



EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS
COUR EUROPÉENNE DES DROITS DE L'HOMME

FIRST SECTION

DECISION

Application no. 14620/21
Elena DE CONTO
against Italy and 32 Others

The European Court of Human Rights (First Section), sitting on 7 May 2025 as a Committee composed of:

Alain Chablais, *President*,

Raffaele Sabato,

Frédéric Krenc, *judges*,

and Liv Tigerstedt, *Deputy Section Registrar*,

Having regard to:

the application (no. 14620/21) against the Italian Republic and following 32 respondent States: the Republic of Austria, the Kingdom of Belgium, the Republic of Bulgaria, the Swiss Confederation, the Republic of Cyprus, the Czech Republic, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Kingdom of Denmark, the Kingdom of Spain, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Finland, the French Republic, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Hellenic Republic, the Republic of Croatia, Hungary, Ireland, the Republic of Lithuania, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, the Republic of Latvia, the Republic of Malta, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Kingdom of Norway, the Republic of Poland, the Portuguese Republic, Romania, the Russian Federation, the Slovak Republic, the Republic of Slovenia, the Kingdom of Sweden, the Republic of Türkiye and Ukraine lodged with the Court under Article 34 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (“the Convention”) on 4 March 2021 by an Italian national, Ms Elena De Conto, who was born in 2000 and lives in Villa di Sedico (“the applicant”) and was represented by Ms S. Sommacal, a lawyer practising in Belluno;

Having deliberated, decides as follows:

SUBJECT MATTER OF THE CASE

1. The application concerns the negative effects allegedly suffered by the applicant due to climate change.

2. According to the applicant, several States had undertaken commitments, in particular under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (“UNFCCC”, adopted 9 May 1992, United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 1771, p. 107) and the Paris Agreement (adopted 12 December 2015, United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 3156), to combat climate change and its adverse effects. As regards such effects, she maintained that they had begun to manifest themselves in an increasingly evident manner. In particular, she cited the occurrence of a storm known as the “Vaia Storm”, an unusually severe wind and rainstorm that had affected several Italian regions, including her own, in October 2018. According to the applicant, her city of residence was particularly affected by the storm, which caused landslides and floods, leading to the closure of roads, the evacuation of hundreds of families, and leaving many residents without electricity for days.

3. The applicant stated that the distress she experienced due to climate change had negative repercussions on her mental health. In particular the applicant, who described herself as suffering from behavioural problems, submitted that she experienced severe anxiety when faced with natural disasters, such as the “Vaia Storm” and other events which she linked to climate change, such as landslides, floods, forest fires and heavy rains. Her state of anxiety was further exacerbated by the prospect of living in an increasingly overheated climate for the rest of her life.

4. In support of her application, she submitted several press articles concerning the “Vaia Storm”. She also furnished medical documentation. According to three medical reports issued in 2016, the applicant was being treated for an impulse control disorder. In the same year she was diagnosed with an eating behaviour disorder. In another report, dating from 2017, it was noted that the applicant displayed symptoms of antisocial personality disorder and oppositional defiant disorder.

5. The applicant complained that the effects of climate change – in particular those in relation to the “Vaia Storm” and flooding – which had an impact on her mental health and well-being, and which were imputable to a failure by the respondent States to take sufficient measures to implement the Paris Agreement, entailed a breach of her rights under Articles 2 and 8 of the Convention.

6. The applicant also complained that she had suffered discrimination in breach of Article 14 of the Convention as, in her view, the harmful effects of climate change would hit the younger generations harder. She further complained about the absence of effective domestic remedies under Article 13, alleging that she would be forced to lodge a complaint in the courts

of a large number of States, a burden which would be impossible for her to bear because of her young age and limited financial resources.

THE COURT'S ASSESSMENT

7. The Court will first address the question whether the respondent States' jurisdiction can be established in the present case. The general principles of the Court's case-law on jurisdiction have been recently summarised in *Duarte Agostinho and Others v. Portugal and 32 Others* (dec.) [GC], no. 39371/20, §§ 168-78, 9 April 2024.

8. The Court notes at the outset that the applicant is a resident of Italy, and thus under its territorial jurisdiction, which means that under Article 1 of the Convention Italy must answer for any infringement attributable to it of the rights and freedoms protected by the Convention in respect of the applicant.

