

# ANNUAL REPORT

**5<sup>TH</sup> YEAR OF ROLE  
2024/2025**

June 24th  
2025

*SUPPORTED BY:*

## Foreword

Dear Reader,

History is made in 2025 as Rule of Law Education celebrates its 5th birthday.

And what a birthday it is.

From humble beginnings in numerous pitch attempts of ELSA Alumni to interest ELSA in the project and get the wheels of our Association turning, across first implementations in the Netherlands, Finland, Serbia and Croatia. Through three International Training Conferences and a coaching system, with a new brand and a recent pre-approval as a Flagship Project of ELSA. This year, we united stronger than ever on Europe's biggest rule of law education program.

The numbers don't lie - this year has been as successful for ROLE as the previous five. Combined. And then some. Witness ROLE's explosive expansion yourself - and prepare for what's coming in the future, which will, leveraging the new EYF grant, the new Flagship status and other achievements, undoubtedly soar to even greater heights.

Before you is an attestation to not only the work of the International Board and myself, who led ROLE as my favourite ELSA project, and the ROLE team of 7, that supported me throughout the year, - it is the compiled result of the work of the entire ELSA Network, as it stands together to **#TakeTheChance** and **#MakeADifference**. The everyday work of hundreds, compressed into these few pages.

Happy reading.

Your ROLE guy,  
Niko

A stylized, handwritten signature in grey ink, consisting of a large, sweeping 'N' followed by a smaller, more complex flourish.

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## Contributors

This Report was drafted and assembled in June of 2025 through the work of:

### **Niko Anzulović Mirošević**

Vice President in charge of Academic Activities

Acting in charge of Professional Development

International Board of ELSA 2024/2025

Editor In Chief of the ELSA Law Review

Always supported by The ROLE International Team, comprising:

- **Andela Bakula** – Director for ROLE
- **Katarina Jurić** – Coordinator for ROLE Coaching
- **Enara Könözszyová** – Coordinator for ROLE Training Conference
- **Alice Bigot & Ana Picado** – ROLE Coaches
- **Leonor C. Ferreira & Bora M. Gedikli** – ROLE Training Conference Assistants

From the submissions of ROLE National Coordinators of National ELSA Groups:

- ELSA Belgium – Amina Bakhtaoui Van Deputte
- ELSA Croatia – Katarina Jurić
- ELSA Finland – Elaine Byman
- ELSA Greece – Alexandra Zourdoumi
- ELSA Hungary – Marcell Gerencsér
- ELSA Iceland – Einar Valur
- ELSA Norway – Elisabeth Rapp
- ELSA Poland – Jakub Struzik
- ELSA Portugal – Maria Rita Silva
- ELSA Romania – Cătălin Panțiru
- ELSA Serbia – Andela Bakula
- ELSA Slovak Republic – Enara Könözszyová
- ELSA Sweden – Frida Nygren Björk
- ELSA Switzerland – Bora M. Gedikli
- ELSA the Netherlands – Barbara Majewska
- ELSA United Kingdom – Aurore Talazac



## About ROLE

Rule of Law Education fosters a deep understanding of integrity and equity among secondary school students (aged 15–18) by highlighting the core principles of the Rule of Law. The project promotes active citizenship, equipping young people with the skills and confidence to advocate for the Rule of Law in their communities.

The ROLE Curriculum, developed by ELSA Alumni, features 10 interactive lessons delivered by law students and young legal professionals across Europe. These lessons cover key Rule of Law concepts, such as access to justice and judicial impartiality. Using a non-formal educational approach, the initiative empowers youth with the knowledge and tools to drive improvements in their societies.

Participants work on collaborative projects that apply Rule of Law principles to address community injustices, often focusing on supporting marginalised groups in accessing justice. These experiences help students make a tangible impact while deepening their understanding of the subject.

By the end of the programme, students gain not only knowledge but also a proactive mindset for civic engagement. Meanwhile, law students develop skills in non-formal education and facilitation. Across the ELSA Network, they visit schools to deliver the curriculum and its locally adapted derivatives.

The ROLE International Training Conference brings together law students and young lawyers from diverse backgrounds, encouraging global exchange and strengthening national ROLE Projects. It enables participants to share experiences and address common implementation challenges.

Rule of Law Education is more than a curriculum—it is a holistic initiative to inspire and prepare the next generation of active citizens. The following pages outline ELSA International's efforts this year and the contributions of its Network.

## Our Journey (Report Summary)

This year, Rule of Law Education has seen significant improvements and tremendous growth, perhaps more than ever before. Throughout the term, we have focused on a systematic upgrade of all aspects of the project. Since August 2024, we have:

- Updated the general knowledge base and Curriculum Derivatives,
- Greatly popularised the project and educated organisers about it,
- Created and enforced an all-new ROLE Brand,
- Leveraged it as a platform for international advocacy on the Rule of Law,
- Lengthened, expanded and rehailed the International Training Conference,
- Expanded the international team dedicated to the project,
- Revamped the international regulation of the project,
- Created an all-new project [webpage](#),
- Acquired pre-approval for the status of Flagship Project of ELSA,
- Secured financial means for the implementation of the project next year, and
- Secured new significant financial support for next year's implementation of the project in National Groups of ELSA through a never-before-seen subgranting system.

Based on our greatly improved support and guidance, ROLE organisers around the ELSA Network have united to push the project forward as well. Together, we have:

- Doubled the number of organising countries,
- Reached more high school students than in all previous years, combined,
- Increased the number of collaborating high schools by 40%,
- Engaged more Facilitators than in all previous years, combined, and
- Organised more ROLE training events than ever.

