

Just Access
Annual Report
2024-2025



Just Access Annual Report

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I. DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

This has been a truly inspiring year for Just Access — one that shows how far a small and determined organisation can go when people share a clear sense of purpose. Together, we've demonstrated how the power of law can open new paths to justice and help secure the foundations of a life with dignity for all.

Two milestones stand out in particular. The first is our legal complaint to several UN Special Rapporteurs, challenging Germany's insufficient action on climate adaptation as a potential breach of children's rights. This innovative approach frames the climate crisis not only as an environmental or policy issue, but as a human rights question that cuts to the heart of intergenerational justice. It represents an important step towards recognising states' obligations to protect children from the long-term effects of climate inaction — and has already drawn significant interest from across the human rights community.

The second major achievement is our work on the economic, social, and cultural rights of prisoners. Through *amicus curiae* briefs submitted to both the European and Inter-American Courts of Human Rights, Just Access argued that the right to dignity, health, and adequate living conditions must extend to everyone, including those in detention. These submissions, which build on months of research and consultation, were the product of extraordinary collaboration across our volunteer network — a reflection of what makes Just Access unique: rigorous legal thinking, teamwork, and a deep commitment to justice for all.

Beyond our casework, we've continued to strengthen our organisational voice and identity. A new visual identity and website (stay tuned for the launch!) now help us communicate more clearly who we are and why our work matters. We also refreshed our mission statement to make it more accessible and outward-looking, ensuring that everyone who encounters Just Access can understand not only what we do, but why they should care about our human rights work.

Our public engagement efforts have also grown. This summer we helped launch *International Law and Popcorn*, a four-part film series on international law and human rights, run with the Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law, a world-leading research centre, and the independent Heidelberg cinema *Gloria/Die Kamera*. The series — and also our own session on asylum barriers and “solidarity crimes” — drew strong attendance and sparked lively debate about law, justice, and community.

We have also joined a national coalition of NGOs supporting the *Letzte Generation* activists, who are facing criminal conspiracy charges for their climate activism. Just Access will lead on the coalition's legal counterclaim against the German State — an important initiative reaffirming our belief that peaceful protest is a vital expression of civic freedom.

Meanwhile, our operations have continued to mature. We won and are working actively to implement a DSEE-funded grant to strengthen our digital security and have submitted several further applications to support the next phase of our development.

I am deeply proud of everything we've achieved together this year, and profoundly grateful to everyone who has given their time, energy, and insight to make it happen. The creativity, dedication, and kindness of this community have been an inspiration to me every day.

On a personal note, health issues mean I've had to step back from my role as Director to focus on recovery. This has been a very difficult decision — I've loved my time with Just Access and working alongside such talented and passionate people. I'm immensely proud of what we've built together and confident that the organisation will continue to flourish under the leadership of Cvetanka Kirovska, who is stepping in as Interim Director, and our Director Emeritus Mark Somos, whose leadership and commitment to Just Access remain invaluable.

All the very best,

Tom Sparks

Former Director, Just Access e.V.

II. MISSION STATEMENT

At Just Access, we believe that human rights are the foundation of a life with dignity. Our mission is to secure that dignity for every person, by focusing on social, economic, cultural, and environmental rights, through education, persuasive advocacy, and innovative strategic litigation. By unlocking access to justice, individuals are empowered to claim their rights, shape secure futures, and enrich their communities.

In just five years, Just Access has become a dynamic force for change. Every day, we work to ensure that social, economic, cultural, and environmental rights are respected and protected. These rights—such as access to quality healthcare, secure housing, education, clean water, and a healthy environment—are the building blocks of a just and thriving society.

Our strength lies in systemic impact. By applying pressure at the right points, we create ripple effects that extend far beyond individual cases. Through targeted educational programs and direct community engagement, we help people understand and claim their rights. By reaching children and young people, we instill respect for human rights and a passion for justice from an early age.

Our advocacy and litigation efforts push boundaries, opening new avenues for justice and paving the way for stronger, more secure communities. By carefully selecting cases with the potential to set legal precedents, we not only address individual injustices but also drive changes in laws and policies that benefit society as a whole.

At Just Access, we confront both immediate challenges and the root causes of injustice. Our holistic approach ensures that our work has lasting impact—so that all people, today and in the future, can reach their full potential and live with dignity in a fair and just society.

III. TEAM

At Just Access, our impact is driven by people. Our team includes 8 staff members and 29 volunteers who bring expertise, passion, and commitment to advancing human rights. Meet our employees:

Birgit Albrecht, Finance Lead, has been working in the NGO sector in Heidelberg for over ten years, focusing on finance, administration, and German association and tax law. Since February 2025, she has also been supporting **Just Access**, contributing her extensive experience in finance and grant management. A trained business economist, Birgit previously spent twelve years in industry and commerce as a sales administrator and secretary. She lives in Walldorf with her husband, their four children, and their dog.

Chelsea Williams, Head of Administration and Finance, completed her Bachelor of Science in Nursing at Western University and her Master of Public Health at the University of Waterloo, both in Ontario, Canada. She is currently a Research Assistant at the Heidelberg Institute for Global Health for the research group “Global Child Health.” Chelsea has previous work experience as a Registered Nurse in acute care, as a supervisor at a public health unit providing access to vaccinations, and with the Government of Canada working under the National Advisory Committee for Immunizations. She is also an active volunteer with Kids Help Phone, a Canadian organization providing mental health crisis support to youth.

Cvetanka Kirovska, Head of Projects has extensive experience working for inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations such as the OSCE-ODIHR, ICMP, UNICTY, UNHCR. She has supported and/or led projects in areas starting from minority access to education; protecting the rights of families of missing persons from the former Yugoslav wars with the ICMP; fighting institutional corruption within the Macedonian Government; to providing legal aid to refugees and protecting their access to justice with the UNHCR. She holds a BA in English Literature and Translation, an MA in International Relations from the CEU, Hungary, and an MBA from the University of Roehampton, UK. She speaks Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, English, German, and Macedonian.

Karthick Ganapathy, IT Implementation Specialist, is an IT professional with a strong foundation in technical support, cybersecurity, and machine learning. With experience in system administration, infrastructure troubleshooting, and IT security, Karthick focus on keeping systems secure, efficient, and reliable. He recently completed his Master’s in Information Technology from SRH University Heidelberg, where he researched AI-driven malware detection using hybrid models. He enjoys staying hands-on with new technologies and continuously looks for smarter ways to solve complex IT challenges.

Lucas Sánchez, Head of Strategic Litigation, is an independent consultant in public international law. Previously, he was a Research Fellow of the Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law, and he completed his PhD at the Freie Universität Berlin on the remedial practice of human rights courts. He obtained his law degree in Barcelona and an LL.M at the University of Heidelberg. He was also a visiting lecturer at the University of Lille and conducted research stays at the Inter-American and the European Courts of Human Rights.

Manuela Baiker, Deputy Head of Strategic Litigation, obtained her law degree in Germany, specialising in Public International Law and European Union Law. Additionally, she holds a Master's Degree in Human Rights and Democratisation (E.MA).

Prior to joining Just Access e.V., Manuela was a trainee lawyer, completing placements at the German Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh City and the Independent National Rapporteur Mechanism on Trafficking in Human Beings at the German Institute for Human Rights. She is passionate about women's rights, and additionally focused on the protection of human rights defenders during her internship at the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT).

Marketa Klicova, Head of Design, is a visual artist and designer with a BFA from Massachusetts College of Art and an MFA from Rutgers University. She has had solo and group exhibitions in both Europe and North America, and has taught visual art and design at the undergraduate level. She speaks English, Czech, German, French and Spanish.

Tom Sparks, Director, is an international lawyer and legal scholar. He holds a PhD in international law from Durham University. With interests ranging from international environmental law and self-determination to the law and practice of international courts, Tom is the author of more than twenty scholarly books, articles, and other publications. Tom joined Just Access in January 2024, when he took up the post as Director. Prior to joining Just Access, Tom was a Senior Research Fellow at the Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law. He has previously served as Judicial Fellow to Judge Peter Tomka at the International Court of Justice in the Hague, and as a Member of the Board of Directors of Amnesty International UK. Tom advises States on matters relating to general international law, international environmental law, and human rights. Outside of his work with Just Access, Tom is a keen runner, walker, and rock climber. He speaks English (mother tongue) and German (conversational).

Alongside our staff, 29 passionate volunteers play a vital role in everything we do. Their dedication and diverse expertise amplify our impact and bring our mission to life. Meet our volunteers:

Alfred, our beloved feline ambassador, was adopted from Tierheim, Heidelberg in January 2024 by our Head of Administration and Finance. Since his arrival, Alfred has become an indispensable part of the Just Access team, brightening our main office with his charming antics and providing much-needed comedic relief. While we focus on safeguarding human rights and access to justice, Alfred champions the cause of animal rights at Just Access, ensuring that our furry friends are not forgotten. He enjoys going for walks on his leash, travelling with his family (he has visited 6 countries and 2 continents so far), and making new friends along the way. Don't forget to follow Alfred on [Instagram](#) and [TikTok](#)!

Celeste Luciano, Fundraising Specialist and Research Fellow, is a social change passionate who has been looking for her way to make an impact for the most in need and disempowered. Her background in International Relations and Development has catalysed her last academic interest while supporting organisations, founding local development associations and joining some UN agencies efforts. This has led to a strong ethics-driven commitment for fundraising, capacity development and participatory mechanisms implementations across organisations. Activism and research interests include labour security, globalizations and food regimes, livelihoods rural and urban development, gendered livelihoods strategies. Celeste also pursues her passion for poetry, reading and sports.

Daren Nair, Head of Information Security, is a security consultant with 17 years experience helping organisations around the world keep themselves safe by implementing information security, physical security, privacy and business continuity. Daren has worked for global organisations in the UK including the Big Four consultancies and has been deployed to 23 countries worldwide. He has been helping Just Access e.V. *pro bono* as Head of Information Security since April 2024.

Daren is also a former Director on the Board of Amnesty International UK where he was the technology subject matter expert on the board. Since 2016, Daren has been campaigning with the families of individuals held hostage or unjustly detained abroad to bring their loved ones home. His work on state-sponsored hostage-taking also known as hostage diplomacy has been cited in reports published by the UK Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee and the US Congressional-Executive Commission on China. Daren has been interviewed/quoted by news outlets worldwide including The Times of London, Reuters, Agence France-Presse, Deutschlandfunk, The Daily Beast, Haaretz as well as Australia's ABC Radio National.

Delasari Krisda Putri, Legal Fellow, is an adept researcher specializing in human rights issues, driven by a profound belief in the power of people to defend themselves and collaborate for impact. She holds Master's degree in Public International Law from Utrecht University. Previously,

Delasari served as a Human Rights Research and Advocacy Assistant at the Manushya Foundation, where she conducted comprehensive research and provided support for advocacy strategies. Her focus areas included democracy, digital rights, and access to justice for marginalized communities in Southeast Asia. Currently, Delasari contributes her expertise as a researcher at FIHRRST, where she is actively involved in conducting Human Rights Due Diligence Reports and researching International Human Rights Law. Her commitment to participatory approaches in human rights advocacy underscores her dedication to empowering communities and fostering collaboration for meaningful impact.

Ebyan Abshir, Legal Fellow and Human Rights Storyteller, completed her Bachelor of Art in Africana Studies at Union College in New York in June 2024. She is currently pursuing a Juris Doctor in Boston, Massachusetts and will be attending Northeastern University School of Law in Boston. She was previously a Thomas J. Watson Fellow at the Watson Foundation, pursuing an independent research project focused on the preservation of collective memory across six countries for the 2024-25 year. Ebyan is interested in global transitional and restorative justice efforts in post-conflict societies, and has documented various memorialisation efforts among civil society groups and national governments throughout her travels. Ebyan speaks English and Spanish.

