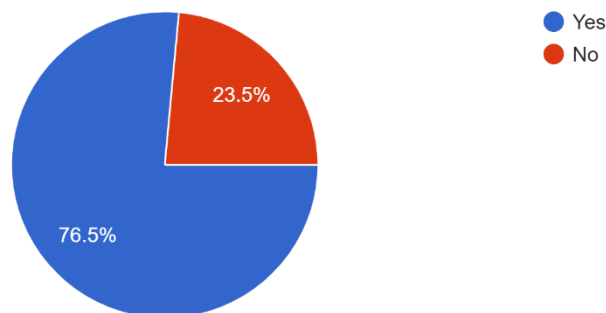
1. Are there any compulsory courses on human rights law at your university?

18 responses



2. Are there any elective courses on human rights law?

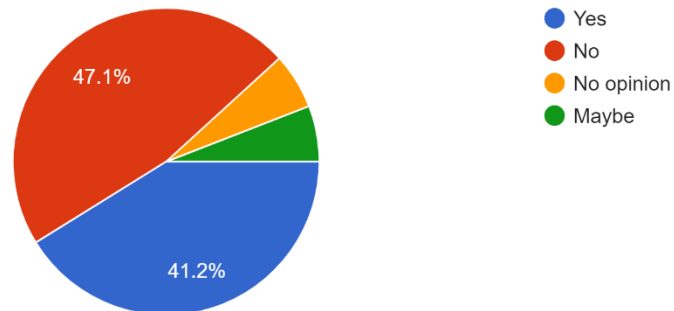
17 responses



Activity 2: Building the capacity for the introduction of the Human Rights Law in the law faculties of Bulgarian universities

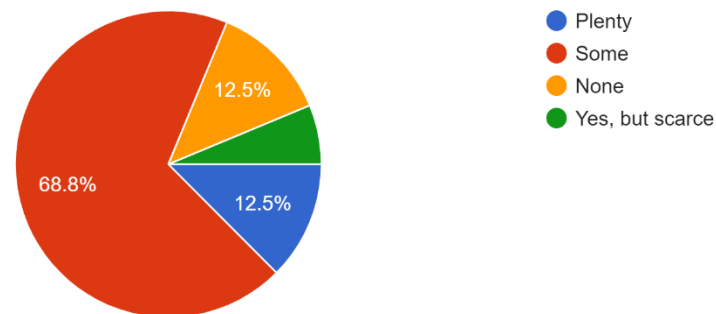
5. Do you think that Human Rights Law, as an independent course, must be related to the general Constitutional Law (an independent course, but still within the framework of Constitutional Law studies)?

17 responses



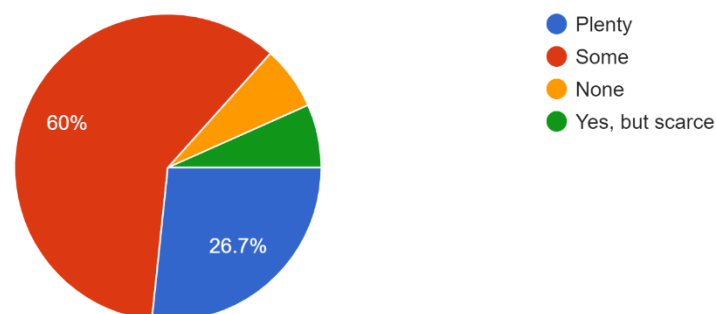
7. Are there dedicated teaching materials in Bulgarian on international and European human rights law?

16 responses



8. Are there dedicated materials in Bulgarian on the case-law of the Bulgarian Constitutional Court and the ordinary courts, ECtHR and the ECJ on human rights issues?

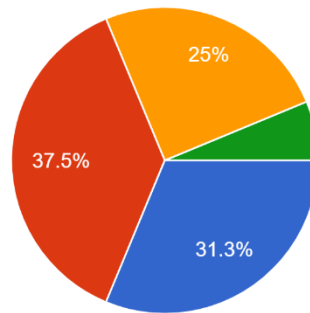
15 responses



Activity 2: Building the capacity for the introduction of the Human Rights Law in the law faculties of Bulgarian universities

