

[Watch Live](#)[Register](#)[Sign In](#)[Home](#) [News](#) [Sport](#) [Business](#) [Innovation](#) [Culture](#) [Travel](#) [Earth](#) [Video](#) [Live](#)

Heidi Crowter to take Down's syndrome case to European Court of Human Rights

18 May 2023

[Share](#)

Vanessa Pearce

BBC News, West Midlands



BBC

Heidi Crowter brought the case against the government over its abortion legislation

A woman with Down's syndrome fighting against abortion laws says she is taking her case to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR).

Heidi Crowter previously challenged legislation allowing foetuses with the condition to be aborted up until birth.

But in November 2022 Judges at the Court of Appeal decided the Abortion Act did not interfere with the rights of the living disabled.

The campaigner had argued that the rules were discriminatory.



Campaigner Heidi Crowter married James Carter in 2020

Ms Crowter, 27, from Coventry, said she was taking her case to the Strasbourg court "because it is downright discrimination that people with disabilities are treated differently".

"In 2023, we live in a society where disabled people are valued equally after birth but not in the womb," she said.

Under legislation in England, Wales and Scotland, there is a 24-week time limit for abortion, unless "there is a substantial risk that if the child were born it would suffer from such physical or mental abnormalities as to be seriously handicapped", which includes Down's syndrome.

In September 2021, High Court judges found the section of the Abortion Act pertaining to the condition to not be unlawful, adding that it aimed to strike a balance between the rights of the unborn child and of women, in a case brought by Ms Crowter and Maire Lea-Wilson from west London, whose son Aidan has Down's syndrome. Posting on social media Ms Crowter said her legal team had sought permission to appeal to the ECHR after the UK Supreme Court refused to hear her case.

If successful, a European Court ruling "could not only have implications for the United Kingdom, but also set a legal precedent for all 46 countries that are members of the Council of Europe," said campaign group Don't Screen Us Out.

Follow BBC West Midlands on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#). Send your story ideas to: newsonline.westmidlands@bbc.co.uk

Woman with Down's syndrome loses abortion law appeal

Woman with Down's syndrome loses abortion law fight

'Abortion law for Down's doesn't respect my life'

'See the person behind the extra chromosome'

Down's syndrome abortion case heads to High Court

Busting myths about Down's syndrome

Hundreds watch campaigner's wedding live stream

Down's syndrome abortions 'need 24-week limit'

Down's syndrome is 'not something to fear'

Related

Abortion buffer zones to take effect within weeks

2 days ago Scotland Politics

Trump to vote against Florida abortion measure after backlash

8 days ago US & Canada

Trump says insurance or government should pay for IVF

29 Aug 2024 US & Canada

More

6 hrs ago

Bid to drop affordable homes from estate rejected

The developer argued it was no longer viable to build the properties, but the council disagreed.

6 hrs ago Coventry & Warwickshire



12 hrs ago

Terminal man fulfils wish to see brother's musical

Ian Hopkins, who has cancer, has seen playwright brother Graham's production at St Mary's Guildhall.

12 hrs ago



16 hrs ago

Daughter of Hiroshima couple to speak at festival

The event in Coventry will hear from Kyoko Gibson who was born in the city three years after the bomb.

16 hrs ago Coventry & Warwickshire



22 hrs ago

'The world was against us' - artist Alison Lapper on the son she lost

The artist opens up about the death of her teenage son and why she will always be scrutinised.

22 hrs ago Culture



2 days ago

Job cuts after university peace centre review

Coventry University says it is supporting affected staff members and redeployment is possible.




2 days ago Coventry & Warwickshire



 Watch Live

[Home](#) [News](#) [Sport](#) [Business](#) [Innovation](#) [Culture](#) [Travel](#) [Earth](#) [Video](#) [Live](#) [Audio](#) [Weather](#) [BBC Shop](#)

BBC in other languages ▼

Follow BBC on:      

[Terms of Use](#) [About the BBC](#) [Privacy Policy](#) [Cookies](#) [Accessibility Help](#) [Contact the BBC](#) [Advertise with us](#) [Do not share or sell my info](#)

[Contact technical support](#)

Copyright 2024 BBC. All rights reserved. The BBC is *not responsible for the content of external sites*. **Read about our approach to external linking.**