Fitri Lestari, Legal Fellow, has been working as a woman human rights defender, migrant workers defender, and researcher since 2017, collaborating with various Non-Governmental Organizations in the Southeast Asia and East Asia regions. She completed her Master of Arts in Social Studies (with a focus on Civil Society Leadership) at Ajou University in the Republic of Korea in February 2024, supported by a full scholarship from the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA). She possesses strong skills in analysis, research, and providing legal opinions on human rights and democracy within the Southeast Asia and East Asia regions. She has an understanding of international human rights law, the UN Human Rights Mechanism, international politics, human rights research, advocacy, and monitoring. She has a deep willingness and passion to contribute to the protection and fulfillment of women's human rights, migrants' rights, human rights, and democracy.

Ida Manton, Senior Adviser, Negotiations and Conflict Resolution is a trainer and scholar in the field of negotiations, mediation and conflict resolution. She is training diplomats, military staff, public service officials, students and business people at various Diplomatic Academies, MFAs, OSCE field operations, Secretariats, Universities, business training centers and companies. Her professional engagement includes mainly work in International Organizations (Peace Corps, NATO, OSCE) in the fields of languages, culture, democratization, minority rights, public relations and governance. She is a member of the Programme Of International Negotiation Training-POINT, associated with the Negotiation experts' network PIN (Processes of International

Negotiations). She is also Diplomacy Dialogue's (Geneva based think tank) Representative at the OSCE Academic Network, and a re-elected member of the Steering Committee. In November 2018 she became Senior Advisor to PACE Global Strategies. Mrs. Manton has a Bachelor's degree in Comparative Literature with second major in English Language and Literature from Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, as well as a Master degree in Diplomacy and International Relations from Leiden University and Clingendael in The Netherlands. Teaches in Macedonian and English, speaks fluent Serbian/Croatian/Bosnian/Montenegrin, average Czech, and basic Greek and French. She is both American and Macedonian citizen, with permanent residence in the Czech Republic.

Jessica Rodenhiser, Legal Fellow, is a US-licensed attorney with a strong background in human rights law, refugee law, and litigation strategy. She holds a Juris Doctorate from New England Law, Boston and is currently completing an LL.M. at Europa-Universität Viadrina, specializing in human rights and humanitarian law.

Jessica has extensive experience in immigration litigation and appellate advocacy, having represented asylum seekers and individuals in removal proceedings before the Executive Office for Immigration Review. As Head of Appellate Litigation, she led litigation strategy, trained attorneys on complex asylum and humanitarian relief cases, and oversaw teams handling waivers and appeals. When the US withdrew from Afghanistan, she played a key role in firm-wide efforts to assist Afghan refugees, training legal teams and coordinating large-scale humanitarian parole and asylum applications.

Beyond immigration law, Jessica has engaged in legal research and advocacy on international human rights issues, contributing to reports for the United Nations on corporate accountability under human rights frameworks. She previously served as a Judicial Law Clerk at the U.S. Department of Justice, advising on the immigration consequences of criminal convictions and drafting decisions for immigration judges.

Currently based in Berlin, Jessica is a Commercial Legal Counsel, where she focuses on AI governance, compliance, and intellectual property. She is involved in shaping internal AI policies to align with emerging regulatory frameworks and ethical considerations in technology. She remains deeply committed to human rights advocacy, with a particular focus on refugee rights, international justice, and the intersection of law and emerging technologies.

Jesse Bade, Legal Fellow and Managing Editor of the Just Access Blog, recently completed her master's thesis on the relationship between neoliberalism and human rights law at Europa-Universität Viadrina, where she studied International Human Rights and Humanitarian Law. She also holds a Juris Doctorate with a concentration in International Law from the University of San

Diego School of Law, as well as a Bachelor's in Journalism and in Political Science from Hofstra University. Jesse has worked as an editor at various periodicals and provided legal assistance to vulnerable populations through her work at clinics. She is a passionate human rights advocate with a particular interest in immigration, as well as economic, social, and cultural rights.

Josephine Preißler, Fundraising Specialist and Research Fellow, is currently a student in "Human Rights and Humanitarian Action" at Sciences Po Paris but originally from Dresden in Germany. During her Bachelor in "International Relations and Organizations" at Leiden University, she developed a passion for human rights and particularly the rights of migrants and refugees, on which she also focused her Bachelor Thesis. Her interest in the field of human rights was strengthened through her time working in Chile for the migrant organization Redin in Los Angeles, helping migrants with settling in the community. Now, she is continuing her devotion to this topic and human rights more broadly at Just Access.

Joshua Rutter, Information Security Officer, after a long career in the arts and cultural field, Joshua has recently transitioned to working in IT and information security. Currently a student of Network Engineering at a technical college in Berlin, he began assisting Just Access e.V. pro bono in April 2024 as their Information Security Officer. Joshua is very pleased to be able to play a small part in helping Just Access with its mission to champion the right of every person to access justice.

Juliana Rouhana, Social Media and Fundraising Specialist, received her BA in Human Development from SUNY Oswego, and her MBA in NGO and CSR Management from Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg. She has held several roles covering marketing, PR, and business development with the UN-SPIDER, Squirrel News, and JoinMyTrip. Her most recent role was as the head of events for Code Intelligence, single-handedly executing the company's digital events strategy. When she's not at work, Juliana enjoys traveling, baking, crocheting, and fantasy novels

Lena Neuhaus, Legal Fellow, completed her Bachelor's degree in German and French Law at the University of Nice and the University of Saarbrücken. She is currently pursuing a Master's in International Human Rights Law at the University of Groningen. Her thesis focuses on sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Lena is deeply passionate about European human rights and firmly believes that every individual deserves dignity, respect, and protection, regardless of their background, beliefs, or circumstances. She sees the defense and promotion of human rights as a shared global responsibility.

Leyan AlMaqousi, Legal Fellow, born in Gaza Strip, has a lifelong commitment to understanding the complex interplay of law and justice that significantly shapes nations and impacts lives. Her upbringing in a region often at the forefront of conflict fueled her deep passion for law and justice, inspiring her to engage in social causes from a young age. She holds two law degrees:

an LLB from IE University in Madrid, Spain, where she received the Academic Excellence Scholarship, and a dual degree in Civil and English Law from the University of Law in the UK, graduating with Upper Second Class Honours Distinction.

Leyan's professional experience is rich and varied. She currently serves as a paralegal at Eversheds Sutherland, a globally recognised top 10 law practice, where she is working towards becoming a qualified English solicitor. Previously, Leyan worked as a Law Clerk at the Qatar International Court and Dispute Resolution Centre, playing a vital role in the Registry team. She also gained valuable experience as a research assistant at IE University, delving into topics such as art, aesthetics, and international justice, and exploring global citizenship as a fundamental element in accessing human rights.

Her dedication to human rights and social justice extends to her involvement with various NGOs. She has notably drafted a legal memorandum for the United Nations to enhance special education access for children with disabilities and worked with the Max Planck Foundation in Sri Lanka, providing legal assistance aimed at strengthening the capacities of judges and lawyers.

Leyan is steadily building her career in the domains of law, human rights, and international justice. Her academic achievements, combined with her diverse professional experiences, highlight her growing potential in these important fields. With a strong foundation in legal education and a demonstrated commitment to human rights and social justice, Leyan is well-equipped to make meaningful contributions in her chosen areas of expertise.

Luca Brocca, Just Access Representative to the UNCAC, is a comparative law student, passionate about the values promoted by the EU and its protection of human rights.

Luca Brocca is a comparative, European and international law student at the University of Trento, where he also works as head of the legal department for a student association. He is currently working on his bachelor's dissertation about food and human rights, and the recognition of the right to food as customary international law. He is passionate about European, human rights and privacy law.

Prof. Mark Somos, Special Counsel, is a legal scholar and practitioner. He advises and represents private clients in human rights procedures at domestic and international fora, including urgent appeals and complaints to the UN Human Rights Council and Special Procedures. Mark holds an MPhil in Political Thought and Intellectual History from Cambridge, an AM in Government and Social Policy and a PhD in Political Science from Harvard, an LLM in International Security and Law from Sussex and a PhD in Law from Leiden. Currently in a Heisenberg position at the Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law, Mark taught law at Sussex,

Tufts, Harvard and Yale universities. He published seven scholarly books and over seventy articles, and serves as co-editor-in-chief of *Grotiana*.

Dr. Miranda Melcher, Senior Legal Fellow, earned her PhD in Defence Studies from King's College London, where she researched how to negotiate and implement peace treaties. Her research identifies methods for integrating opposing forces into unified post-conflict security institutions through peace treaty negotiation and implementation and her qualitative historical case studies focused on Mozambique and Angola. She works primarily with qualitative methods, including interviews and archival work, such as at the UN archives with recently declassified UN peacekeeping documents. Prior to her PhD, she earned an MA in Intelligence and International Relations from the Department of War Studies at King's College London and a BA in Political Science from Yale University. Dr. Melcher has taught at the Joint Services Command and Staff College (UK), Ecole de Guerre (France), King's College London (UK) and Northern Illinois University (USA). She also researches and teaches on neurodiverse inclusive teaching practices and pedagogy, finding surprising links between best practices in the classroom and political negotiations. Miranda is the unmistakable voice behind the Just Access Podcast.

Nima Akhavan, B2B Events Manager, studied for his Bachelor's in Engineering in Iran and pursued his MA in Business Management with a focus on Strategic Marketing in Berlin. He is an Events and Marketing Manager with 5 years of experience in planning and executing successful cultural and international corporate events (supported and coordinated 50 concerts and catering events for Microsoft, BMW, Benz, and Deutsche Bank), management and execution of over 20 major Techno events for 500 – 1500 people, including raves and showcases in Berlin, Hamburg, Eindhoven, Dresden, Wroclaw, Freiburg, Munich, Mönchengladbach, Lyon, Bordeaux, Malaga, Cologne, HansBunte, Augsburg. Nima decided to start his new path in our NGO since the climate issue and the Geopolitical situation in the world are rapidly changing. He pursues his passion for Western politics, Middle East geopolitics, contemporary Arts, and Iaido, (a traditional Japanese sword art). He speaks 5 Languages including, English, German, Farsi, Kurdish, and Tajik. His aim in our organization is B2B events collaboration with various organizations based on our policies.

Rita Ostrowski, Pedagogical Advisor, joined Just Access in 2024 as Pedagogical Advisor, and is helping Just Access to design and deliver education programmes on human rights. Rita worked for social insurance for many years in various functions, including press and public relations as well as in the political field. She also spent several years working for several educational organisations and was responsible for funding management at a social services provider. She holds a bachelor's degree in health communication and an MA in Career Guidance and Organisational Development.

Sabina Grigore, Just Access Representative to the UNODC, is a graduate from the Liberal Arts and Sciences Program in Freiburg im Breisgau with a Double Degree, as part of a collaborative project between University College Freiburg and University College Maastricht. She has dedicated two bachelor's theses to the conjunction of international criminal law, international human rights law, and transitional justice in post-communist Romania. In 2022, she was given the chance to work as a teaching assistant in two university courses focused on human rights, international security, and sustainable development. As part of the Digital Interdisciplinary Mini-Academy offered by the University of Freiburg, she has been working with Ukrainian students, assisting them in pursuing university courses despite the war. From September 2023, she will be a Master's student at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, specializing in International Crimes, Conflict and Criminology.

Selene Rosselli, Legal Fellow, is a legal researcher specialized in women's rights, gender equality, and gender mainstreaming. She has extensive knowledge of UN Special Procedures and has participated in the UN Human Rights Council. She holds a Master's degree in Human Rights and Multi-level Governance from the University of Padua and a Bachelor's degree in Law from the University of Paris VIII. Selene is passionate about making an impact in international law and the gender rights space.

Sorana Ungur, Research Fellow, is currently a student in "International Economics and Management" at Bocconi University in Milan, Italy. Originally from Romania, she has developed a strong interest in global economic and political dynamics. Her passion for writing and international affairs is reflected in her role as a writer for the European Generation blog, where she explores pressing global issues. She has also gained hands-on experience through internships in finance and public administration, as well as volunteering initiatives supporting refugees and vulnerable communities. Now, she continues to deepen her expertise in economics, policy, and international relations.