On the following pages, you can read more about all of these components of the success of Rule of Law Education during the term 2024/2025. All numbers and data are based on the ROLE Coaching system's data collection and the ROLE Unified Evaluation Form.

# Impact on the Ground

Rule of Law Education delivers its impact through  
**National ROLE Projects.**

Let's take a look at their numbers from this term.

## Organising Countries

Rule of Law Education is an internationally coordinated project, but it ultimately relies on its impact on the ground and locally relevant implementation. While the ELSA Network acts as one to educate on the rule of law, ROLE's power comes from the bottom up.

The localised implementations of ROLE are called **National ROLE Projects**. Each National Group of ELSA can start and organise one, through the guidance and support of ELSA International. On the map below, you can see an overview of them all (dots on capitals).



This term, a total of **20 interested organisers** have been involved in the coaching system. While the implementation stages they have reached differ due to many external and internal factors, most organisers have delivered the project in full, conducting numerous sessions in high schools based on the training they prepared and executed beforehand.

Many volunteers from ELSA were involved in this effort. While we couldn't possibly collect all of their stories, below you can read testimonials of the 5 biggest ROLE organisers.

### Katarina - ELSA Croatia

*For another year we have participated in ROLE Campaign, making new progress, learning and developing. More ELSA members joined the Campaign and spread the knowledge and awarress about the importance of the rule of law to young high schoolers who instead got a chance to learn a little bit more about something that is and should always*

*be a part of their everyday life. As the world changes become so prevalent, and not always in a good direction, we are glad to give our best to promote and guard basic principles of human rights and democracy.*

### **Barbara – ELSA The Netherlands**

*ROLE has truly been an inspiring project for high school students in the Netherlands. Seeing their curiosity grow encouraged us to bring this initiative into international schools as well, allowing us to involve all students from the ELSA the Netherlands network. To make the project as engaging as possible, we created several tailored versions of the curriculum, introducing topics like AI and Technology or Statelessness, to spark meaningful discussions. The 2025 edition of the project concluded with a moot court competition, giving the students an opportunity to apply their knowledge and experience in a practical way.*

### **Andela – ELSA Serbia**

*This term, ELSA Serbia successfully implemented ROLE in two schools and initiated cooperation with ten more across five cities. While the year brought some unexpected turns, our enthusiasm and vision never wavered. We proudly trained a new, highly motivated generation of facilitators during our biggest training so far. Their energy fuels our ambition to expand ROLE even further. Their passion and commitment inspire us to take ROLE to new heights in the upcoming year. The mission continues – with even greater purpose and determination!*

### **Maria – ELSA Portugal**

*The implementation of ROLE in Portugal this year focused primarily on the growth and expansion of the project. Our team's efforts were dedicated to reaching as many students as possible, culminating in the successful expansion to the islands, namely the Azores. With the support of 12 facilitators, we were able to engage students from across the country.*

### **Elaine – ELSA Finland**

*During 2024-2025 we wanted to update the Finnish part of the ROLE project. So we clarified the ways we do things, updated our materials, strengthened our facilitator training and of course most importantly organized some ROLE sessions! It's been an exciting and successful year and we hope to keep on developing further!*

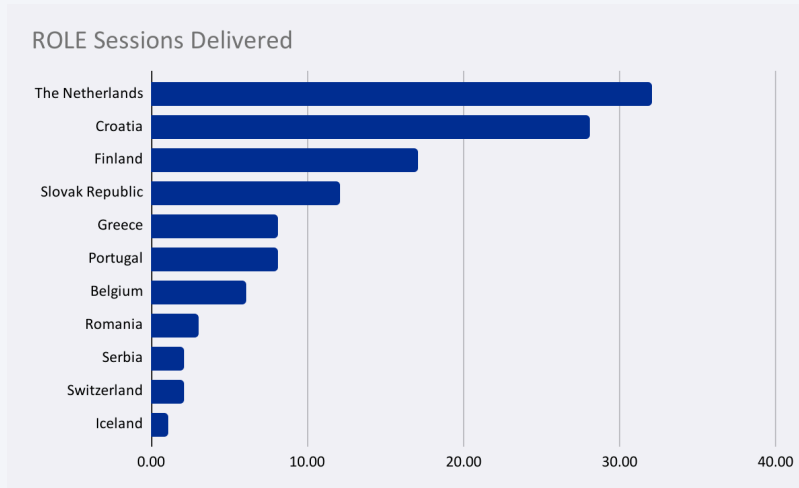
## Impact on Real Lives

Local and direct impact through non-formal education is the end goal of ROLE. Growing rapidly, this year has been by far the strongest in this regard, toppling all of the past years combined.

Throughout this year, we have conducted a total of

# 121

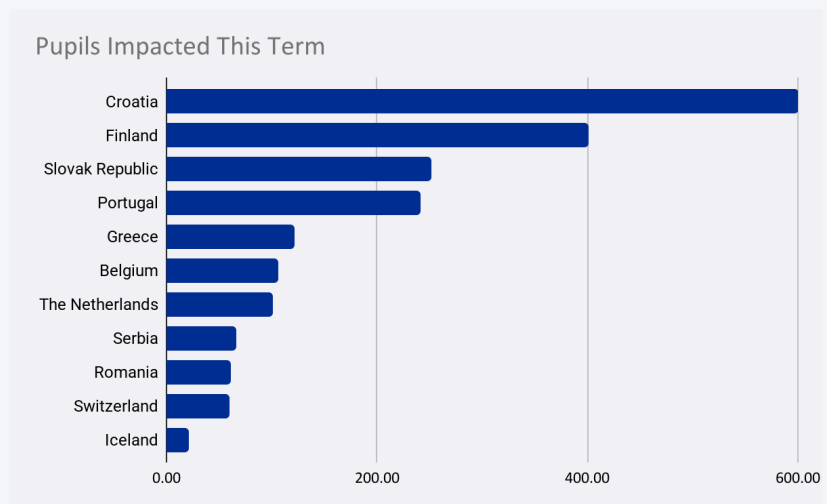
ROLE sessions in schools.