9. Are English language teaching materials being used?

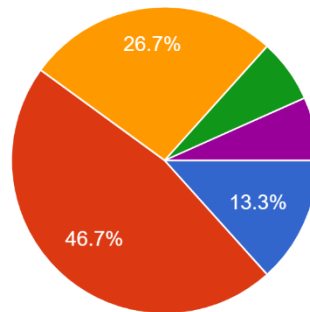
16 responses



- Yes
- Sometimes
- Not at all
- Yes, but scarce

10. Is literature on other languages used?

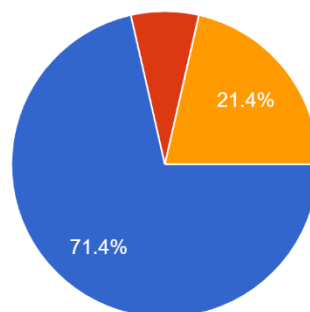
15 responses



- Yes
- Sometimes
- Not at all
- Yes, but scarce
- I don't know

Are any of them teaching a human rights course?

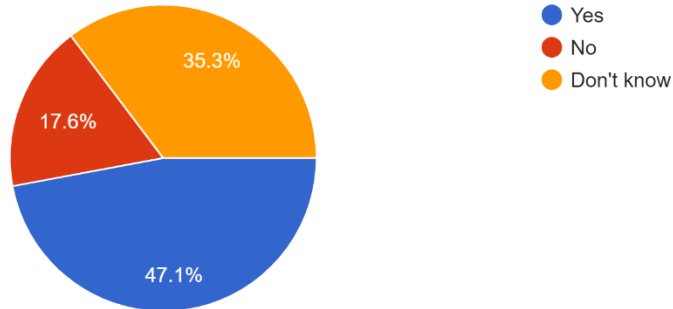
14 responses



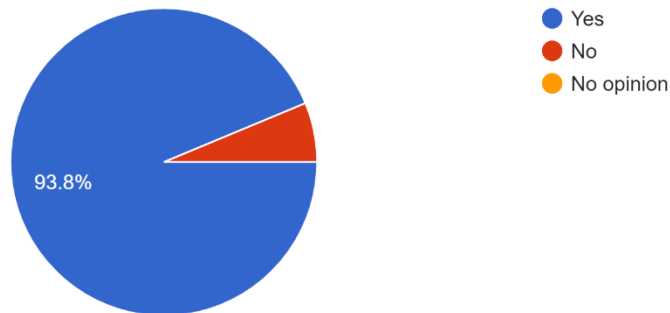
- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Activity 2: Building the capacity for the introduction of the Human Rights Law in the law faculties of Bulgarian universities

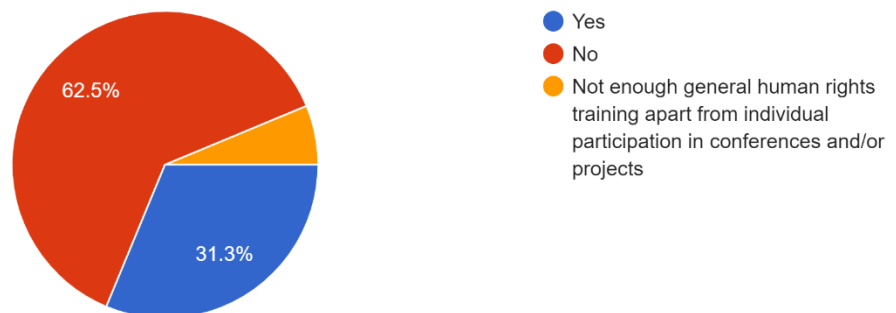
Does academic staff with different, but related expertise (administrative law, criminal law, family law, etc.) follow any human rights professional training to keep up with the latest developments in the human rights field?
17 responses



16. Is there a general preparedness and willingness on your part to incorporate human rights legal issues within the respective course(s) you teach?
16 responses



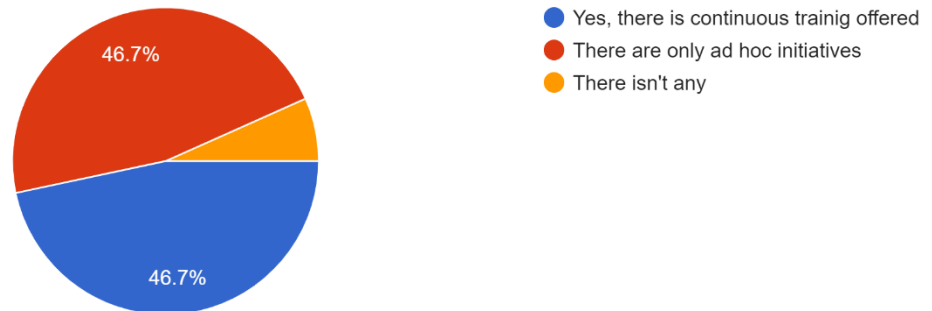
17. Are you aware of any relevant professional human rights training that is available to academic staff?
16 responses