Uygar Ulusoy, Digital Marketing and Engagement Lead, is originally from Istanbul, where she studied sociology before earning her Master of Arts in Media Studies at The New School for Social Research in New York. She has extensive experience as a communication consultant, specializing in digital strategy, content creation, and brand management. Uygar has worked in both corporate and agency settings, helping organizations enhance their messaging and engage with diverse audiences. Fluent in Turkish, German, and English, she thrives in multicultural environments. At home, she enjoys life as a mother to two children and the owner of two playful cats.

Dr. Viktoriia Lapa, Senior Legal Fellow, is a Lecturer at Bocconi University, Milan, an Affiliated Scholar at the Center for Constitutional Studies and Democratic Development, Bologna, and a Guest Lecturer at the University of Bologna. Previously she was Visiting Research Fellow, Lauterpacht Center for International Law, University of Cambridge (2018); Researcher, Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public and International Law (2017-2018); Junior Lawyer at Dentons, Ukraine (2014-2015); and Public Prosecutor in Ukraine (2011-2012). She received her PhD in Law from Bocconi University and was awarded an LL.M. from the University of Barcelona and Maastricht University. Viktoriia has published in areas of international trade law and constitutional law of Ukraine.

Vishal Wadhvani, Brand Strategist, is a seasoned professional in brand-building and marketing communications, with a wealth of experience spanning over 15 years across various categories and brands, from global titans to local gems. Among the notable brands he's contributed to are Unilever (Vaseline), Abbott Nutrition (Ensure), World Gold Council, Acer Laptops, and Parachute Coconut Hair Oil (India's largest hair oil brand), amongst others. Beyond his professional endeavors, Vishal is deeply committed to humanitarian causes, engaging in social work and charitable pursuits on a personal level in his native India. In his leisure time, he finds joy in following European football and reconnecting with nature, often immersing himself in his passion for bird photography. Fluent in English and Hindi, he's also currently mastering Deutsch.

Zinovia Verikokidi, Just Access Representative to the Coalition for the International Criminal Court, holds a Bachelor of Laws degree from Maastricht University and is now advancing her education as an LLM candidate in Trade and Investment Law at the University of Amsterdam. Her bachelor's thesis explored women's abortion rights, while her master's thesis assesses the impact of trade sanctions and their WTO compliance following the coup d'état in Myanmar. Professionally, Zinovia has garnered experience as a paralegal, with a focus on Intellectual Property Law. Additionally, she has served at the NATO Office Information Centre, where her efforts were directed towards promoting Moldova's European and Euro-Atlantic integration. Beyond her professional pursuits, Zinovia is an animal rights activist and is committed to animal welfare. She is the founder of Saving Moldova's Forgotten Animals NGO, an organization dedicated to rescuing animals and facilitating their adoption both nationally and internationally. In her social commitments, Zinovia has volunteered for multiple NGOs, including Little People Romania, War Child, and ALGA.

In addition, a number of talented interns supported our work this year, bringing new energy, skills, and commitment to advancing our mission.

Alexia Lang, Legal Intern, holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and German Public Law from Heidelberg University. After completing a one-year Pre-Master in European Law at Maastricht University, she is currently pursuing her LL.M. in International Law with a specialisation in Human Rights. Passionate about protecting the rights of the vulnerable – including women, children, and other marginalised groups – her research has focused on the implementation of women’s rights in Eastern European States, the protection of the child’s best interests in German migration law, and the potential of intersectional arguments in climate change litigation before the ECtHR.

Bertina Lou, Legal Intern, is a second-year law student at the University of Ottawa. She holds a Master of Arts in Sociology from Western University and has held research and policy roles in academia and federal organizations prior to law school. With a strong Canadian background in social justice issues, she is looking forward to helping Just Access defend human rights at the international level.

Debasmita Bhattacharya, Legal Intern, is in her final year of her JD program at the University of Ottawa. She has strong research and analytical skills pertaining to international relations, and has a keen interest in women’s legal rights, health law and human rights. She joined Just Access as an intern and was excited to remain as a volunteer and permanent member of our team.

Iseult Daly, Legal Intern, is currently in the final year of an LLB degree in Law and International Relations at the University of Edinburgh. Iseult is deeply interested in the ways in which law and politics interact to drive social change, and in exploring what avenues are most effective counter global economic injustice. She hopes to move into a master’s course which will allow her to develop her skills and, in the professional world, to work to disarm privatised power abuse and economic exploitation globally. She joined Just Access as an intern and was excited to remain as a volunteer and permanent member of our team.

Lara Yuki Muschel, Legal Intern, studies Political Science and Sociology at the University of Heidelberg and is currently in the final year of her Bachelor’s degree. She is passionate about migrants’ rights and women’s human rights.

We were fortunate that all of our interns chose to stay on as volunteers and Legal Fellows, allowing us to benefit from their growing expertise and sustained dedication.

IV. ACHIEVEMENTS

IV.1. ADVOCACY

Advocacy is at the heart of Just Access' mission. Through strategic engagement in international forums, collaborative networks, and thematic working groups, JA works to amplify the voices of victims, influence policy discussions, and promote accountability and human rights protection at both national and international levels. Our team continuously contributes to shaping debates on justice, corruption, climate change, gender, and victims' rights, while also strengthening coalitions with civil society and institutional partners. This commitment to advocacy ensures that JA remains not only a watchdog but also a proactive actor driving change in critical global processes.

- On 26 August 2024, Just Access requested accreditation to the CICC for ASP23 in The Hague.
- On 28 August 2024, Just Access attended the UNCAC meeting on Strengthening the UNCAC IRM to Increase Transparency & Civil Society Participation.
- On 29 August 2024, Just Access attended the UNCAC meeting on Strengthening the UNCAC IRM to Increase Effectiveness & Practical Implementation.
- On 3 September 2024, Just Access attended the Victims' Rights Working Group consultation on updating the ICC Strategy in Relation to Victims.
- On 11 September 2024, Just Access attended the first briefing by the German Foundation for Engagement and Volunteering under the 100xDigital programme, commencing the official grant finalisation process.
- On 14 September 2024, Just Access became a member of NGOs1, a platform connecting citizens, businesses, and stakeholders with trusted NGOs.
- On 20 September 2024, Just Access attended the panel discussion *The Impact of Gender Disinformation on Democracy* hosted by the Global Democracy Coalition.
- From the 14-18 October 2024, Just Access attended the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (COP UNTOC) (Vienna, Austria), where among other things, the implementation of the Convention and its three Protocols, namely the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons; the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air; and the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms were discussed.

- On 23 October 2024, Just Access attended the first preparatory meeting in preparation for the CICC Twenty-third session of the Assembly of States Parties at the World Forum.
- On 15 November 2024, Just Access attended the International Day for the Prevention of and Fight against All Forms of Transnational Organized Crime with the UNODC.
- On 21 November 2024, Just Access attended the second preparatory meeting in preparation for the CICC Twenty-third session of the Assembly of States Parties at the World Forum.
- From 2 - 7 December 2024, Just Access attended the Twenty-third session of the Assembly of States Parties at the World Forum in The Hague, The Netherlands.
- On 30 January 2025, Just Access attended a lecture by Elisa Morgera, United Nations Special Rapporteur on human rights and climate change, hosted by the University of Nottingham.
- On 6 March 2025, Just Access participated in a panel discussion on the topic: *Bertha von Suttner: A beacon for women in international law and peace activism*, at the Center for International and European Law within the Asser Instituut in the Hague.
- On 26 March 2025, Just Access participated in a Film Screening and Discussion: “[*Movies that Matter*] *The Reckoning Project: Ukraine testifies*”, at the Center for International and European Law within the Asser Instituut in the Hague.
- On 28 March, Just Access attended an event in Brussels called “New Frontiers And Tools In Climate Change Adaptation And The Role Of Civil - Military Cooperation” organized by the Brussels dialogue on climate diplomacy.
- On 2nd of April, Just Access signed the UNCAC open letter to support a more effective, transparent, and inclusive UNCAC Implementation Review Mechanism (IRM).
- From 4th to 5th June, Just Access attended the UNODC and Beijing +30 event: Women, Justice, and Security in a Changing World From June 16 to June 20th, Just Access attended the ICC-NGO Roundtables, co-convened by the Coalition for the ICC and the International Criminal Court, will take place from Monday 16 June to Friday 20 June, in a hybrid format, at the ICC.

IV.2. STRATEGIC LEGAL ACTION

In 2025, Just Access continued to expand its **strategic litigation portfolio** across multiple jurisdictions and international fora, advancing the protection of human rights through targeted, precedent-setting interventions. Our cases this year addressed critical gaps in the protection of **vulnerable and marginalised**

groups—from children affected by cross-border parental abduction and climate change, to persons deprived of liberty in Europe and the Americas. Each intervention was designed not only to secure justice in the individual matter, but to **influence systemic change**, strengthen the interpretation of international law, and reinforce accountability for human rights violations across national and regional legal systems.

1) INTERNATIONAL PARENTAL CHILD ABDUCTION CASE

On 4 October 2023, the Just Access strategic litigation team signed a letter of engagement with a victim who approached the organization for support in an international child abduction case. The victim was the mother of two children whose father—her ex-husband, with whom she was engaged in an ongoing custody dispute before the German family court—illegally removed the children from Germany to the United States. Prior to the abduction, the mother had repeatedly warned the authorities, including the presiding judge, that the father had threatened to take the children abroad. She had formally requested an order prohibiting him from leaving Germany with the children without her consent, but no such order was issued in time.

The Just Access Strategic Litigation Team provided legal advice to the victim during the proceedings initiated in the United States under the Hague Convention on International Child Abduction. Following a hearing on 8 February 2024, the children were ordered to be returned to Germany. However, upon their return they were placed in the custody of social services for five months, based on unfounded allegations of abuse against the mother—allegations that had already been dismissed by the U.S. court as baseless. During this time, the children were held in a foster home, excluded from school, and deprived of psychological support. At the same time, the lengthy and inefficient bureaucratic processes inflicted severe psychological strain on the mother, with serious consequences for her mental health.

On 18 March 2024, the Just Access Strategic Litigation Team submitted an intervention letter to the German judge overseeing the case and consequently prepared two submissions to the UN Special Procedures: one to the Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment on behalf of the mother, and another on behalf of the children concerning violations of their rights to health and education. Ultimately, the submissions were not filed, as the mother—mentally exhausted and deeply distressed—chose not to proceed. Just Access fully respected and honoured her decision and withdrew from further intervention. We continue to study alternative avenues to address the problem of international child abduction, whether through strategic litigation or other advocacy channels.

Why This Case Matters and Potential Impact

Just Access took on this case not only because of the compelling individual circumstances but also because it exemplifies a broader systemic problem: **international parental child abduction** and its profound

human rights implications. Germany, as both a country of origin and destination for cross-border families, continues to experience hundreds of new parental abduction cases every year. According to the German Central Authority (Bundesamt für Justiz, BfJ), there were **527 new cases** under the Hague Convention in **2023**, including **437 return proceedings** and **90 contact or visitation cases**. Of these, **236** involved children removed *from* Germany and **201** involved children brought *to* Germany. In **2024**, the number slightly decreased to **474 new cases**, comprising **392 return proceedings** (228 outgoing, 164 incoming) and **82 contact procedures**.

The BfJ notes that these figures cover only cases in which the Central Authority was directly involved, meaning the actual number of abductions is likely higher, as not all families pursue formal Hague proceedings. At the European level, estimates suggest up to **1,800 cross-border parental child abduction cases** occur annually across the EU, demonstrating that this is not a marginal phenomenon but a persistent structural challenge.

The consequences for children and left-behind parents are severe: loss of contact, prolonged legal uncertainty, disrupted education, and psychological trauma. Mothers are disproportionately affected, often left without adequate legal or psychosocial support as they navigate complex cross-border procedures.

