

Dear Sir/Madam,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am addressing you concerning the upcoming **5th edition** of the European Human Rights Moot Court Competition organised by **the European Law Students' Association (ELSA)** in cooperation with the Council of Europe.

The competition is **the only of its kind in English**: a Europe-wide moot court competition on the European Convention on Human Rights with its Final Round in the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

We would like to invite you and your students to be a part of this competition. The European Human Rights Moot Court Competition works as a unique contribution to your university curricula in helping students understand the principles and implementation of Human Rights. Furthermore, through the Competition students gain practical experience comparable to **pleading a real case** in the European Court of Human Rights itself.

What is ELSA?

The European Law Students' Association is the world's largest independent, non-profit, non-political association run by and for law students and young lawyers. ELSA comprises a membership of 43,000 students and recent graduates, who are interested in law and have demonstrated commitment to international issues. ELSA operates primarily through its Local Groups, which are located at more than **300 law faculties** throughout **43 countries** in Europe.

The ELSA Vision is: *"A just world in which there is respect for human dignity and cultural diversity"*. Contributing to legal education and promoting Human Rights awareness are among the central aims of our association. Through various academically focused projects and events ELSA provides opportunities for law students and young lawyers to apply theory in practice and to learn about other legal systems. For more information on ELSA, please visit www.elsa.org.

About the European Human Rights Moot Court Competition

The competition will simulate the procedure of complaints to the European Court of Human Rights: teams will examine a fictive case and prepare written submissions for each party. The teams will be evaluated based on their written submissions and the best 20 teams will compete in the European Final at the European Court of Human Rights.

ELSA has long-standing experience in organising moot court competitions on national and international level. An example worth noting is the ELSA Moot Court Competition on WTO Law (EMC2), which is organised since 14 years now.

Through the European Human Rights Moot Court Competition ELSA wishes to extend the tradition of mootings and to answer to the need for an English language moot court competition on Human Rights **voiced by students** across Europe.

ELSA wishes to enable law students to deepen their understanding of law and practice their skills outside of the lecture halls of their universities and in an international environment. Participation in a competition such as the Human Rights Moot Court will help them **build a professional profile** already during their studies and prove their skills immediately upon entering professional life. Your university will benefit by building a reputation of educating law students, who are more prepared than others for the challenges of legal practice.

University Involvement

Law faculties in increasing numbers recognise the importance of understanding not only the role of Human Rights in modern legal practice but also of **applying Human Rights regulations** such as the European Convention on Human Rights correctly. The best way for law students to learn how to apply the Convention is to research the articles and their application in a team and plead a case themselves. The experience gained through such a practice-oriented activity will contribute to the presentation, legal argumentation and teamwork skills of students regardless field of law they specialise in during their career.

Universities can promote the competition to students and support their participation for example by accrediting participants with ECTS credits, by coaching their team or by helping the team fundraise for their travel to the Final. With faculty involvement your University can ensure that your students have access to the best and most effective means of learning about Human Rights – an area of law which is more and more relevant in all fields of legal practice. Furthermore, your university can go beyond teaching law by encouraging your students to develop their soft skills – qualities, which students cannot learn from textbooks.

The trend concerning the functioning of the European Human Rights system is to increase the role of national courts in these matters and to reduce the case burden of the European Court of Human Rights. As a consequence, Council of Europe member states will need lawyers with a strong command of the European Convention on Human Rights and its implementation on national level. As a major actor in legal life in your country, this is a prime opportunity to contribute to the realisation of a project with a **significant impact on the way future lawyers** understand and apply the European Convention on Human Rights.

How Your Students Can Participate

A team consists of **2-4 participants**, who are enrolled in a University or law faculty accredited under National Law and awards a degree that permits its graduates to enter any legal profession.

The case for the 5th edition of the Competition is published on the **04th of August 2016** and teams can register from then on until the **06rd of November 2016**.

I hope that you'll find this Moot Court Competition interesting and consider the opportunity to take part in it. Should you have any questions or in case you wish to ensure your students involvement in the competition, you can reach me at mootcourts@elsa.org.

I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Christine Beck

Vice President for Moot Court Competitions

ELSA International 2016/2017