During all those sessions, we have impacted a total of

# 2078

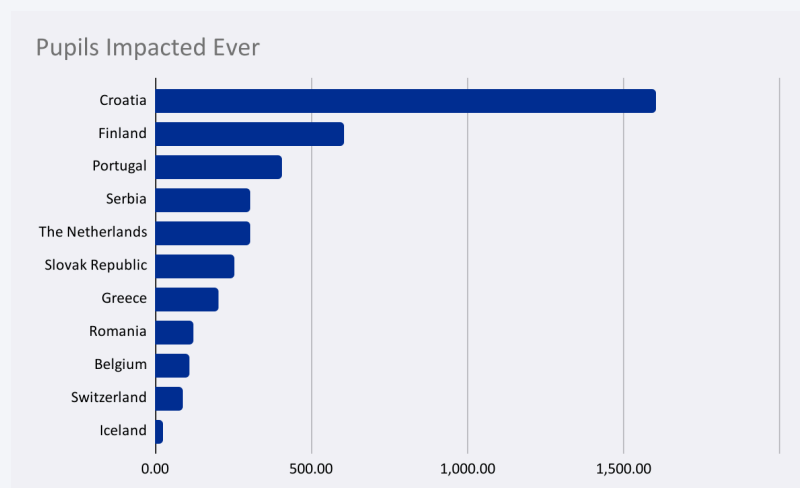
high school students.



This makes more than half of

# 4038

pupils impacted in total, demonstrating the project's explosive expansion and rapid growth this year.



## School Collaboration

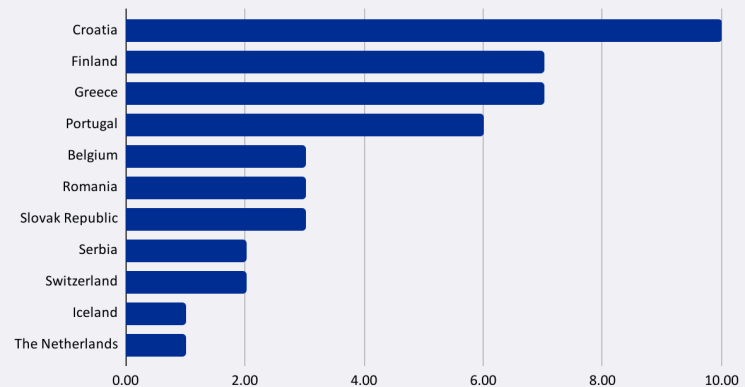
The easiest way to get to high schoolers is, you guessed it, going to high schools. Although ROLE doesn't theoretically have to collaborate with a school, this collaboration is always the simplest and best way to go about it, and in fact, no one has skipped it so far.

This year, we visited

**47**

high schools around Europe.

Schools This Term

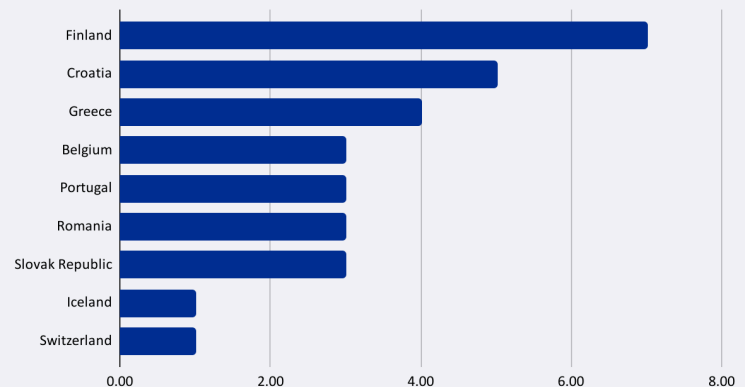


Through effective external relations, we have added

**32**

new schools to ROLE's circle of influence.

New Schools Added

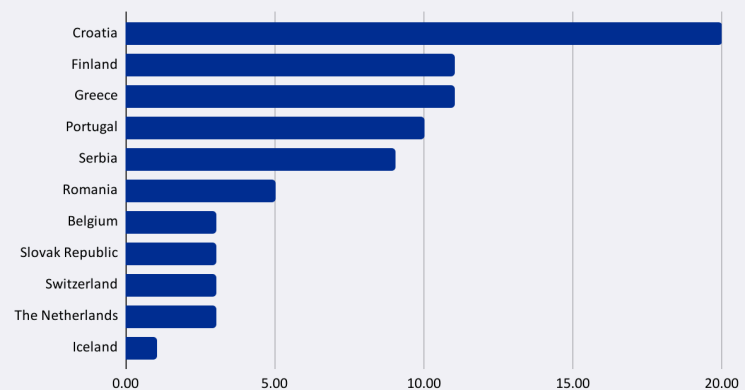


This brings us to a total of

**81**

schools that ROLE has visited so far.