The Need for Strategic Intervention

The scale of the problem underscores the need for focused, rights-based intervention. Based on current statistics, Germany records approximately **500 new international child abduction cases per year**—each involving one or more children and at least one left-behind parent. Yet only a fraction of these families receive specialised legal or psychosocial assistance, and even fewer benefit from strategic litigation or international human rights advocacy.

By intervening in **10–20 cases annually**, Just Access can directly support **10–20 families**, or roughly **20–40 children**, each year. Over five years, this translates to **50–100 families** and **100–200 children** supported directly. Beyond the individual cases, each intervention can generate wider impact through precedent-setting, awareness-raising, and improvements in judicial and administrative practice.

This case was evaluated to have the potential to influence institutional responses to international parental abduction cases in Germany, particularly regarding judicial awareness, preventive measures, and cross-agency coordination between family courts and child protection authorities. Lessons drawn from this case are expected to inform future advocacy and capacity-building efforts aimed at reducing secondary victimisation of both children and parents.

This case therefore represents more than a single instance of injustice—it highlights the urgent need to strengthen safeguards for cross-border families, enhance preventive mechanisms, and ensure that both

children’s and parents’ rights are upheld in every jurisdiction. Through strategic litigation and engagement with UN mechanisms, Just Access contributes to building accountability and protection frameworks that can benefit hundreds of families in Germany and beyond.

2) RIGHTS OF PRISONERS CASE –INTERVENTION SUBMITTED TO THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

On 8 April 2025, the Just Access Strategic Litigation Team submitted a **third-party intervention** before the **European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR)** in the conjoined cases *Zbuchenko and Others v. Ukraine*. The cases concern seven prisoners (not war-related), each serving lengthy custodial sentences, four of whom still have more than twenty years remaining. The applicants complain of **overcrowding, lack of privacy, insufficient access to natural light, social isolation, and limited opportunities for physical exercise**, arguing that these conditions collectively amount to **cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment (CIDT)** in violation of **Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights**.

The Court’s mandate to Just Access was to address a specific and novel legal question: the **applicability of Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life)** to the circumstances of imprisonment. The intervention, therefore, focused solely on the interpretation of the Convention and did not address the merits or factual background of the individual cases.

Drawing on extensive jurisprudence and comparative analysis, Just Access argued that **Article 8 applies to prison conditions**, that **a breach may occur even in the absence of a violation of Article 3**, and that the **social, cultural, and relational dimensions** of detention are relevant in assessing whether imprisonment respects human dignity. The submission highlighted how Article 8 has historically served as a bridge for incorporating **economic, social, and cultural rights** into the ECHR framework and urged the Court to recognise that detention conditions engage not only physical integrity but also the right to private and family life, personal development, and identity.

Why This Case Matters

This intervention reflects Just Access’s broader commitment to advancing **structural human rights protection within European legal systems**. Although the ECtHR has long addressed detention conditions under Article 3, that provision sets a **very high threshold**—limited to extreme circumstances amounting to torture or inhuman or degrading treatment. As a result, many forms of systemic deprivation in prisons—such as poor hygiene, lack of privacy, or restricted access to natural light—remain legally permissible.

By advocating for the application of **Article 8** to detention contexts, Just Access seeks to **lower the threshold for human rights scrutiny** in European prison cases, ensuring that even substandard conditions which fall short of CIDT can still be reviewed through a human rights lens. Recognising Article 8 as applicable would open a new legal pathway for individuals in detention to claim violations of dignity, privacy, and humane living standards—rights which, though implicit, have long been under-protected in the European system.

The Need for Strategic Intervention

According to the **SPACE research project**, a collaboration between the Council of Europe and the University of Lausanne, there were **907,933 prisoners** in Council of Europe member states in **2022**. Despite broad recognition that prisoners retain human rights, enforcement remains uneven, and the ECtHR’s reliance on Article 3 alone has limited the protection of detainees from degrading but non-extreme conditions.

Through this intervention, Just Access seeks to **expand the interpretive scope of the ECHR** and to foster a **more comprehensive human rights approach to detention**. Success in this case could pave the way for new standards of review applicable to conditions such as overcrowding, lack of privacy, and restricted access to recreation or family contact—issues affecting hundreds of thousands of detainees across Europe.

The process remains ongoing: the Court has received the intervention, which has been forwarded to the parties for their observations. A decision is expected within **6 to 24 months**, depending on the Court’s docket.

Evaluated Potential Impact

This case has been **evaluated to have significant jurisprudential potential**. If the Court accepts that **Article 8 applies to conditions of detention**, it would establish a **new head of legal action** for prisoners’ rights in the Council of Europe region. Such a development would mark a major shift in European human rights protection, creating a basis for **improved prison standards, dignity safeguards, and access to remedy** across nearly 50 jurisdictions.

Even if the Court ultimately finds no violation in this specific case, recognition of Article 8’s applicability would constitute a **landmark victory**—laying the groundwork for future litigation that can progressively strengthen the protection of prisoners’ rights. As the “thin end of the wedge,” this intervention represents a carefully calibrated step toward opening the door to more humane, dignity-based standards of detention throughout Europe.

Next Steps

See below, case no. 3.

3) RIGHTS OF PRISONERS CASE – INTERVENTION SUBMITTED TO THE INTER-AMERICAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

In 2024, the Just Access Strategic Litigation Team submitted an amicus curiae brief to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACtHR) in the case *Santos Sebastián Flores Castillo v. Nicaragua*. The case concerns a Nicaraguan man detained under inhumane conditions in La Modelo prison, where he allegedly suffered prolonged isolation, malnutrition, lack of medical care, and denial of access to water, sanitation, education, and employment.

The brief focused on the application of Article 26 of the American Convention on Human Rights to detention contexts, arguing that the Court should recognise violations of several economic, social, and cultural rights (ESCRs)—specifically the rights to health, food, water and sanitation, housing, work, and education. Although the Inter-American Commission’s Merits Report identified breaches of civil and political rights (Articles 4, 5, 8, 11, 17, and 25), it did not address Article 26. Just Access urged the Court to apply the principle of *iura novit curia* and extend its analysis to these ESCRs, building on Advisory Opinion OC-29/22, which recognised States’ heightened obligations toward persons deprived of liberty.

The submission provided detailed legal reasoning grounded in Inter-American, UN, and European standards—particularly the Nelson Mandela Rules, CESCR General Comments, and previous IACtHR jurisprudence such as *Hernández v. Argentina* and *Manuela v. El Salvador*. It demonstrated how prison conditions that endanger physical or mental health, restrict access to clean water or adequate food, or deny meaningful work and education opportunities constitute violations of Article 26. The brief also proposed structural guarantees of non-repetition, including prison-law reforms ensuring adequate nutrition, daily outdoor exercise, mental-health care, hygiene, safe working conditions, and access to education and vocational training.

Why This Case Matters

Just Access engaged in this intervention not only to support the victim’s right to redress, but also to advance a **broader strategic goal**: strengthening the justiciability of economic, social, and cultural rights within the Inter-American human rights system. Persons deprived of liberty are wholly dependent on the State for the protection of their basic needs, dignity, and health. Yet, across the region, prison conditions frequently fail to meet international standards, amounting to systemic violations of human rights.

By urging the Court to explicitly recognise **Article 26 violations** in detention cases, this intervention sought to **expand regional human rights jurisprudence** and consolidate enforceable minimum standards for prison conditions across the Americas. It also aimed to promote **accountability for systemic neglect** and reinforce States' positive obligations to ensure humane, dignified, and health-supportive environments in all detention facilities.

The Need for Strategic Intervention

Structural deficiencies in detention systems remain widespread across Latin America. According to regional data, the region's prison population exceeds **1.6 million people**, with **overcrowding rates averaging 184%**, as noted in the Inter-American Court's Advisory Opinion OC-29/22. These conditions have a devastating impact on health, dignity, and reintegration prospects. Despite this, the economic, social, and cultural dimensions of detention have rarely been litigated before the Inter-American Court.

Through this amicus intervention, Just Access sought to close this jurisprudential gap and to support the Court's evolving interpretation of **Article 26** as a living provision protecting the full spectrum of human rights in detention. The organisation's expertise in strategic litigation and human rights law positioned it to contribute meaningfully to this development, ensuring that violations of health, food, water, sanitation, housing, education, and work rights are treated as **justiciable and enforceable** under the Convention.

Evaluated Potential Impact

This intervention was evaluated to have the potential to **influence the Court's future jurisprudence** on the scope of Article 26, contributing to stronger regional standards for detention conditions. If reflected in the Court's eventual judgment, the arguments advanced by Just Access could support future reforms affecting **over 1.6 million detainees across Latin America**, guiding States toward improved prison laws and policies that guarantee access to healthcare, adequate nutrition, sanitation, mental well-being, and educational and vocational opportunities.

Next Steps

We expect judgment to be handed down in the ECtHR and IACtHR cases on prisoners' rights (2 & 3) in 2026-27.

The cases have two key objectives: first, we hope that the two Courts will recognise that additional legal protections are needed for prisoners' standards of living, and will mandate additional measures to guarantee prisoners' economic, social, and cultural (ESC) rights while in incarceration. Secondly, we hope to prompt the two Courts to engage seriously with ESC human rights. This is a higher barrier in the case of the ECtHR than the IACtHR: while the IACtHR has the explicit authorisation in its statute to have recourse to ESC rights and has a well-developed case-law on ESC rights, the equivalent case-law at the ECtHR is in its

infancy. We want to encourage both Courts—but especially the ECtHR—to continue to develop their respective jurisprudence on ESC rights.

Building on the judgments which are handed down, we will seek to identify further opportunities to intervene before both Courts both to continue to support the rights of prisoners, and to prompt the Courts to continue to develop their jurisprudence on ESC rights.

4) CHILDREN’S CASE – COMMUNICATION TO UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEURS ON CHILDREN’S RIGHTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (GERMANY)

On 20 September 2025 – World Children’s Day, the Just Access Strategic Litigation Team submitted a **joint communication to four UN Special Rapporteurs**—on Human Rights and Climate Change (Prof. Eliza Morgera), the Right to Health (Dr. Tlaleng Mofokeng), the Right to Education (Ms. Farida Shaheed), and the Right to Housing (Prof. Balakrishnan Rajagopal). The communication urges these mandate-holders to engage with the **Government of Germany** regarding critical omissions in its draft National Adaptation Strategy, particularly in relation to the protection of **children’s rights**.

Just Access argues that the strategy fails to adequately address the human rights dimensions of climate change adaptation for children, despite Germany’s obligations under international human rights law. The submission identifies major deficiencies in four key areas:

- **Right to Health** – insufficient consideration of the long-term effects of extreme heat on children, the mental health impacts of climate anxiety, and other climate-related risks such as air pollution, UV radiation, allergies, and cyanobacteria exposure;
- **Right to Education** – inadequate adaptation of school infrastructure and playgrounds to withstand extreme weather and the absence of climate education in the curriculum;
- **Right to Adequate Housing** – failure to prioritise children, particularly those from low-income families or those leaving the parental home, in housing adaptation measures, and lack of safe, climate-resilient outdoor spaces;
- **Right to Be Heard** – limited inclusion of children and youth representatives in the design and consultation process of the adaptation strategy.

This communication marks the **first international claim linking children’s human rights to climate change adaptation**, rather than mitigation. If successful, it would represent the **first time an international body has explicitly affirmed** that **States’ human rights obligations extend to climate adaptation measures**.

Why This Case Matters

The submission was timed to coincide with **World Children’s Day**, highlighting the intersection of **climate justice and intergenerational equity**. In Germany, approximately **14.3 million children under 18** (16.9% of the population) stand to be directly affected by national adaptation policies. Over the next 20 years, an estimated **14.8 million additional children will be born** in Germany—meaning that the climate adaptation decisions made today will shape the well-being and survival of **nearly 30 million children** over the coming generation.