Activity 2: Building the capacity for the introduction of the Human Rights Law in the law faculties of Bulgarian universities

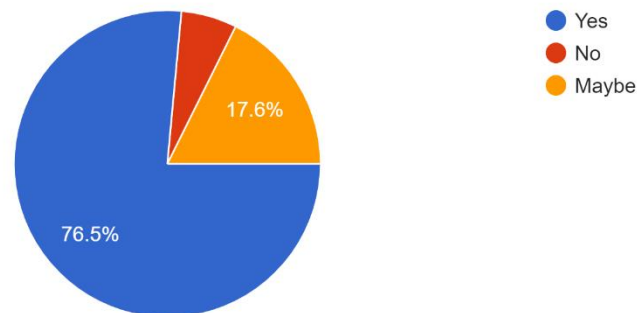
19. Is there any continuous human rights education or training offered, or is this based on ad hoc initiatives?

15 responses



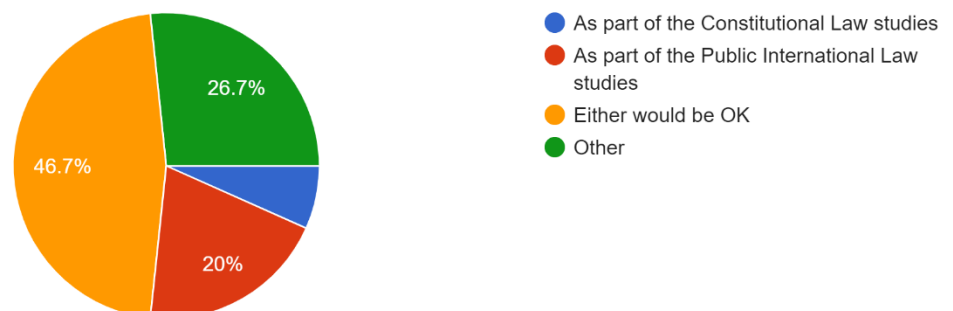
20. Would you be willing to teach a course on human rights law, if a guideline and a sample curriculum were available?

17 responses



24. If Human Rights Law becomes a mandatory course, where should it be placed in your opinion?

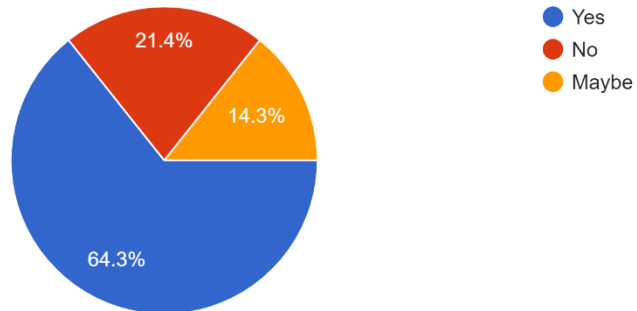
15 responses



Activity 2: Building the capacity for the introduction of the Human Rights Law in the law faculties of Bulgarian universities

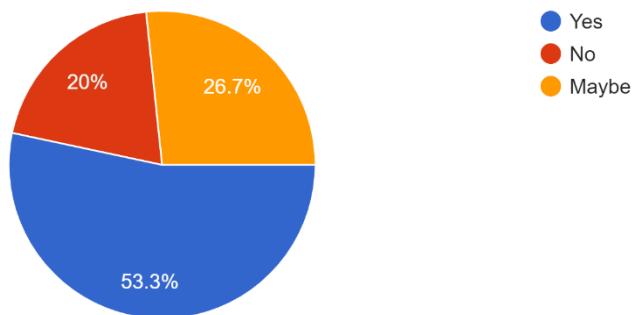
25. Can you integrate part of a sample curriculum on Human Rights Law in a course you are currently teaching?