Schools Visited Ever



## Facilitator Engagement

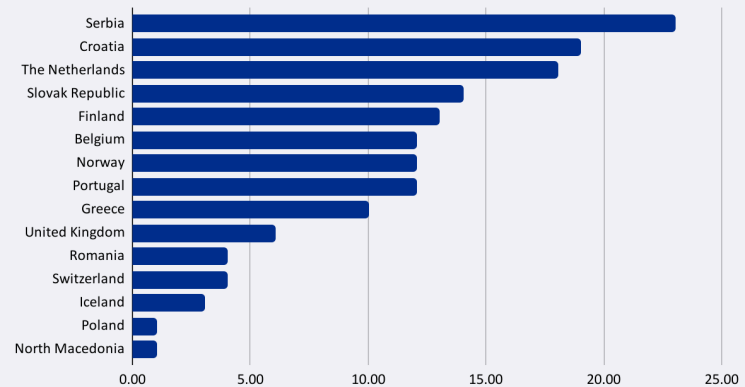
Our main vessel to deliver ROLE sessions are our trained Facilitators: ELSA members who volunteer for this fulfilling, yet responsible duty of reinforcing the rule of law through a friendly approach and two-way non-formal education.

This year, we engaged

# 156

eager law students and young lawyers as ROLE Facilitators, higher than the estimation for four previous terms, *combined*.

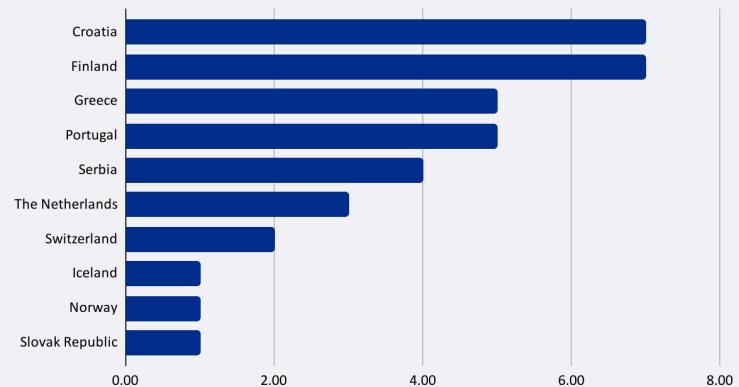
Facilitators Engaged This Term



# 36

of those are returning: having been trained in previous years, they come back to contribute to ROLE once more.

Old Facilitators Re-Engaged

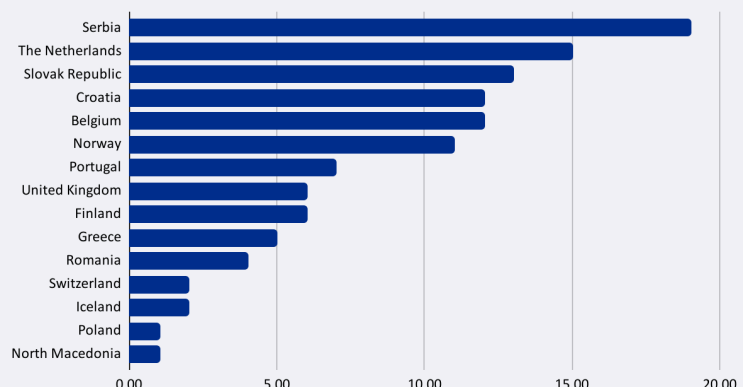


We strengthened our ranks with

# 120

new Facilitators fully devoted to ROLE's mission.

New Facilitators Recruited





## ROLE Training

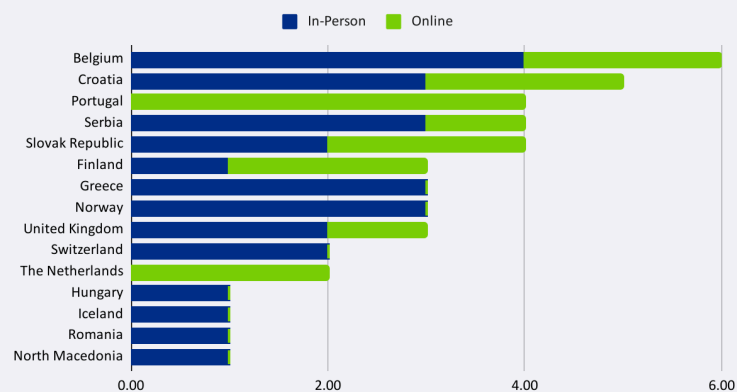
Facilitators aren't born – they are made. Through numerous hours of training, preparation, and exercise, the ELSA Network worked hard to equip our Facilitators with the knowledge and the skillset they need to deliver successful ROLE sessions. ROLE Training covers at least the rule of law knowledge, basics of non-formal education and ROLE Curriculum implementation.

Apart from the international Training Conference, we held a total of

**43** ROLE training events.

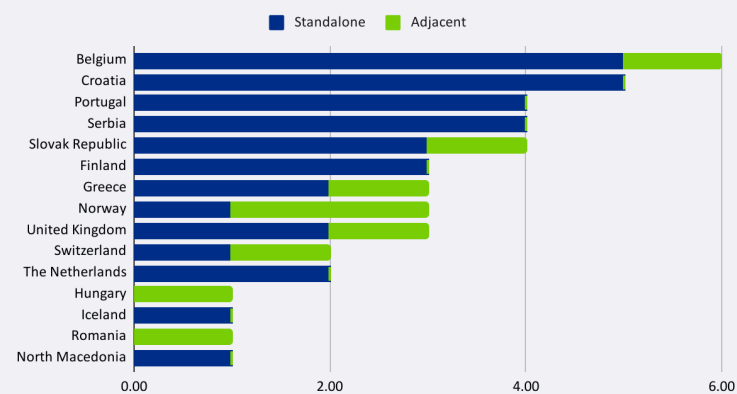
Over **60%**  
of these events were in-person.