By drawing the attention of the UN Special Procedures to these deficiencies, Just Access seeks to ensure that **children’s rights are mainstreamed** into climate policy and that adaptation measures respect, protect, and fulfil the rights to health, housing, education, and participation. The communication underscores that Germany’s human rights obligations are **immediate and ongoing**, and cannot be postponed until the 2030 adaptation deadline under the UNFCCC framework.

The Need for Strategic Intervention

This case reflects Just Access’s strategic focus on **bridging the gap between human rights law and climate governance**. While Germany may argue that it is ahead of the 2030 adaptation timeline, Just Access contends that the relevant question is not one of timeliness but of compliance: the **duty to act now** to prevent foreseeable and irreversible harm to children’s rights.

To substantiate its claim, the submission demonstrates that the identified violations are either **already occurring** at current levels of global heating or **inevitable in the near future** if action is not taken immediately. This forward-looking human rights argument positions adaptation not as a policy choice, but as a **legal obligation** arising from States’ duties to prevent harm and protect the most vulnerable.

Evaluated Potential Impact

This communication has been **evaluated to have a transformative potential**—both nationally and globally. If the UN Special Rapporteurs accept and act upon the submission, it would establish an important precedent affirming that **human rights apply to climate change adaptation**, setting a new benchmark for climate governance worldwide.

At the national level, the communication could influence Germany’s adaptation planning, directly benefiting over **14 million children** currently living in the country. At the global level, it could catalyse a **wave of similar complaints** in other jurisdictions, as Just Access plans to develop a **“Do-It-Yourself Kit”** to enable NGOs and children’s organisations worldwide to replicate the complaint process. With **2.37**

billion children globally (and an estimated **2.7 billion more to be born in the next 20 years**), even modest uptake could multiply the initiative's reach exponentially.

Next Steps

Following submission, Just Access will invite the Special Rapporteurs to **review the communication on an urgent basis**, given the imminent adoption of Germany's strategy. Should the Government fail to adopt the recommendations, **Phase 2** of the project foresees a **domestic legal challenge** before the German courts, potentially in partnership with NGOs such as **BUND** and **GermanWatch**.

Three possible outcomes are envisaged:

1. A **favourable lower-court ruling** that binds the Government, setting a rapid and enforceable precedent;
2. A **prolonged appeal** leading to a Bundesgerichtshof or Bundesverfassungsgericht judgment—delayed but of greater authority; or
3. A **complete rejection**, leading to an appeal before the **European Court of Human Rights**, which would extend the precedent to all **146 million children living in Council of Europe member states**.

In any of these scenarios, the case is expected to make a **lasting contribution to the legal recognition of children's rights in the era of climate change**, consolidating Just Access's **leadership in strategic litigation** at the intersection of climate and human rights.

V. PRESS AND PUBLICATIONS

In its fifth year, **Just Access** continued to strengthen its role as a thought leader in the fields of international law and human rights. Our publication activity reflected both the diversity and depth of our thematic engagement — ranging from climate justice and gender equality to digital rights, corruption, and global governance. Through our blog, we published **32 original articles** that provided timely, accessible, and analytically grounded commentary on global human rights developments.

We also maintained a strong and consistent **social media presence** and engagement across **Facebook, LinkedIn, X (formerly Twitter)**, and expanded our outreach by establishing presence on further platforms like **Bluesky, Mastodon, Instagram, and TikTok**. These platforms allowed us to share insights from our legal work, promote public education on complex rights issues, and reach new audiences in innovative ways.

Below is the full list of our blog publications for the reporting period:

- Open Data, Privacy, and Corruption: What’s the Solution? – August 9, 2024;
- The Paris 2024 Olympics: “Inclusive Games” or Human Rights Catastrophe? – September 19, 2024;
- Be a Human Rights Hero! – September 21, 2024;
- The Urgent Need to Protect the Rights of Indonesian Women Migrant Domestic Workers – October 4, 2024;
- Don’t Look Away! – October 7, 2024;
- Are Schools Military Targets? The Impact of Russian Aggression on Ukrainian Educational Institutions – November 12, 2024;
- COP29: Lost and Damaged (Part 1) – December 17, 2024;
- COP29: Lost and Damaged (Part 2) – December 28, 2024;
- Unseen and Unprotected: How Climate Change Demands Urgent Action for the Protection of Domestic Workers in Indonesia (Part 1) – January 10, 2025;
- Unseen and Unprotected: How Climate Change Demands Urgent Action for the Protection of Domestic Workers in Indonesia (Part 2) – January 15, 2025;

- Digital Self-determination: Learning to Preserve Individual Dignity and Autonomy in an Online World – January 24, 2025;
- Myanmar’s Ongoing Crisis: Can the Big Powers Truly Justify Their Inaction? – January 31, 2025;
- Trump Attacks the ICC: What You Need to Know – February 8, 2025;
- Under Siege? The Struggle of the International Criminal Court to Uphold Global Justice Amid US Sanctions – February 20, 2025;
- Italy’s Terra dei Fuochi Goes to Court: ECtHR Says Enough is Enough – February 22, 2025;
- Menstrual Health, Sexual and Reproductive Rights, and the Climate Crisis: The Struggles of Poor Girls in Indonesia (Part 1) – March 7, 2025;
- Menstrual Health, Sexual and Reproductive Rights, and the Climate Crisis: The Struggles of Poor Girls in Indonesia (Part 2) – March 7, 2025;
- Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence as an Intersectional Issue (TFGBV Part 1) – March 18, 2025;
- Global Perspectives on Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV Part 2) – March 18, 2025;
- Lessons on the Intersectional Complexities of Addressing Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV Part 3) – March 18, 2025
- The Right to Happiness: Commentary by Alfred the Feline Animal Rights Ambassador – March 20, 2025;
- A Direct Blow to the Heart of Democracy? Illiberal Liberalism and the Romanian Presidential Elections – April 4, 2025;
- The Space Junk Crisis: Why We Need the ‘Polluter Pays’ Principle in Orbit – April 12, 2025;
- Space Colonisation: Learn from History or Be Doomed to Repeat It – April 12, 2025;
- Laws, Policies, Politics, and the Expanse of Outer Space – April 12, 2025;
- Mental Health Research and Critical Race Theory: A Canadian Perspective (Part 1) – April 16, 2025;

- Mental Health Research and Critical Race Theory: A Canadian Perspective (Part 2) – April 16, 2025;
- Living Together in Peace — Wishful Thinking or Decision Yet to Be Made? – May 16, 2025;
- Half-Hearted Justice and the ICC’s Unenforced Arrest Warrants – May 28, 2025;
- Saúl v. RWE: A Legal Milestone in the Fight for Climate Accountability – June 2, 2025;
- Military Satellites to “Fight” Against Climate Change – June 12, 2025;
- Pinkwashing: The Co-Option of Gay Rights for the Colonial Project – July 27, 2025;

VI. PARTNERSHIPS AND NETWORKING

In its fifth year, Just Access continued to strengthen its global, national, and local partnerships. By engaging in diverse networks, we advanced three key objectives: raising visibility and promoting our work through strategic partnerships and outreach; building public support for the *Children’s Case* as part of our strategic litigation efforts; and laying the foundations for active fundraising.

1) INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL NETWORKS

Throughout Year Five, Just Access remained an active member of leading coalitions and alliances, including **the Coalition for the ICC, the civil society networks of UNODC and UNTOC, the CIVICUS Alliance, the Welcome Alliance (former Alliance for Ukraine), the OSCE Network of Think Tanks and Academic Institutions, and the UNCAC Coalition**).

On 12 March 2025, Just Access entered into a partnership with the **University of Europe for Applied Sciences (UEAS) in Berlin**. Through this collaboration, Just Access is offering internship opportunities for UEAS students, while the university has generously made its premises available for any fundraising events we may wish to organize. This partnership not only strengthens our ties with academia but also creates valuable opportunities for student engagement and community-based fundraising.

On 5 June 2025, Just Access’s application for **ECOSOC Consultative Status** was initially assessed and the Committee decided to continue its **review during its 2026 Regular Session**, scheduled for 26-30 Jan, 4-6 Feb 2026.

2) RAISING VISIBILITY AND PROMOTION

We significantly expanded our partnerships with organizations in Heidelberg, Germany, and beyond:

- We joined a national coalition of **NGOs supporting the Letzte Generation activists**, who are facing criminal conspiracy charges for their climate activism. Just Access will lead the coalition's legal counterclaim against the German State — an important initiative reaffirming our belief that **peaceful protest is a vital expression of civic freedom**.
- We launched collaboration discussions with **BUND (Bund für Umwelt und Naturschutz Deutschland)** and are currently preparing a podcast interview featuring one of their legal experts.
- We engaged with **Pro Bono Deutschland** and **Pro Bono Heidelberg** on identifying victims of human rights abuses for potential strategic litigation, while with **UPJ Pro Bono Rechtsberatung** we secured pro bono legal support to update the Just Access statute and advise on other legal matters.
- Through our partnership with **Freiwilligenagentur Heidelberg**, we attended four networking events and recruited a local volunteer to help develop a pedagogical strategy for children's rights workshops.
- We established links with the **UNICEF Working Group Heidelberg** to explore future collaborations on children's rights initiatives.
- We were invited to join the **Eine-Welt-Zentrum (One-World-Centre)**, an umbrella organization for Heidelberg-based NGOs.
- At the invitation of **Werkstatt Ökonomie**, an NGO member of the One-World-Centre, attended an event organised by the **Interkulturelles Zentrum Heidelberg** as part of the *Days Against Racism*.
- Together with the **Gewaltambulanz (University Hospital Heidelberg)**, we distributed 200 English-language flyers on violence victims' rights (with German and Turkish versions in development). We also set up additional potential distribution channels through **Frauennotruf Heidelberg** and **Frauen-Helfen-Frauen**.
- We engaged with the **City of Heidelberg**, including Mayor Stefanie Jansen, which led to cooperation with the Department for Equal Opportunities and their support for our violence victims' rights leaflet and the children's art exhibition.
- We explored cooperation with the **German-American Women's Club Heidelberg**, who offered us visibility and fundraising opportunities at their annual bazaar.
- We partnered with **The Activist – Lawyer**, a platform for human rights lawyers, to support each other's podcasts through guest referrals and cross-promotion on social media.

- We initiated discussions with **Karlstorbahnhof Heidelberg**, which expressed interest in hosting a human rights film series followed by panel discussions featuring Just Access and partner experts.
- We collaborated with **Heidelberg Cinema (“Kino Gloria & Kamera”)** and the **Max Planck Institute** to launch *International Law and Popcorn*, a film screening series followed by expert-led discussions. The film screening series is planned for the summer of 2025.
- We have collaborated with the **Heidelberg School of Education** to offer students internship opportunities (for academic credit). As part of their internships, students will design workshops on human rights and children’s rights in the context of climate change.
- We have collaborated with the **SRH Hochschule** to offer students internship opportunities.
- We have partnered up with the **University of Europe for Applied Sciences – Berlin**, to offer students internship opportunities (for academic credit) and received an offer to use their facilities for organizing fundraising and promotion events free of charge
- We have joint connection with BEBESEA (Better Engagement between East and Southeast Asia) with overlapping priorities in advocating for domestic work, care work, care for the planet, and addressing the climate crisis.

3) BUILDING PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE CHILDREN’S CASE

Throughout the reporting period, Just Access laid an extensive foundation for public engagement and educational outreach to accompany its **Children’s Rights and Climate Change Case**. Recognising that litigation alone cannot drive systemic change, these initiatives were designed to **raise awareness, empower young people, and build sustained public support** for children’s rights in the context of climate change adaptation.

All preparatory work for these initiatives has been completed, with implementation planned to follow the formal submission of the Children’s Case. We are currently working to **secure additional funding** to realise these projects at scale in 2026 and beyond.

a. Children’s Art Exhibition - Giving Children a Voice

Just Access has been actively laying the groundwork for organizing a children’s art exhibition to provide young participants with a creative platform to express their feelings and perspectives on climate change. The artwork, created in collaboration with art teachers in schools, will be reviewed by a panel of judges who will select the winners.