14 responses



26. Would you be willing to contribute to an edited volume on human rights law that can be used as a human rights law textbook in Bulgarian?

15 responses

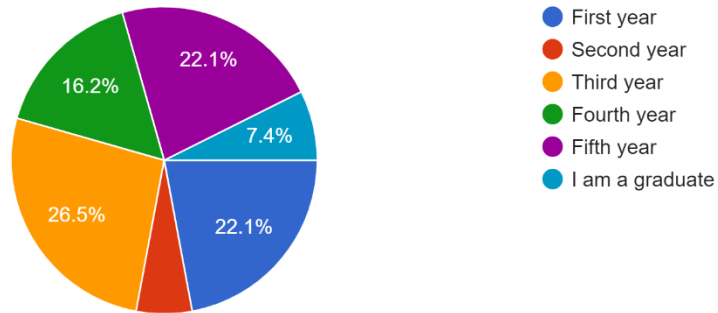


Activity 2: Building the capacity for the introduction of the Human Rights Law in the law faculties of Bulgarian universities

Annex 2: Students' Responses to the survey 'Effectiveness of Human Rights Law teaching in the Law Faculties in Higher Education in Bulgaria'

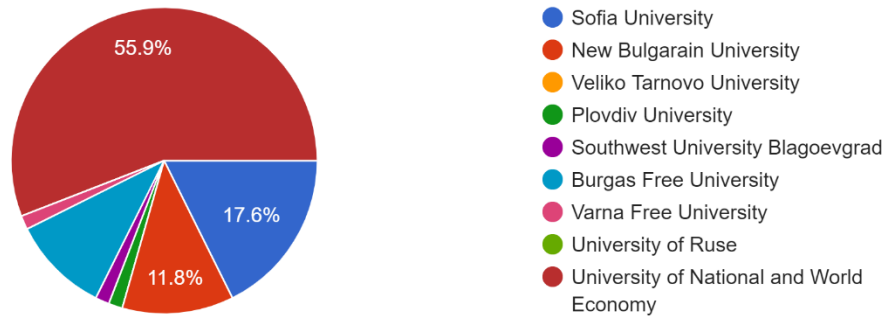
What year are you in at university?

68 responses



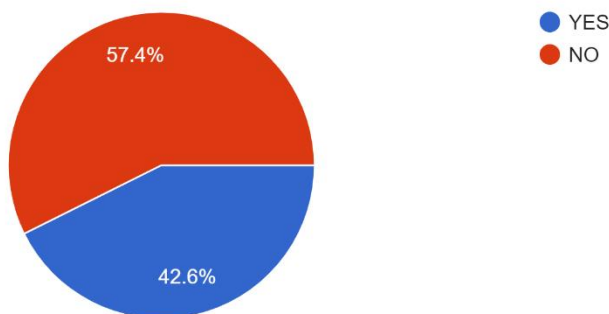
Which university do you study at?

68 responses



1. Have you taken any course on human rights law during your law studies?

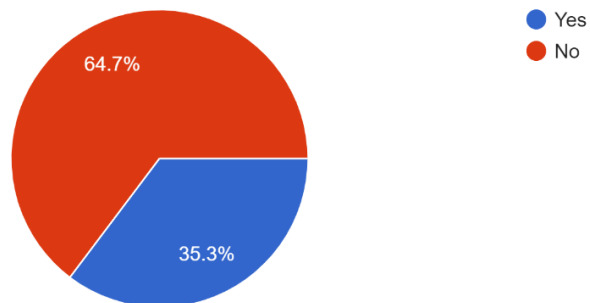
68 responses



Activity 2: Building the capacity for the introduction of the Human Rights Law in the law faculties of Bulgarian universities

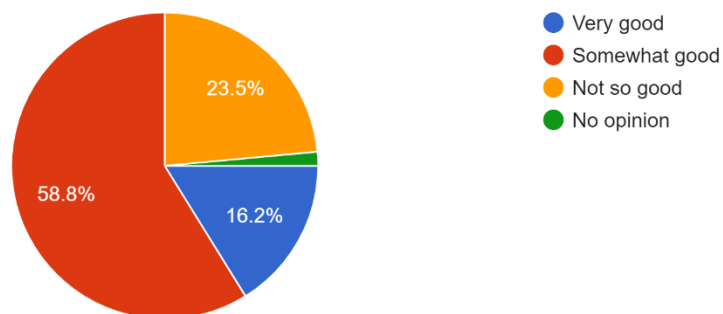
2. Have you followed any seminars or other activities on human rights law during your legal studies?