In-Person vs. Online Training Events



Over **70%**  
of these events were  
standalone, with the rest being  
combined with bigger training  
meetings or Council Meetings  
of the ELSA Group.

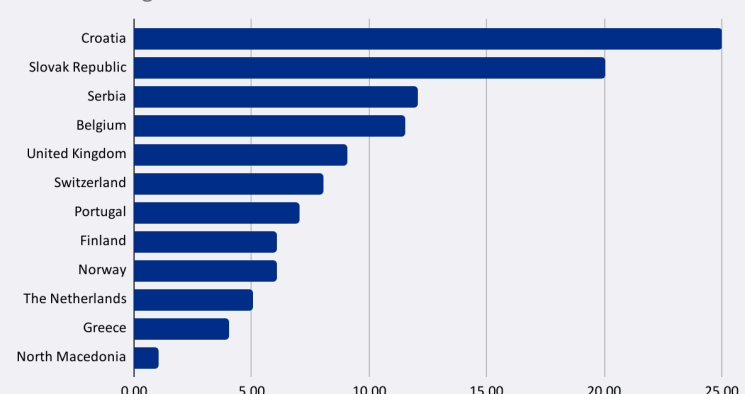
Standalone Vs. Adjacent Training Events



On these events, we  
aggregated a total of

**115**  
training hours.

Total Training Hours



# Together as One

Rule of Law Education is united in impact through  
**international coordination.**

Let's look at the strides we achieved this year.

## International Training Conference

Previously named “The Train The Facilitators Conference”, this year saw the 3rd ROLE Training Conference take place – now rebranded and less cumbersome to pronounce in the first place. The Conference is the central international capacity-building event for the ELSA Network to learn about the rule of law, ROLE and the Curriculum, and undergo extensive interactive training, with simulations, on how to apply non-formal education for the successful delivery of ROLE sessions.

But not only that – thanks to the support of the **European Youth Foundation**, the Conference is **ELSA’s single most financially accessible event**. This means that participants on this Conference truly know no borders, and are admitted and trained purely based on their ambition, will to learn and interest in promoting the rule of law, leadership, equality and diversity.

This year, the Conference’s organisation was made even more sustainable, with youth-led organisations and smaller companies providing venues, hotels and meals instead of international mega-corporations. Thanks to these practices and sound financial management, we were able to:

- Provide **full reimbursement** of **all** travel and public transport costs to **all participants**, as opposed to only 150€ per person in the last two editions.
- Extend the Conference’s duration for a **full day**, allowing us to add a lot more training sessions, expanding our training on non-formal education, ROLE’s history and project management.
- Finalise the Conference with a **more positive budget realisation** than the last two.
- Establish relationships with some of the service providers for future business.

Apart from its logistic improvements and the primary capacity-building purpose it’s intended for, the Conference serves another crucial end: it provides a very accessible networking opportunity for all those interested in education on the rule of law. Its famous relaxed atmosphere contributes to inclusion and diversity on a high level, connecting ELSA members from all across Europe.

On the page below is an overview of some of this year’s Conference’s most important stats: duration, total training and simulation duration, total participants and their profiles, as well as some photos from the event itself.

**4**

23/24



**5**

24/25  
Days

**13**

Training  
Sessions

**35**

Participants

**17**

Countries  
Participating

**18**

Simulation  
Sessions



## EYF Grant & Subgranting System

For all three of its editions, the ROLE Training Conference has been organised through co-funding by a grant from the European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe, which this year amounted to 25,000€ in co-financing. This has made the project possible at all and greatly helped proliferate ROLE into what it is today.

This year, we realised that we have been underutilising the financial support provided by the grant. Although such thing has never been done before in ELSA, we have identified that the EYF grant can be used not only to fund ELSA International's activities, but also to support the Network through an all-new **subgranting system**.

When you think about it, it makes a lot of sense – a central application lodged for a total sum, to then be distributed internally based on subgrant application quality, budget quality, need for financial support and more, all in a transparent and fair way. This would push ROLE even further into the extreme of being the single most accessible project of ELSA: not only would the central Conference be free to attend and the expenses reimbursed, not only would it be possible to start organising ROLE at a low scale with little to no money – now, it would be possible to truly leverage ROLE's impact to the maximum in every country, every jurisdiction.

ROLE would no longer be bound by the financial situation of the country where it's taking place, or rely on extensive fundraising of the ELSA Group organising it to achieve scale.

And – we've done it. Perfectly. A total grant application of **60,000€** has been **approved in full** by the EYF, and at the time of writing this Report, a subgrant application call is open for all interested organisers. More than half of the total granted amount will be distributed to organisers, and its implementation and reporting carefully tracked, ensuring wide adoption and rapid growth, unbound by traditional limitations.

Going forward, no ELSA Group will have to expend its own valuable resources for the organisation of ROLE at the desired impact and complexity – an opportunity that no ELSA Officer remembers to have ever existed before.