Just Access has prepared the concept for a **children’s art exhibition** that will give young participants a creative platform to express their feelings and perspectives on climate change and the environment. The exhibition will feature artworks created in collaboration with art teachers from local schools, to be reviewed by a jury composed of representatives from the **Heidelberger Kunstverein**, the **Pädagogische Hochschule Heidelberg**, and **Just Access**.

The **Wilhelmsgut Heidelberg** has been identified as the prospective venue and has offered to host the event on a partially donation-based model. All participating children, their parents, and their schools will be invited to the exhibition, which will serve both as a **community celebration** and as a **platform to present our Children’s Case** and mobilise public support through a petition.

This initiative is expected to have a strong **awareness-raising impact**, encouraging civic participation and embedding the themes of children’s rights and environmental responsibility within the local community.

b. **Student Internships and Workshop Development**

In collaboration with the **Pädagogische Hochschule Heidelberg (PHH)**, Just Access has planned a **student internship programme** through which students from the PHH can receive academic credit for developing **interactive workshops** on human rights and children’s rights in the context of climate change as part of their internships with Just Access. These workshops will form a cornerstone of our youth education outreach in the coming year.

c. **School Workshop Outreach**

Once finalised, the workshops will be offered to **schools across Heidelberg and neighbouring towns**, with the aim of engaging pupils in meaningful discussions about climate change, rights, and social responsibility. These sessions are designed to complement formal education while empowering children to become **agents of change** in their own communities.

d. **Collaboration with the ‘Global Classroom’**

Just Access has partnered with the **“Global Classroom”** initiative of the **One-World Centre Heidelberg**, securing agreement for our workshop on children’s rights and climate change to be included in their list of **approved educational courses**. This collaboration will enable the programme to reach a **broader and more diverse student audience**, including schools already participating in the Global Classroom network.

e. **Performing Arts Collaboration**

To enhance the accessibility and emotional resonance of our outreach, Just Access has also engaged with the **Haus der Jugend**, whose children's dance and theatre groups are exploring ways to perform at the **opening of the art exhibition**. These performances will bring the themes of the case to life through art and movement, deepening public understanding of the human impact of climate change.

f. Court Case Simulation at the Mark Twain Centre

The **Mark Twain Centre** has offered to host a **court case simulation** based on the Children's Case, allowing schoolchildren to participate in a **hands-on, interactive learning experience** about justice, advocacy, and environmental responsibility. The simulation will combine educational value with public engagement, promoting understanding of legal processes and children's rights through participatory learning.

VII. PROJECTS

1) JUST ACCESS PODCAST

Our podcast continued to be a cornerstone of Just Access' outreach and education efforts throughout Year Five. Designed to make complex legal and human rights issues accessible to a broad audience, the podcast provides a platform for experts, practitioners, and activists to share their insights, experiences, and innovative approaches to justice. By combining in-depth discussions with an engaging format, we aim to raise awareness, inspire action, and contribute to global conversations on human rights and access to justice.

Between June 2024 and July 2025, we released a rich array of episodes spanning multiple seasons, covering topics such as climate litigation, children's rights in the context of climate change, protection of human rights defenders, gender discrimination in healthcare, negotiation and mediation, surveillance and digital rights, environmental law at the European Court of Human Rights, intellectual property as an access to justice issue, and the fair inclusion of Indigenous knowledge in international law. The episodes feature leading scholars, activists, practitioners, and members of the Just Access team, providing both expert insights and personal perspectives.

Here is the complete list of Just Access podcast episodes published during the reporting period, listed by title:

- **Episode 14 – Why Study Peace Treaties and Post-Conflict Militaries?** – Interview with Dr. Miranda Melcher, podcast host at Just Access and author of *Securing Peace in Angola and Mozambique*, interviewed by Nalenhle Moyo, Donor and Communication Specialist at Just Access, June 10, 2024;
- **Episode 15 – Why Study Peace Treaties and Post-Conflict Militaries?** – Interview with Dr. Miranda Melcher, podcast host at Just Access and author of *Securing Peace in Angola and Mozambique*, interviewed by Nalenhle Moyo, Donor and Communication Specialist at Just Access – June 24, 2024;
- **Episode 16 – What Are Climate Protests?** – Interview with Juanita van Lunen, attorney specializing in criminal law and demonstration rights in the Netherlands, and Mirjam Herrmann, climate activist and law student in Germany, member of the association *Rückendeckung für eine aktive Zivilgesellschaft (RAZ) e.V.* – July 8, 2024;
- **Episode 17 – What to Look Out for with Ongoing Climate Protests?** – Interview with Mirjam Herrmann, climate activist and law student in Germany, member of the association *Rückendeckung für eine aktive Zivilgesellschaft (RAZ) e.V.*, and Juanita van Lunen, attorney specializing in criminal law and demonstration rights in The Hague, Netherlands – July 22, 2024;

- **Episode 18 – Will the Courts Save Us from Climate Change?** – Interview with **Dr. Ashfaq Khalfan**, Director of Climate Justice at Oxfam USA – August 5, 2024;
- **Episode 19 – Can Strategic Litigation Remove Barriers to Protecting the Climate?** – Interview with **Amy Rose**, Global Director of Litigation, Governance, and Legal Services at ClientEarth – September 6, 2024;
- **Episode 20 – What is a Human Rights Defender and Who Protects Them?** – Interview with **Mary Lawlor**, Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders appointed by the UN Human Rights Council and founder of Frontline Defenders – September 2, 2024;
- **Episode 21 – What is Negotiation and Mediation?** – Interview with **Ida Manton**, trainer and scholar in negotiations, mediation, and conflict management – September 16, 2024;
- **Episode 22 – How to Get Involved in Negotiations?** – Interview with **Ida Manton**, trainer and scholar in negotiations, mediation, and conflict management – September 30, 2024;
- **Episode 23 – Structural Sex Discrimination in Gynecology and the Law** – Interview with **Dr. Christopher Robertson**, Professor at Boston University, and **Dr. Louise King**, Assistant Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School – October 14, 2024;
- **Episode 24 – Defending Women’s Rights Through Sports and Photography?** – Interview with **Dana Rösiger**, photographer and human rights advocate collaborating with NGOs such as DISCOVER FOOTBALL, Equal Playing Field, and Women Win – November 4, 2024;
- **Episode 25 - How Can Human Rights Stories Be Told Collaboratively?** – Interview with **Bora Un**, Managing Director, and **Anne Schroeter**, Impact Consultant at Art Works Project (AWP), a nonprofit focused on visual advocacy and human rights storytelling – November 18, 2024;
- **Episode 26 – How Can Visual Storytelling Promote Human Rights?** – Interview with **Bora Un**, Managing Director, and **Anne Schroeter**, Impact Consultant at Art Works Project (AWP), a nonprofit focused on visual advocacy and human rights storytelling – December 2, 2024.

Additionally, within the timeframe **January–June 2025**, additional episodes appeared in Season 3:

- **Episode 1 – How Did “Just Access” Start?** – Interview with **Dr. Mark Somos**, founder of Just Access and human rights law expert – December 17, 2024;

- **Episode 2 – From Personal Journeys to Global Impact: Behind the Scenes of Just Access**
– Interview with Dr. Tom Sparks, Director of Just Access, and Cvetanka Kirovska, Head of Projects
– January 13, 2025;
- **Episode 3 – What Is Being a Lawyer for Climate-Focused Strategic Litigation Like?** –
Interview with Dr. Amy Rose, Global Director of Litigation, Governance, and Legal Services at
ClientEarth – January 27, 2025;
- **Episode 4 – Where Are We at with Strategic Litigation Today?** – Interview with Dr. Amy
Rose, Global Director of Litigation, Governance, and Legal Services at ClientEarth – February 10,
2025;
- **Episode 5 – How Is Climate Change a Human Rights Issue?** – Interview with Professor Elisa
Morgera, UN Special Rapporteur on Climate Change – March 9, 2025;
- **Episode 6 – Climate Change and Children’s Rights** – Interview with Professor Elisa Morgera,
UN Special Rapporteur on Climate Change – March 23, 2025;
- **Episode 7 – Just Access vs. Climate Injustice: Why Adaptation Is a Legal Necessity** –
Interview with Dr. Tom Sparks, Director of Just Access, and Dr. Lucas Sanchez, Head of Strategic
Litigation at Just Access – April 7, 2025;
- **Episode 8 – Climate Justice for Children: Legal Action in Germany** – Interview with Dr.
Tom Sparks, Director of Just Access, and Dr. Lucas Sanchez, Head of Strategic Litigation at Just
Access – April 21, 2025;
- **Episode 9 – Why Human Rights Should Be the Heart of Discussions on Technology** –
Interview with Professors Jane Bailey and Valerie Steeves, co-leaders of The eQuality Project –
May 5, 2025;
- **Episode 10 – Challenging Surveillance and Empowering Youth to Claim Their Rights** –
Interview with Professors Jane Bailey and Valerie Steeves, co-leaders of The eQuality Project –
May 19, 2025;
- **Episode 11 – Holding States Accountable: Environmental Law at the European Court of
Human Rights** – Interview with Luca Brocca, Master’s student in European Studies at KU
Leuven and Just Access representative to the UNCAC Coalition and OSCE Network – June 2,
2025;

- **Episode 12 – How Is Intellectual Property an Access to Justice Issue?** – Interview with Professor Dr. Chidi Oguamanam, legal scholar and researcher on sustainable bio-innovation, indigenous knowledge systems, and knowledge governance – June 17, 2025;
- **Episode 13 – How Can Indigenous Knowledge Be More Fairly Included in International Law?** – Interview with Professor Dr. Chidi Oguamanam, legal scholar and researcher on sustainable bio-innovation, indigenous knowledge systems, and knowledge governance – June 30, 2025;
- **Episode 14 – How Does Data Shape the Way We Understand Peace Agreements?** – Interview with Dr. Marika Sosnowski, legal scholar and author of *Redefining Ceasefires: Wartime Order and Statebuilding in Syria*, and Dr. Sanja Badanjak, Data Director at PeaceRep and Chancellor’s Fellow at the University of Edinburgh Law School – July 14, 2025.

2) **HAVE YOU BEEN HURT? - KNOW YOUR RIGHTS, FIND SUPPORT**

In Year Five, we further developed the **“Have You Been Hurt?” - Know Your Rights, Find Support** project, by producing leaflets that lead through a QR code to a dedicated page on our website (just-access.de/have-you-been-hurt) to inform victims of violence—including gender-based, racial and xenophobic attacks, intimate partner violence, homophobic violence, and other forms of abuse—of their rights under the German legal system. The project aims to remove barriers to reporting of the perpetrators by informing victims on what their rights are and where they could get help. The leaflet and website also provided information and links to support services, such as medical and psychosocial care.

A beta version of the leaflet was produced and test-printed. Copies were distributed to the **Gewaltambulanz** (a Heidelberg NGO, part of the Heidelberg University Clinic, providing immediate medical support to victims of violence). We also collected feedback from stakeholders including **Frauennotruf Heidelberg** (emergency support for women), the **Amt für Chancengleichheit** (Heidelberg’s office for equal opportunities), and other partners. Based on this feedback, we are working on a revised version of the leaflet tailored to the specific needs of women, refugees and asylum seekers, and people experiencing homelessness. Translation of these versions began with Turkish, then Arabic, French, and Ukrainian planned to follow.

In the next phase of rollout, we aim at distributing the leaflets across Heidelberg, particularly in places accessible to individuals at risk of intimate partner violence. Following advice from **Frauennotruf**, distribution will be concentrated in supermarkets and daily utility stores, as people living under coercive control are often prevented from access to doctors’ offices, government offices, or support hubs.

Although precise figures are difficult to obtain, demographic estimates suggest that each year in Heidelberg approximately:

- **1,300 women** are subject to violence (including femicide, rape, and intimate partner violence),
- **2,500 disabled people** are victims of violence, and
- around **800 people** experience racial/xenophobic violence (including antisemitism), violence against LGBTQIA+ communities, refugees, migrants, or homeless people.