9. As regards the other respondent States, the applicant has not argued, nor would there be any basis to find that their territorial jurisdiction could be established in respect of them (*ibid.*, § 179). Moreover, following the reasoning adopted by the Court in the case of *Duarte Agostinho and Others* (cited above, §§ 181-213), it sees no grounds on which to conclude that the other respondent States exercised extraterritorial jurisdiction. In particular, there is no suggestion that any of the other respondent States exercised in any manner effective control of an area outside their national territory bringing the applicant within its jurisdiction *ratione loci*, or that any of them exercised authority or control over the applicant (*ibid.*, § 182). Moreover, the Court discerns no relevant "exceptional circumstances" or "special features" which have led the Court, in previous cases, to the conclusion that a State exercised extraterritorial jurisdiction (*ibid.*, §§ 184-213). The Court underlines, moreover, that the applicant did not submit any specific arguments on the subject of extraterritorial jurisdiction.

10. It follows from the above that territorial jurisdiction is established in respect of Italy, whereas no jurisdiction can be established as regards the other respondent States. The applicant's complaints against the other respondent States must therefore be declared inadmissible pursuant to Article 35 §§ 3 and 4 of the Convention.

11. Given the above, the Court will proceed with its examination of the applicant's complaints solely in respect of Italy.

12. The Court reiterates that the relevant principles on victim status in the climate-change context have been summarised in *Verein KlimaSeniorinnen Schweiz and Others v. Switzerland* [GC], no. 53600/20, §§ 487-88, 9 April 2024.

13. As regards the applicant's complaint under Article 8, the Court reiterates that two key criteria have been set out, in particular, for recognising the victim status of natural persons in the climate-change context: (a) high intensity of exposure of the applicant to the adverse effects of climate change;

and (b) a pressing need to ensure the applicant's individual protection (ibid., § 527). The Court has also stated that the threshold for fulfilling these criteria is especially high (ibid., § 488).

14. As regards the alleged impact on the applicant's mental health (see paragraph 3 above), the Court notes that the medical certificates submitted by her do not contain any suggestion that her medical conditions (see paragraph 4 above) could be linked to her exposure to the adverse effects of climate change as alleged in her application. Moreover, none of the documents submitted mention states of severe anxiety, whether linked to the applicant's concerns over climate change or not. On the basis of these documents alone, the Court does not have sufficient elements to enable it to identify a correlation between the applicant's medical conditions and her complaints before the Court (see, *mutatis mutandis*, ibid., § 534). The case file contains no other material which would lead the Court to conclude that she was otherwise subjected to a high intensity of exposure to the adverse effects of climate change affecting her personally, or that there had been a pressing need to ensure her individual protection from the harm which the effects of climate change may have had on the enjoyment of her human rights (ibid., §§ 531 and 533). The Court thus considers that the applicant provided insufficient substantiation in respect of her allegations, in particular as regards her exposure to the adverse effects of climate change.

15. It follows that the applicant's complaint under Article 8 should be declared inadmissible as being incompatible *ratione personae* with the provisions of the Convention within the meaning of Article 35 § 3.

16. As regards the applicant's complaint under Article 2 of the Convention, the Court notes that she did not make specific submissions regarding that Article, relying instead on a general statement, covering both Articles 2 and 8 (see paragraph 5 above). In any event, as under Article 8 above, the Court finds that she did not properly substantiate her allegations. It observes, in particular, that nothing in the material submitted to it indicates that her life had been endangered during the 2018 storm (contrast *Kolyadenko and Others v. Russia*, nos. 17423/05 and 5 others, §§ 150-56, 28 February 2012, and *Budayeva and Others v. Russia*, nos. 15339/02 and 4 others, § 146, ECHR 2008 (extracts)) or that she had otherwise been exposed to a sufficiently "real and imminent" risk to life in the terms defined by the Court's case-law (see, *Verein KlimaSeniorinnen Schweiz and Others*, cited above, § 513). The foregoing considerations, coupled with those set out in paragraph 14 above, suffice for the Court to conclude that the complaint under Article 2 should be declared inadmissible as being incompatible *ratione personae* with the provisions of the Convention within the meaning of Article 35 § 3.

17. The applicant also raised other complaints under various Convention provisions (see paragraph 6 above). The Court considers that, in the light of all the material in its possession and in so far as the matters complained of

are within its competence, these complaints either do not meet the admissibility criteria set out in Articles 34 and 35 of the Convention or do not disclose any appearance of a violation of the rights and freedoms enshrined in the Convention or the Protocols thereto.

18. It follows that the application must be rejected in accordance with Article 35 § 4 of the Convention.

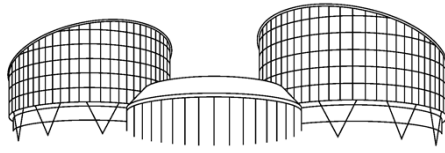
For these reasons, the Court, unanimously,

Declares the application inadmissible.