Even the smallest ELSA Groups will be able to take ROLE to the next level, and ROLE will be the one profiling competent organisers, giving them extensive development and networking opportunities, despite a potentially unfavourable background.

## Project Popularisation & Education

At this term's start, ROLE was still branded and promoted by ELSA International, and thus seen by most of our Network, as a "new initiative" in ELSA, despite having existed for five years, and despite already having covered a significant part of Europe through a coordination system at a higher level than all other projects of its department. Thus, we sought to educate on the project and profile it to organisers for what it is: a truly flexible powerhouse of social impact opportunity.

We have conducted many online and in-person workshops to popularise the project in various different formats and varying content. Although some workshops were delivered on ROLE in the past, their volume has risen by approximately **200%** this year. Wherever ELSA International was, so was ROLE, in greatly increased capacity.

Firstly, of course, the (now rebranded) ROLE International **Training Conference** served as a primary vessel, co-funded by the European Youth Foundation, to provide in-depth education on the project to all interested organisers, accessible to everyone.

When it comes to other **live events**, we delivered workshops on ROLE at both International Council Meetings of the year in Antalya and Malta, the Nordic Officers' Meeting in Oslo, on many National Council Meetings (in the Czech Republic, Croatia, Greece and Serbia), as well as on the ELSA Alumni Annual Meeting in Bucharest. These workshops were largely interactive and modelled after the Training Conference to convey knowledge about ROLE through its main language: non-formal education.

ROLE also had a great presence **online**, in written and audiovisual form. We intensified social media posts on ROLE, promoting the project and educating on the Rule of Law. We created a new project webpage (see below) aligned with the new branding and useful links and information. Through Open Calls for the ELSA Network, constant coaching calls with organisers, as well as at the International Training Meeting online, a lot of information on ROLE was explained repeatedly and accessibly to all organisers who dared to listen.

Bucharest, Alumni Annual Meeting



Malta, LXXXVII ICM





## Knowledge & Curriculums

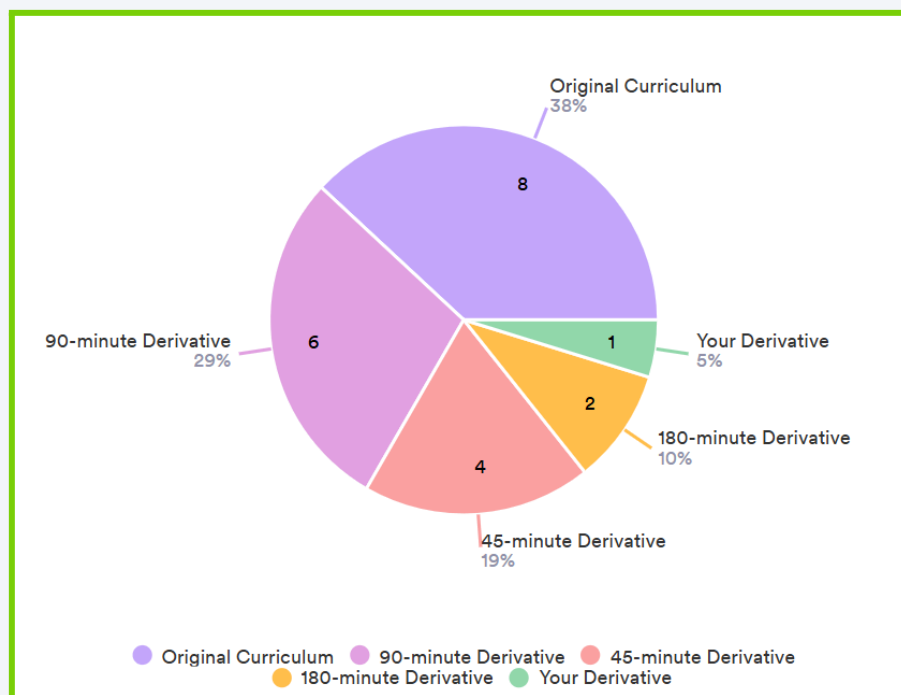
The ROLE Curriculum was developed by ELSA Alumni and is intended to be highly adaptable to the local context of the ELSA Group implementing it. Its main power was always meant to be a clear and familiar demonstration of the importance of Rule of Law principles, not only in a government, but on all levels of any society.

At this term's start, we have found that some organisers had a misconception: many were reluctant to create their own Derivatives of the ROLE Curriculum, fearing sanctions that do not, and have never existed. Thus, we fought to make it crystal clear and understandable to everyone that the Curriculum is a living tool.

Through many live and online workshops on this topic, tasking dedicated Coaches preaching this message and creating new written materials, including new [Localisation Guidelines](#) as well as a dedicated page with a [Curriculum Derivative Database](#), we have made significant improvements in this field.

Apart from the original Curriculum, the most widely used Derivative this year has been the 90-Minute Derivative, created by ELSA Croatia in 2023, standardised and translated for wider use by ELSA International.

This is reflected not only by the sheer number of organisers who now see how much flexibility they have to tackle relevant legal topics, but also by the number of different Derivatives used, as seen below.



## ROLE Brand

ROLE has been promoted with different visual identities in the past, all of them informal and unregulated. We believed that the first sign of a strong project identity is a stable brand image that corresponds to the project's values. Thus, this year saw the rise of the new ROLE brand: playful and informal with the bright, thin greens, grounded in law, equality and justice for all with the deep, transparent and overlapping blues.

Below is an overview and some examples of the new ROLE Brand.