Taken together, this means that if well implemented and distributed, the leaflet could benefit upwards of **4,000 victims of violence in Heidelberg annually**.

The first phase of distribution will focus locally on supermarkets and convenience stores—spaces identified as more accessible for individuals under coercive control, compared with medical offices or government buildings. In phase two, we plan to scale nationally by partnering with supermarket and convenience store chains across Germany. If successful, the leaflet could reach an estimated **2.2 million victims of violence nationwide each year**—including approximately **900,000 women, 780,000 disabled people, and 230,000 others** targeted due to racial, xenophobic, homophobic, or other forms of discrimination.

3) INTERNATIONAL LAW AND POPCORN – FILM SCREENING SERIES

Just Access co-organized a film series in partnership with the Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law (MPIL) and Gloria Kino in Heidelberg. The series used documentary films as an entry point to critically examine some of the most pressing challenges in international law today. The program included:

- **Soundtrack to a Coup d’État** – on international interventions and legacies of colonialism (screened on 28 April 2025), with discussion led by Sofia Vandenbosch (MPIL);
- **The New Corporation** – on the global power of transnational corporations (screened on 19 May 2025), with discussion featuring the film’s director Joel Bakan and MPIL’s Matthias Goldman;
- **No Other Land** – on conflict in the Middle East (screened on 23 June 2025), with discussion led by Silvia Steininger (Hertie School/MPIL); and
- **Solidarity Crime** and **Granica** – short films on the criminalization of solidarity and European border regimes (screened on 14 July 2025, beyond the reporting period), with discussion led by Tom Sparks (Just Access).



The screenings were a great success, drawing strong audiences and sparking very engaging discussions between the speakers and participants. Feedback highlighted the value of using film to make international law tangible and accessible to a broader public. Thanks to this positive experience, our partners — Gloria Kino and MPIL — have agreed to organize a follow-up film series in the coming year.

4) HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION

In year 5, Just Access has been working to create educational programmes on human rights at different levels:

a) HUMAN RIGHTS WORKSHOPS FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN

In Heidelberg, there are 54 general education and vocational schools (“allgemeinbildende und berufliche Schulen”) offering education from grade 5 upwards. Approximately 4,000 schoolchildren are enrolled in grades 5-9 in Heidelberg’s public and private mainstream schools in the 2024/25 academic year. Although education policy in Baden-Württemberg requires that all pupils receive human rights education, it leaves it up to the schools to decide what is taught and how this is delivered. Anecdotal evidence that we have received indicates that the quality varies very widely. Students at *Gymnasium* (grammar schools) tend to be relatively well served, but the general education and vocational schools do not have the resources to provide high quality education beyond the core curriculum.

In **Phase 1** of the project, we have been working on developing a workshop concept based around our ‘children’s case’; focussing on linking human rights, socio-economic rights, and climate change adaptation in Germany, to introduce human rights concepts and show the relevance of human rights to the pupil’s own lives (as well as more broadly). Beyond the reporting period, workshops will be designed and delivered by JA team members (staff and volunteers), working with trainee teachers, who will receive credits for their participation as part of the practical part of their training. For this purpose, we are in the process of concluding a partnership with the **Heidelberg School of Education** (HSE), a joint initiative between the Pädagogische Hochschule Heidelberg (Heidelberg teacher training college) and the Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg (Heidelberg University), created to deliver a master’s program in teacher education (for trainee teachers in programmes both for ‘general’ and ‘grammar’ schools). We will start by delivering the workshops in selected schools which are particularly oriented to themes of internationalism, tolerance, diversity, and similar, such as the *Internationale Gesamtschule Heidelberg* (IGH) which currently enrolls approximately around 1,300 students in grades 5-12.

In **Phase 2**, we will scale up to as many schools as possible in Heidelberg, to reach the target of delivering human rights education to all schoolchildren in Heidelberg at least once during their schooling (approx. 4,000 students in grades 5-9; i.e., approx. 1000 students per year).

Based on the learning from phases one and two, **Phase 3** will see us develop ready-made workshop kits (activities, teaching materials, and explanatory notes) so that teachers and other educators can deliver the workshops directly. We will promote the use of these materials to schools throughout Baden-Württemberg (approximately 734,000 pupils at any given time) and Germany. We will also expand scope of the programme, developing further workshop concepts based on other JA cases as well as key developments.

b. TRAIN THE TEACHERS TO TEACH CHILDREN ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS

As part of our partnership with the Heidelberg School of Education (HSE), we have also been planning to develop workshops for teachers, beginning with future teachers: the students at the HSE. At present, there are more than 4000 trainee teachers enrolled at the HSE's constituent institutions, and graduates go on to teach in Heidelberg, and across the wider region. By training future teachers, we can help to sensitise them to human rights concerns, and the ways in which a human rights perspective can add depth to students' learning on a wide variety of subjects.

In **Phase 1**, we will develop and deliver workshops for future teachers on human rights, economic and social rights, and climate change and human rights. These workshops will help upskill trainee teachers, and simultaneously give us the opportunity to refine our workshop concepts. Thereafter, in **Phase 2**, we will seek to have our workshops accredited for teacher continuing professional education (CPE), through a partnership with *Seminar Heidelberg* (Teacher Education Seminary). All teachers in Germany are required to undertake CPE. By offering CPE sessions on teaching human rights both in in-person and webinar formats, we hope to generate a multiplier effect: each teacher we reach may, over the course of a year, deliver sessions based on our materials to 300-350 students (based on the average teaching-load of a teacher of *Sozialkunde* (social studies) at a general education school). If we are able to train 1000 teachers through a combination of in-person and online sessions, therefore, we may directly and indirectly be able to expose more than 300,000 schoolchildren to the importance of human rights.

In in partnership with the Heidelberg School of Education (HSE) we plan to developing workshops for current teachers - both webinars and teacher training workshops in person.

c. GENERAL EDUCATION - WEBINARS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

As part of our wider mission to provide human rights education to the general public, within the reporting period, we have laid the groundwork to expand our general educational/public

information offering. In addition to our blog and our podcast, we will shortly launch a monthly webinar series, targeted at the educated layperson. The webinars will have a flexible format to permit variations based on the subject matter, but will usually take the form of panel discussions featuring Just Access employees, friends of JA (including (senior) legal fellows where appropriate), and external experts. The webinars will be held online via zoom or a similar platform, and will also offer opportunities for participants to ask questions and join the discussion.

The topics for the webinars will vary. On the one hand, they offer an opportunity for JA to speak about its ongoing/recent cases and other projects, but they also offer an excellent forum for us to highlight work done by our partners, and to join the public discussion about key concerns of the moment.

6) STRENGTHENING STRUCTURES, SECURITY AND VISIBILITY

In Year Five, Just Access focused on building up its internal and external organizational capacities through digital transformation. These efforts were directed at two key areas: **branding and representation** and **digital security and safe communication**. Together, they have strengthened our visibility, professionalized our operations, and enhanced our ability to protect sensitive information while supporting victims of human rights abuses worldwide.

a) BRANDING, LOGO AND WEBSITE REVAMP

A stakeholder survey revealed that our former logo and website appeared too formal and outdated, limiting our ability to connect with broader audiences and potential supporters. Recognizing that our previous visual identity and online presence no longer reflected the energy and purpose of our work, in June 2024, we launched a major rebranding initiative to strengthen Just Access' visibility and credibility.

With the invaluable guidance of expert volunteers, we undertook a full redesign to better communicate who we are—an innovative, people-powered organization driving access to justice. The new logo conveys dynamism, accessibility, and impact, while our redesigned website—set to launch shortly after the reporting period—offers a clearer, more engaging, and more inclusive user experience.

This transformation is far more than aesthetic: it strategically positions Just Access to reach wider audiences, deepen community engagement, and enhance our capacity to attract new donors, partners, and volunteers.

b) DIGITAL SECURITY: DIGI-SAFE JA

In parallel, we initiated **DiGi-Safe JA**, a project designed to address the growing digital threats faced by Just Access. Our work depends on a global volunteer network using personal devices, creating

vulnerabilities for sensitive communications and data. Having already been the target of repeated cyberattacks, including those linked to state actors, we recognized the urgent need to unify our digital systems and prioritize security.

On 21 August 2024, Just Access was awarded a €20,000 grant under the **100xDigital programme of the German Foundation for Engagement** to conduct a full audit of our IT infrastructure and data security policy and develop a roadmap to strengthen security and efficiency. With expert guidance, we began rationalizing our digital tools, updating outdated hardware, and introducing robust policies to ensure safe data handling. Central to this initiative was the creation of secure, unified communication channels—vital for protecting human rights defenders and victims of abuse with whom we work. The project started in January 2025 and is currently in progress, scheduled to be finished by the end on 2025.

VIII. STAFF AND VOLUNTEER TRAINING

At Just Access, we place great importance on continuous learning and capacity building as essential drivers of our organizational growth and impact. Throughout the reporting period, our team actively participated in a wide range of professional development opportunities designed to strengthen our expertise in areas such as fundraising, digital communication, volunteer management, community building, strategic litigation, and the responsible use of new technologies. Remarkably, all of these trainings were made possible at no cost to Just Access, thanks to our strong network and partnerships with organizations such as Haus des Stiftens, WerteWissensWandel, PRO-BONO Camp, and the United Nations. By investing in staff and volunteer development through strategic collaborations, we ensure that Just Access remains innovative, well-informed, and equipped to advance its mission more effectively.

- On 26 September 2024, our Head of Projects, Cvetanka Kiroška, attended a Webinar on AI-Tools for Non-Profits, offered by the Haus des Stiftens.
- On 26 September 2024, Cvetanka Kiroška attended a Webinar on Fundraising for NGOs, organized by the WerteWissensWandel.
- On 12 March 2025, Cvetanka Kiroška and JA Director, Tom Sparks, attended a Webinar on: *Google Grants*, offered by the Haus des Stiftens.
- On 19 March 2025, Cvetanka Kiroška and Tom Sparks, attended a Webinar on: *Volunteers, step forward! Fundamentals of promoting engagement*, offered by the Haus des Stiftens.
- On 21 March 2025, Cvetanka Kiroška and Tom Sparks, attended a Webinar on: *Community Building – benefiting from working together*, offered by the Haus des Stiftens.
- On 24 March 2025, Cvetanka Kiroška and Tom Sparks, attended a Webinar on *Strategic Litigation under the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, offered by the UN.
- On 25 March 2025, Cvetanka Kiroška attended a Webinar on: *Female Empowerment: Together for a Strong Future*, offered by PRO-BONO- Camp.
- On 10 April 2025, Cvetanka Kiroška attended a Webinar on: *Facebook & Instagram Ads*, offered by the Haus des Stiftens.
- On 10 April 2025, Cvetanka Kiroška attended a Webinar on: *Volunteers, step forward! Coordinating Volunteers with AI*, offered by the Haus des Stiftens.
- In May 2025, Jour Information Security Officer, Joshua Rutter, attended GITEX Europe, a large international tech Expo in Berlin. He also occasionally attended the Berlin Cybersecurity Social, a monthly meet-up for cybersecurity professionals in Berlin.

- On 3 June 2025, Cvetanka Kiroška attended a Webinar on: *Tik Tok & LinkedIn*, offered by the Haus des Stiftens.
- On 25 June 2025, Cvetanka Kiroška delivered an in-house staff training on Project Management to the Strategic Litigation Team.

IX. FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

Fundraising has remained a core joint priority for the Just Access team. Throughout the reporting period, we continued to invest significant effort in expanding our funding base, strengthening donor relationships, and diversifying income streams to ensure the sustainability and growth of our mission. In addition to the dedication of our staff, our volunteers—specifically engaged in fundraising—have played a crucial role in advancing our efforts, contributing fresh ideas, research, and outreach that have significantly enhanced our organizational capacity.

Our team’s collective work in fundraising this year reflects both persistence and strategic learning. We have submitted multiple high-quality proposals to key donors and foundations, refined our digital engagement tools, and built new partnerships across Europe—all laying the groundwork for stronger funding results in the year ahead.