Done in English and notified in writing on 30 May 2025.

Liv Tigerstedt
Deputy Registrar

Alain Chablais
President



EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS
COUR EUROPÉENNE DES DROITS DE L'HOMME

FIRST SECTION

DECISION

Application no. 14615/21
Daniela URICCHIO
against Italy and 31 Others

The European Court of Human Rights (First Section), sitting on 7 May 2025 as a Committee composed of:

Alain Chablais, *President*,

Raffaele Sabato,

Frédéric Krenc, *judges*,

and Liv Tigerstedt, *Deputy Section Registrar*,

Having regard to:

the application (no. 14615/21) against the Italian Republic and the following 31 respondent States: the Republic of Austria, the Kingdom of Belgium, the Republic of Bulgaria, the Swiss Confederation, the Republic of Cyprus, the Czech Republic, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Kingdom of Denmark, the Kingdom of Spain, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Finland, the French Republic, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Hellenic Republic, the Republic of Croatia, Hungary, the Republic of Lithuania, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, the Republic of Latvia, the Republic of Malta, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Kingdom of Norway, the Republic of Poland, the Portuguese Republic, Romania, the Russian Federation, the Slovak Republic, the Republic of Slovenia, the Kingdom of Sweden, the Republic of Türkiye and Ukraine, lodged with the Court under Article 34 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (“the Convention”) on 3 March 2021 by an Italian national, Ms Daniela Uricchio, who was born in 2002 and lives in Ferrandina (“the applicant”) and was represented by Ms A.M. Bitonti, a lawyer practising in Matera;

Having deliberated, decides as follows:

SUBJECT MATTER OF THE CASE

1. The application concerns the negative effects allegedly suffered by the applicant due to climate change.

2. According to the applicant, several States had undertaken commitments, in particular under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (“UNFCCC”, adopted 9 May 1992, United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 1771, p. 107) and the Paris Agreement (adopted 12 December 2015, United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 3156), to combat climate change and its adverse effects. As regards such effects, she maintained that they had begun to manifest themselves in an increasingly evident manner. In particular, she submitted that Southern Italy, and also the area in which she resided, was experiencing a range of climate-change impacts, including increases in temperatures and extreme heat in the summer months, as well as severe flooding.

3. The applicant stated that she suffered from allergies, skin rashes, and respiratory problems which were affected by high temperatures. She also submitted that she suffered from a state of anxiety stemming from the impossibility for her to go outside on hot days and her concerns about whether she would be able to spend time outdoors in the future due to global warming. She experienced trouble sleeping and had recurrent nightmares, linked to her presence in the city of Matera during a flood in 2019.

4. In support of her application, she submitted three extracts from an online weather reporting website, which stated that in May 2020 several cities in Southern Italy had experienced heatwaves, with record-high temperatures in some cities in Sicily. She also furnished a press article from 2019 which described a severe flash flood that had affected the city of Matera, which was in the same province as her place of residence. The same article also reported strong gusts of wind reaching the speed of 150 kilometres per hour in the same area.

5. The applicant complained that the effects of climate change – in particular those in relation to increasing temperatures and flooding – which had an impact on her health and well-being, and which were imputable to a failure by the respondent States to take sufficient measures to implement the Paris Agreement, entailed a breach of her rights under Articles 2 and 8 of the Convention.

6. The applicant also complained that she had suffered discrimination in breach of Article 14 of the Convention as, in her view, the harmful effects of climate change would hit the younger generations harder. She further complained about the absence of effective domestic remedies under Article 13, alleging that she would be forced to lodge a complaint in the courts of a large number of States, a burden which would be impossible for her to bear because of her young age and limited financial resources.

THE COURT'S ASSESSMENT

7. The Court will first address the question whether the respondent States' jurisdiction can be established in the present case. The general principles of the Court's case-law on jurisdiction have been recently summarised in *Duarte Agostinho and Others v. Portugal and 32 Others* (dec.) [GC], no. 39371/20, §§ 168-78, 9 April 2024.

8. The Court notes at the outset that the applicant is a resident of Italy, and thus under its territorial jurisdiction, which means that under Article 1 of the Convention Italy must answer for any infringement attributable to it of the rights and freedoms protected by the Convention in respect of the applicant.