**ROLE** Rule of Law  
Education

**FONT**  
Poppins (all weights)

**COLOURS**

 RGB: 13 40 171 CMYK: 97 76 0 0 HEX: #052986	 RGB: 56 49 235 CMYK: 95 71 0 0 HEX: #363567	 RGB: 58 119 234 CMYK: 78 54 0 0 HEX: #3a77ba
 RGB: 243 245 249 CMYK: 6 3 2 0 HEX: #f5f5f9	 RGB: 4 20 57 CMYK: 100 91 45 58 HEX: #051a39	 RGB: 121 207 7 CMYK: 58 0 100 0 HEX: #79a107

**KEY SELLING POINTS**

1. Rule of law knowledge for youth
2. Non-formal education & facilitation
3. Teaching legal literacy & social responsibility

**ELEMENTS**

1. Overlapping irregular circular shapes
2. Thin green lines

**TIMELINE**

1. **General Promotion** - Throughout the year

ELSA Brandbook | 29



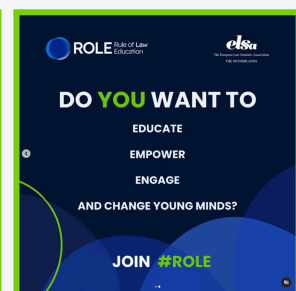
ELSA Slovak Republic



ELSA Norway



ELSA Portugal



ELSA The Netherlands



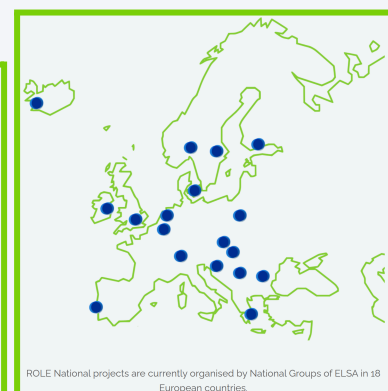
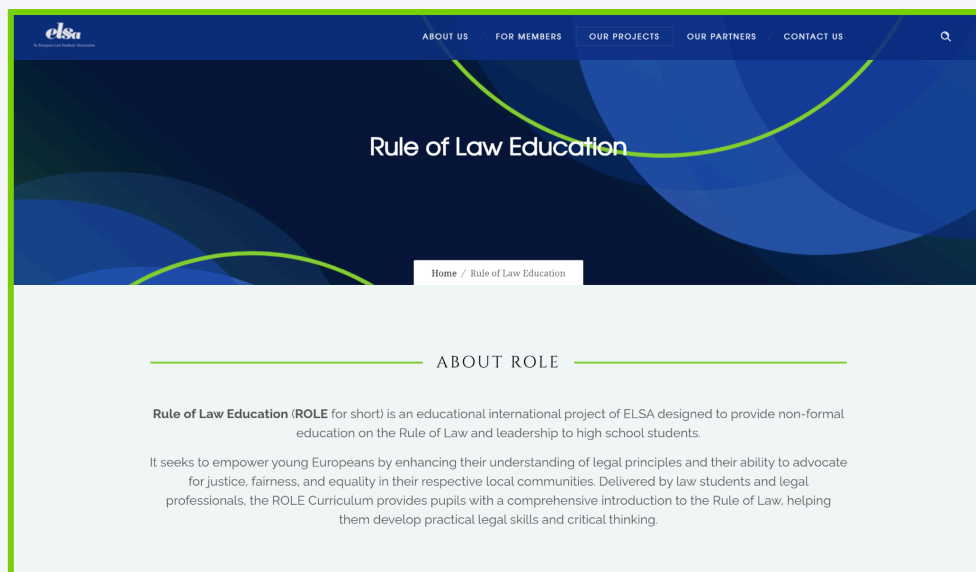
## New Webpage

This year, ROLE also saw its webpage rehauled. It was rebuilt from scratch to reflect the current state, components, partners, participating countries and more. It is available at:

**[elsa.org/ruleoflaw](https://elsa.org/ruleoflaw)**

It now also includes a Curriculum database available to ELSA Officers, which should serve them to more easily review all of the different Derivatives currently available.

The webpage is intended to give any visitor a brief yet comprehensive overview and understanding of the project. It will be updated accordingly, soon to migrate to its own full website to include more information, interaction links and more. Screenshots below.



## Rule of Law Advocacy

Although already a powerhouse for advocacy and social responsibility, as it impacts hundreds of law students and thousands of high schoolers, as part of a wider push across ELSA's international projects, this year we sought to #ActToImpact by sharing some of the core messages from our projects over the internet, in permanent format on social media. This way, we made the core message of the projects available to anyone who clicks on our socials, not only to those who organise or participate in the project physically.

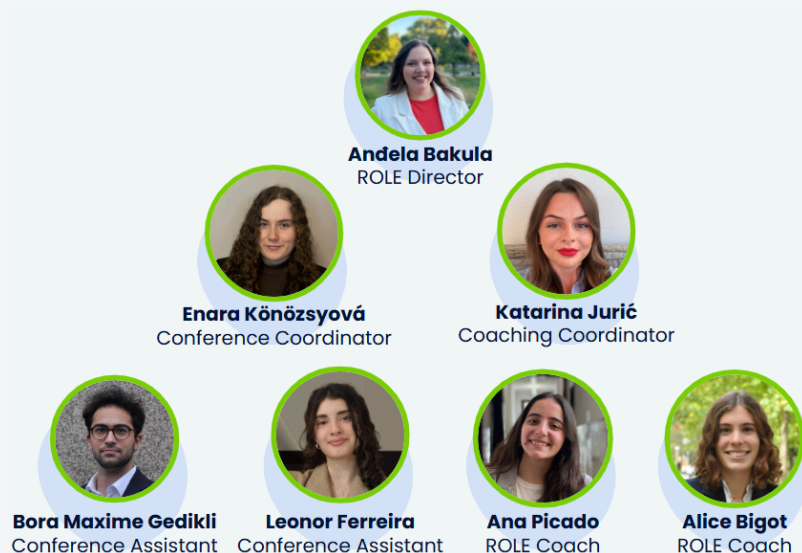
What this additional approach lacks in depth and interactivity, it makes up for in sheer reach. Even passively, our posts about the Rule of Law and some of its components have reached tens of thousands of viewers, raising their awareness on the issue, and potentially interesting them in ROLE in the far or near future. Here are some examples of the advocacy we pushed through ROLE this term.