68 responses



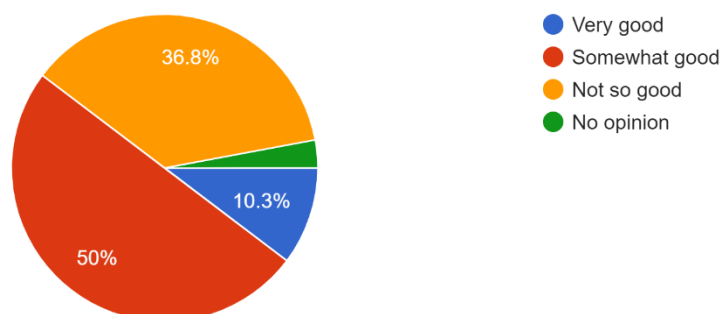
4. How do you assess your overall knowledge of human rights law?

68 responses



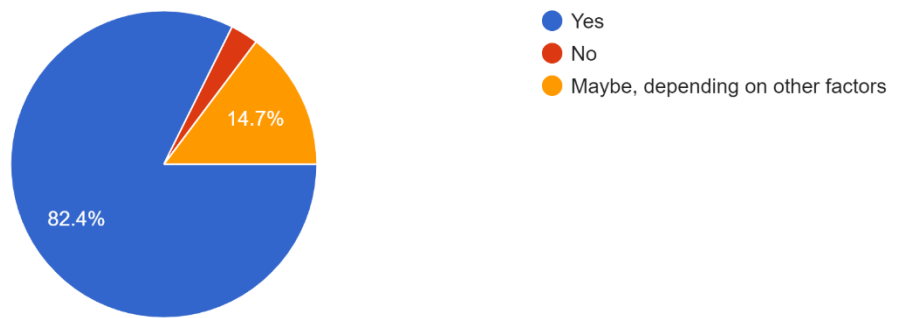
5. How do you assess your knowledge of the case-law concerning human rights matters of the Bulgarian Constitutional Court, the European Cour...s and the Court of Justice of the European Union?

68 responses

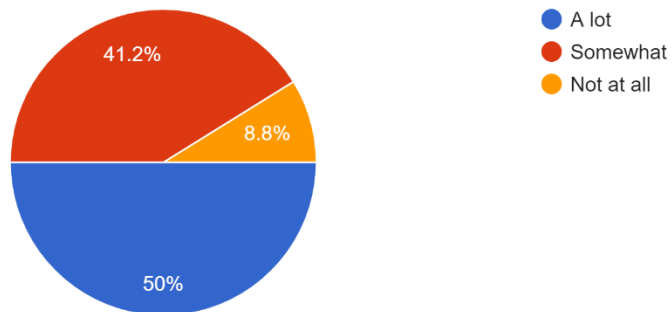


Activity 2: Building the capacity for the introduction of the Human Rights Law in the law faculties of Bulgarian universities

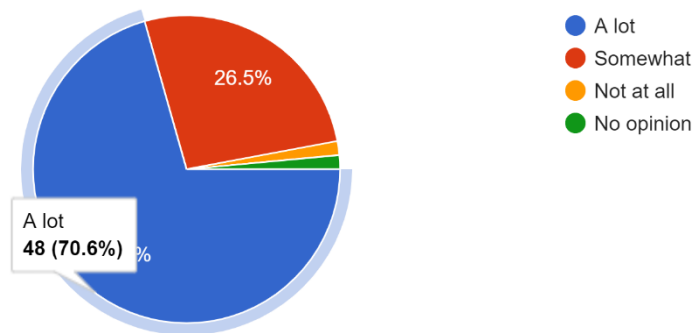
9. Would you be willing to take a course on human rights law, if it were available at your law school?
68 responses



11. To what extent would the availability of adequate learning materials affect your decision on whether to take an elective course on human rights law?
68 responses



13. To what extent do you think that human rights-related issues are going to be useful for your professional activity as a lawyer?
68 responses



Activity 2: Building the capacity for the introduction of the Human Rights Law in the law faculties of Bulgarian universities

14. If Human Rights Law becomes a mandatory course, where do you think it should be placed?
68 responses