9. As regards the other respondent States, the applicant has not argued, nor would there be any basis to find that their territorial jurisdiction could be established in respect of them (*ibid.*, § 179). Moreover, following the reasoning adopted by the Court in the case of *Duarte Agostinho and Others* (cited above, §§ 181-213), it sees no grounds on which to conclude that the other respondent States exercised extraterritorial jurisdiction. In particular, there is no suggestion that any of the other respondent States exercised in any manner effective control of an area outside their national territory bringing the applicant within its jurisdiction *ratione loci*, or that any of them exercised authority or control over the applicant (*ibid.*, § 182). Moreover, the Court discerns no relevant "exceptional circumstances" or "special features" which have led the Court, in previous cases, to the conclusion that a State exercised extraterritorial jurisdiction (*ibid.*, §§ 184-213). The Court underlines, moreover, that the applicant did not submit any specific arguments on the subject of extraterritorial jurisdiction.

10. It follows from the above that territorial jurisdiction is established in respect of Italy, whereas no jurisdiction can be established as regards the other respondent States. The applicant's complaint against the other respondent States must therefore be declared inadmissible pursuant to Article 35 §§ 3 and 4 of the Convention.

11. Given the above, the Court will proceed with its examination of the applicant's complaints solely in respect of Italy.

12. The Court reiterates that the relevant principles on victim status in the climate-change context have been summarised in *Verein KlimaSeniorinnen Schweiz and Others v. Switzerland* [GC], no. 53600/20, §§ 487-88, 9 April 2024.

13. As regards the applicant's complaint under Article 8, the Court reiterates that two key criteria have been set out, in particular, for recognising the victim status of natural persons in the climate-change context: (a) high intensity of exposure of the applicant to the adverse effects of climate change; and (b) a pressing need to ensure the applicant's individual protection (*ibid.*, § 527). The Court has also stated that the threshold for fulfilling these criteria is especially high (*ibid.*, § 488).

14. As regards the alleged impact on the applicant's physical and mental health (see paragraph 3 above), the Court notes that the applicant provided no medical documentation to substantiate her allegations. The Court does not, therefore, have any elements to enable it to determine whether she suffered from such conditions, let alone establish a correlation between them and her complaints before the Court. The case file contains no other material which would lead the Court to conclude that she was subjected to a high intensity of exposure to the adverse effects of climate change affecting her personally, or that there had been a pressing need to ensure her individual protection from the harm which the effects of climate change may have had on the enjoyment of her human rights (*ibid.*, §§ 531 and 533). The Court thus considers that the applicant provided no substantiation in respect of her allegations, in particular as regards her exposure to the adverse effects of climate change.

15. It follows that the applicant's complaint under Article 8 should be declared inadmissible as being incompatible *ratione personae* with the provisions of the Convention within the meaning of Article 35 § 3.

16. As regards the applicant's complaint under Article 2 of the Convention, the Court notes that she did not make specific submissions concerning that Article, relying instead on a general statement covering both Articles 2 and 8 (see paragraph 3 above). In any event, as under Article 8 above, the Court finds that she did not substantiate her allegations. It observes, in particular, that nothing in the material submitted to it indicates that her life had been endangered during the 2019 flood cited in the application (contrast *Kolyadenko and Others v. Russia*, nos. 17423/05 and 5 others, §§ 150-56, 28 February 2012, and *Budayeva and Others v. Russia*, nos. 15339/02 and 4 others, § 146, ECHR 2008 (extracts)), or that she had otherwise been exposed to a sufficiently "real and imminent" risk to life in the terms defined by the Court's case-law (*Verein KlimaSeniorinnen Schweiz and Others*, cited above, § 513). The foregoing considerations, coupled with those set out in paragraph 14 above, suffice for the Court to conclude that the complaint under Article 2 should be declared inadmissible as being incompatible *ratione personae* with the provisions of the Convention within the meaning of Article 35 § 3.

17. The applicant also raised other complaints under various Convention provisions (see paragraph 6 above). The Court considers that, in the light of all the material in its possession and in so far as the matters complained of are within its competence, these complaints either do not meet the admissibility criteria set out in Articles 34 and 35 of the Convention or do not disclose any appearance of a violation of the rights and freedoms enshrined in the Convention or the Protocols thereto.

18. It follows that the application must be rejected in accordance with Article 35 § 4 of the Convention.

URICCHIO v. ITALY AND 31 OTHERS DECISION

For these reasons, the Court, unanimously,

Declares the application inadmissible.

Done in English and notified in writing on 30 May 2025.

Liv Tigerstedt
Deputy Registrar

Alain Chablais
President