

Wunderlich Fact Sheet

What's at stake?

Homeschooling families in Germany face tremendous pressure, the worst of which is the German government's readiness to violently remove children from their home. A victory in *Wunderlich v. Germany* would establish that such behavior is not acceptable under Germany's international legal obligations to the European Convention of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. It would also deter other European countries from using such *in terrorem* tactics against families.

Some parents will gladly face fines or imprisonment to follow their convictions, but the threat of violence and separation is a nightmare that virtually no parent is willing to face. Under such a threat, homeschooling will never become available to the many families who could benefit from a more customized form of private education. This case gives the ECHR a chance to clearly establish that violence against families for homeschooling is a violation of their human rights.

Why is HSLDA involved?

HSLDA is a global advocacy organization. Although most of our members are in the United States where we were founded 30 years ago, our membership is increasingly global. We are privileged to have the resources, expertise, and desire to help families and organizations who desire to enjoy the same freedom we have here in the U.S.. Additionally, defending freedom abroad strengthens homeschool freedom here at home. Our founder Michael Farris once said, "If we don't defend these rights everywhere then we won't have these rights anywhere."

In addition to working with Alliance Defending Freedom on behalf of the Wunderlich family, HSLDA has also started an [online petition](#) to put pressure on the German government to cease its oppression of homeschooling families.

Where do the Wunderlichs live?

Near Darmstadt, Germany. Dirk works as a gardener.

How many children do they have and what are their ages?

The Wunderlichs have four children: Machsejah (18), Joshua (17), Hananjah (15), and Serajah (11).

What's the case timeline?

2006 — German court fines Wunderlichs several hundred euros for homeschooling.

2008 — Family leaves Germany and continues homeschooling in France.

September 2009 — Alerted by Germany, French officials remove children, but return them a few days later.

2012 — Unable to find long-term employment, family returns to Germany.

October 2012 — German district court transfers legal custody of children to German social services.

August 29, 2013 — Children removed in a raid by 20 German social workers and police officers.

September 19, 2013 — After court hearing in Darmstadt, Germany, children are returned on condition that they attend public school. But court revokes their passports.

August 2014 — German court orders passports and custody of children returned to family.

September 2014 — Wunderlichs resume homeschooling, vowing to stay in Germany and fight.

April 2015 — HSLDA and ADF file application with European Court of Human Rights on behalf of Wunderlichs.

August 2016 — ECHR decides to take Wunderlich case and orders German government to answer family's claims.

January 2017 — German government formally responds to ECHR.

April 2017 — HSLDA and ADF file reply to Germany's arguments with ECHR.

For more information and interviews, contact:

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