- On 22 August 2024, Just Access submitted a project proposal titled “*Podcasting for Human Rights Education and Strengthening Democracy*” to the **Robert Bosch Foundation**. The proposal received highly positive feedback and was well-evaluated, though it was ultimately not selected for funding. The constructive feedback we received will inform and strengthen future submissions, helping us refine our approach to developing innovative projects that combine human rights education with civic engagement.
- On 26 June 2024, Just Access submitted a grant application to the German Foundation for Commitment and Volunteering (**Deutsche Stiftung für Engagement und Ehrenamt**) under its 100xDigital programme, which was a huge success, with **Just Access selected to receive 20.000€** to support the upgrading of our IT systems in order to enable our work. The project implementation is ongoing, to be wrapped up by the end of 2025.
- On 16 September 2024, Just Access co-applied—as part of a five-NGO coalition led by the Hungarian civil society organization Szubjektív—for funding to establish a **Civic Space Empowerment Network**, an **EU-wide initiative** aimed at promoting and protecting civic space, strengthening the resilience of civil society organizations (CSOs), and empowering civil society actors at local, regional, and national levels. Within this consortium, Just Access proposed to focus on the **legal dimension of civic space protection**—specifically on empowerment and access to justice for CSOs. Our planned activities included providing legal training for CSOs on defending their rights; developing a practical toolkit on legal frameworks and mechanisms for safeguarding civic space; establishing a legal aid network to offer pro bono services for CSOs; organizing seminars on strategic litigation; and fostering cooperation among human rights defenders, legal experts, and civil society organizations. Although the

proposal was not selected for funding, the process helped us build valuable partnerships and deepen our understanding of collaborative approaches to strengthening civic space within the EU.

- On 26 September 2024, Just Access launched a crowdfunding campaign for each of its ongoing projects on the online crowdfunding platform **Betterplace.me** (later rebranded as **GoodCrowd.org**). The campaign ran for three months and was actively promoted through our social media channels. While it did not meet its fundraising goals, it provided valuable insights into online donor engagement and helped strengthen our understanding of digital fundraising strategies for future campaigns.
- On 17 September 2025, Just Access co-applied with six partner NGOs—**Refugees Welcome Italia** (Italy), **Glocal Factory** (Italy), **Avvocato di Strada** (Italy), **Subjective Values Foundation** (Hungary), **BEST** (Austria), and **Second Tree** (Greece)—for funding under the **Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV) Program** of the EU. The project, “*Guardians of Rights (GoR)*,” is designed to strengthen the ability of civil society actors to protect the rights of migrants, homeless people, and other marginalized groups through strategic litigation. **Just Access plays a central role**, leading on the legal dimension by training strategic litigators, providing expertise on access to justice, and developing practical tools and resources to empower CSOs across Europe. The initiative, still under consideration, represents a key opportunity to advance systemic human rights protections and reinforce the impact of civil society in safeguarding Europe’s most vulnerable communities.
- On 19 September 2025, Just Access, **Szubjektiv** and our collaborators re-submitted a revised and improved version of our application for EU funding to establish the **Civic Space Empowerment Network** (see above). We continue to believe that the proposal could make a significant contribution to the protection of civic space across Europe, and hope that the revised proposal will be selected for funding. At present, the proposal is under consideration.
- **Diversifying fundraising channels** – In addition to grant applications, both staff and volunteers have invested in developing a fundraising strategy with a broader fundraising mix, including events, individual giving, sponsorship opportunities, and peer-to-peer campaigns, and we have developed resources to help Just Access activists raise funds in their own communities to support our work. These efforts aim to build a stronger culture of giving around Just Access and engage our growing community of supporters.
- **Strengthening donor engagement through rebranding** – The comprehensive redesign of our logo and website has been a strategic investment in donor and public engagement. Our refreshed visual identity and improved online presence make it easier and more appealing for individuals, partners, and funders to connect with our mission and support us through donations.

- **Building a major donor strategy** – We have compiled a detailed database of potential major donors and designed a targeted outreach and engagement plan to be implemented in the coming year. This strategic groundwork positions Just Access to cultivate long-term partnerships and secure sustainable support for our initiatives.
- **Building a B2B donor strategy** – With the support of dedicated volunteers with experience in B2B fundraising, Just Access has begun the process of developing a B2B fundraising strategy. This work, which is at an early stage, will be continued in the next reporting period.

X. REVENUE, EXPENSES AND PERSONNEL

Revenue

In its fifth year of operation, Just Access continues to rely entirely on the generous support of our donors. Between 1 July 2024 and 20 June 2025, we raised € 157,135.91, enabling us to advance our mission, sustain core activities, and broaden our impact. For the first time, we also secured a € 20,000 grant for an IT-Security project; the initiative is already underway, although the funds are expected to be disbursed after the reporting period. Additionally, we received our first small donations through the website's Donate system—while modest in size, these contributions mark the launch of a new fundraising channel and have prompted the development of targeted strategies to grow online giving in the future. We are deeply grateful to every donor whose commitment makes this progress possible. Looking ahead, we aim to leverage this momentum to further scale our programs and deepen our impact in the coming year. This funding has been vital for both maintaining existing programs and expanding our reach to new communities.

Expenses

Just Access overall annual expenses amounted to 156.132,32 EUR. We maintained a strong focus on efficiency and mission-driven spending throughout the year. The majority of resources were dedicated to our team—the people who design, manage, and deliver our programs. Operating costs such as rent, essential office equipment, and digital tools were kept lean and carefully managed. A one-off accounting service and minor administrative expenses rounded out the year's spending. Overall, our financial management ensured that nearly all funds directly supported the work advancing Just Access's mission while maintaining a stable and sustainable financial position. Figures 1, 2 & 3 below visually illustrate year 5.

Figure 1: Revenue and Expenses 2024-2025

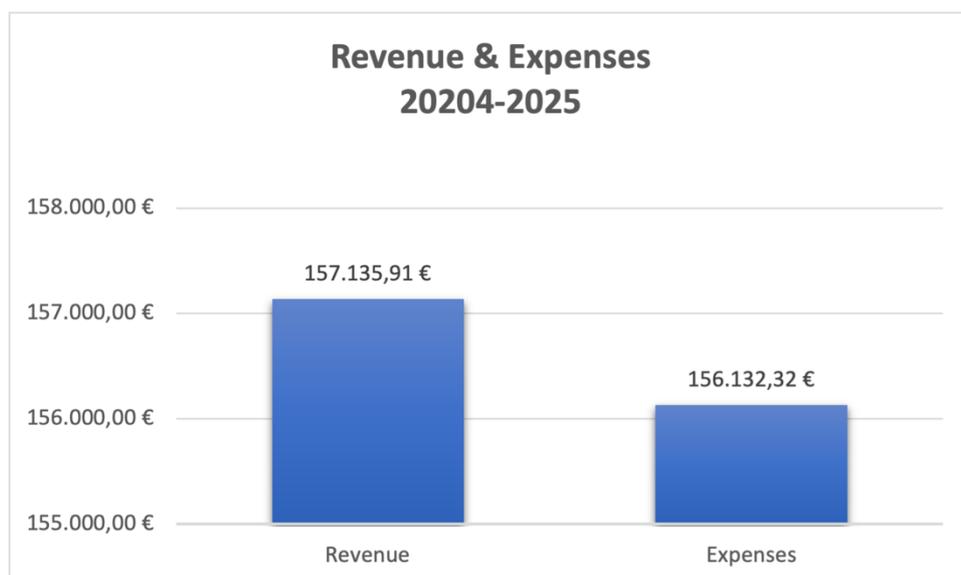


Figure 2: Expenses – Year 5

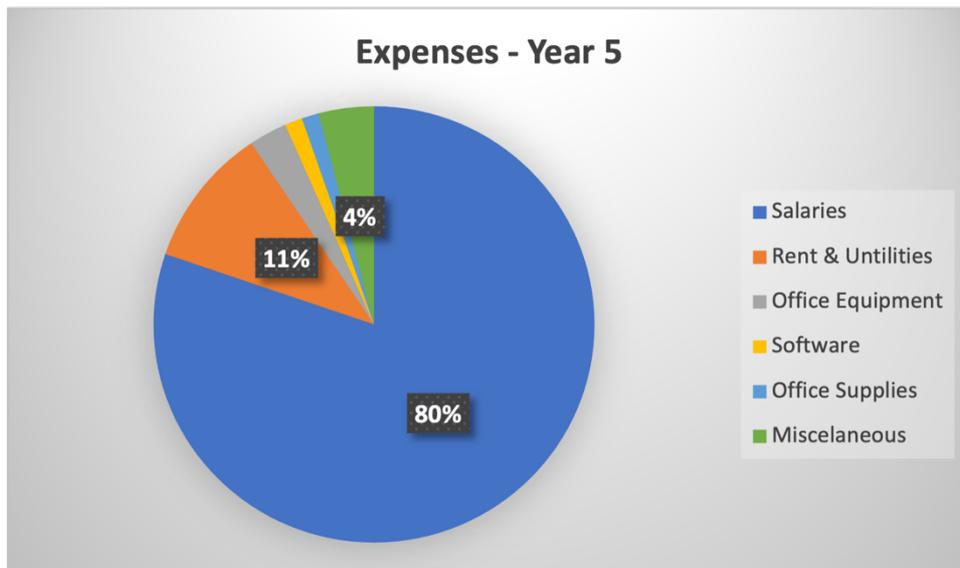
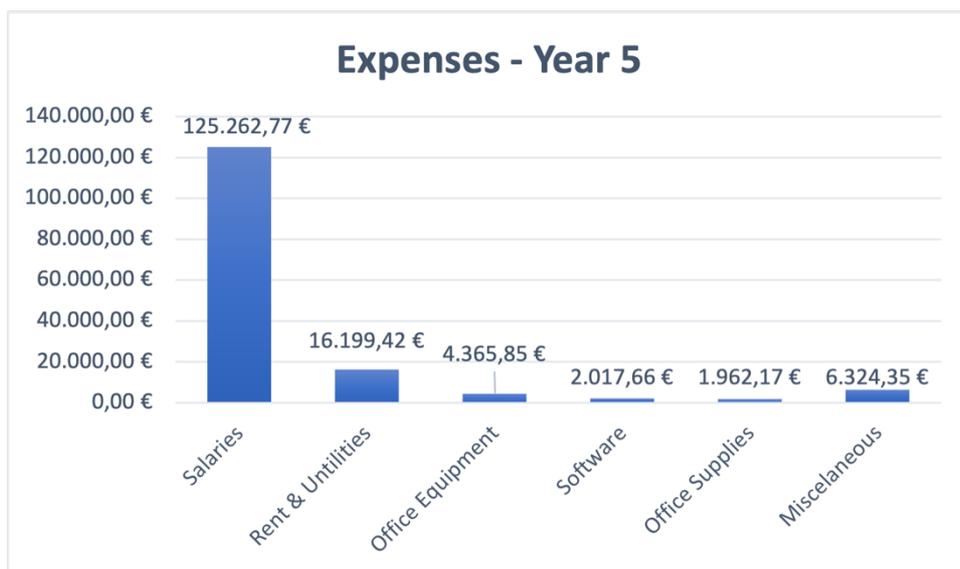


Figure 3: Expenses – Year 5



Personnel

In its fifth year, Just Access continued to be powered by an exceptional team of eight dedicated part-time employees and a remarkable group of 28 volunteers. Together, they form the heart and driving force of the organization. Our staff members bring professionalism and expertise to every operational and administrative function, ensuring that our work remains effective and reliable. Equally invaluable are our volunteers, who have contributed their time, energy, and skills with extraordinary generosity. Their

commitment has amplified our capacity far beyond what our financial resources alone could achieve. The synergy between our staff and volunteers exemplifies the collaborative spirit of Just Access — a team united by purpose, resilience, and an unwavering belief in advancing human rights and access to justice. Please see Figure 4 below for visual illustration.

Figure 4: Staff and Volunteers