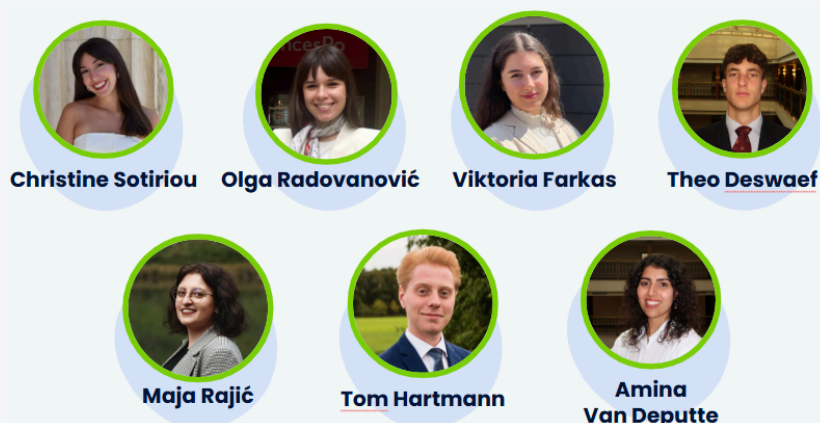
## ROLE International Team

While an internal matter, the ROLE International Team makes the core circle that supports the International Board in making the project possible. Due to the project's growing complexity, this year saw the introduction of a three-step advanced work division to optimise tasks, as opposed to the standard two-step arrangement. This is a rarity among the projects of ELSA in general, as they usually only require a two-step team.

However, given the very diverse swath of task groups that need to be completed by ELSA International for ROLE to prosper, a division like this suits it. While the Coaching side of the team focused on facilitating knowledge transfer and National ROLE Projects, the Conference side ensured consistent planning, organisation and reporting on the Training Conference as a central event. However, as ROLE must be integrated into one synchronous whole, so does the ROLE team. They had to meet often altogether, and undertake tasks together during the highest pressure points of the year. The whole team was connected through the central person in charge, a ROLE Director.



Since the international Training Conference is an extensive and intense event on its own, in order for not only the logistics but all the training sessions to go according to plan, an additional team of 7 (shown below) joined the ROLE Team and the International Board and helped make it all happen.



## Project Regulation & Definitions

We believed it was important that we not only preach about the project, but also enforce certain definitions and minimums of quality in our international regulations. This ensures slow but steady progress and continuity, as our regulations are often reviewed and taken by organisers as the only set of obligations they must obey.

Below is first the old regulatory framework for ROLE, and then the new one, clearly demonstrating advancement in the general perception of the project, necessary for its further growth and development.

### Article 1. Definition

1.1 The Rule of Law Education Programme shall contribute to Europe's youth education and empowerment by letting law students and young lawyers provide youth with rule of law-oriented, non-formal education.

1.2 The Rule of Law Education Programme shall be implemented through Rule of Law Education projects organised by National Groups.

### Article 1. Definition

1.1 Rule of Law Education is an international project of ELSA, consisting of

- the Training Conference, organised by ELSA International and
- National Projects, organised by National Groups and coordinated by ELSA International which fulfil the requirements regulated in this Chapter.

1.2 Rule of Law Education shall contribute to Europe's youth education and empowerment and emphasise the importance of legal literacy and social responsibility.

1.3 The project shall be delivered by law students and young lawyers, and based on non-formal education and the Rule of Law Education Curriculum or its Derivatives, as created by:

- ELSA International, or
- National Groups under the supervision of ELSA International.

## Flagship Status Pre-Approval

Flagship Projects of ELSA are well-established projects of key importance, organised and/or coordinated by ELSA International. They are our primary way of interacting with and contributing to the world.

For a project to acquire this status, it must go through extensive reporting to assess how it fares in fulfilling numerous criteria regarding reach, impact, coverage, longevity, continuity and more. And not only that, but after all this reporting, the status is not given automatically – instead it is up to a discretionary vote.

Given ROLE's immense growth in reach and impact, this year we have embarked on this journey of extensive reporting and proposing to add ROLE to the Flagship list – a task never attempted before.

Thus, we prepared a ROLE Flagship Report to accompany this proposal. In it, we outlined and stressed how ROLE fulfilled all the required criteria, and went beyond – and should thus be approved for this status. You can access the document by clicking on the preview.



The status was approved once by the Council. Although adding ROLE to the Flagship list will require another vote, we are certain that the next report will be even more overachieving, and this status will finally be acquired.



**Niko Anzulović Mirošević**  
VP Academic Activities

[academicactivities@elsa.org](mailto:academicactivities@elsa.org)



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