

# ELSA & Council of Europe

Cooperation guidelines  
2012/2013



The European Law Students' Association



The European Law Students' Association



Council of Europe

Conseil de l'Europe



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## Introduction

### **Dear ELSA Network,**

ELSA and the Council of Europe have had a successful cooperation especially since 2008 by signing the Human Rights partnership agreement.

After 6 years of cooperation in diverse domains and 3 years after the first version of the Guidelines of Cooperation of ELSA and the Council of Europe, the time has finally come to update this document and to give it back to our network.

This brief guide aims at providing information on how the local and national groups can benefit from the cooperation established between ELSA International and the CoE. As CoE is the Human Right partner of ELSA International, it is important that you use the advantages connected to this cooperation in order for it to be successful also in the future and for a long term. You will find a list of different possibilities to cooperate with the CoE.

If you have more questions concerning the Council of Europe and the cooperation with ELSA, please do not hesitate to contact ELSA International for further information. You can reach the International Board of ELSA at [elsa@elsa.org](mailto:elsa@elsa.org).

We wish a successful development of cooperation with the Council of Europe!

**Bartosz, Anette, Alpo, Anders, Dena, Federica, Vasco and Corinna**

ELSA International 2012/2013

## What is the Council of Europe?

The Council of Europe occupies a unique place on the international political stage and is the oldest international organisation dedicated to fostering co-operation in Europe. It does this through the protection and promotion of human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

Since its creation, the Council of Europe has successfully evolved in the pursuit of its goals. It has responded to major changes in Europe's political and social landscape and to the emergence of new threats to the human rights of the European population.

The Council was one of the first international institutions to open its doors to Eastern European countries following the fall of the Berlin Wall and it has introduced new treaties to tackle modern issues such as cybercrime, healthcare crime, international terrorism and trafficking in human beings.

Today, the role of the Council of Europe is more important than ever as it works to safeguard the fundamental rights and freedoms of the hundreds of millions of citizens in its 47 member states.

Its efforts to promote social cohesion, cultural diversity and democratic citizenship, to combat racism and intolerance, to promote intercultural dialogue and to find common solutions to major problems play a crucial part in helping to form a stable, functional and cohesive Europe.

The best known bodies of the Council of Europe are the European Court of Human Rights, which enforces the European Convention on Human Rights, and the European Pharmacopoeia Commission, which sets the quality standards for pharmaceutical products in Europe. The Council of Europe's work has resulted in standards, charters and conventions to facilitate cooperation between European countries.

Its statutory institutions are the Committee of Ministers comprising the foreign ministers of each member state, the Parliamentary Assembly composed of MPs from the parliament of each member state, and the Secretary General heading the secretariat of the Council of Europe. The Commissioner for Human Rights is an independent institution within the Council of Europe, mandated to promote awareness of and respect for human rights in the member states.

The headquarters of the Council of Europe are in Strasbourg, France, with English and French as its two official languages. The Committee of Ministers, the Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress also use German, Italian, and Russian for some of their work.



## Council of Europe and Human Rights

The protection and promotion of human rights lies at the heart of the Council of Europe and has been a fundamental focus since its inception. The main foundation on which its work is based is the European Convention on Human Rights.

The Convention was established in 1950 and guarantees the right to life, liberty, security, a fair trial, family life and freedom of thought, conscience, religion and expression.

With ratification, a condition of membership of the Council, the Convention has become a pan-European human rights protection system that symbolises not only its status as a unique and powerful propagator of civilised values and democratic growth, but also of the organisation's goal of common standards.

## Cooperation between ELSA and the Council of Europe

Since 2000 ELSA has a participatory status with the Council of Europe. The non-governmental organisations (NGO) with a participatory status form the Conference of INGOs that meets in Strasbourg four times a year. ELSA has the right to attend the sessions of the Conference of INGOs and to participate in the work of its committees and transversal groups.

Since 2008 the Council of Europe is the Human Rights partner of ELSA International. Therefore, the Council of Europe supports ELSA in many different ways. Human Rights education is one of the focuses of ELSA. During the International Council Meeting in 1998 in Rome the Council decided upon a „Special Commitment to Human Rights“:

“Human Rights are the main treasure and value of mankind. Therefore, the implementation of Human Rights is an objective of the Network. ELSA shall be continuously committed to Human Rights awareness, Human Rights education and the respect of the rule of law. ELSA shall strive to be recognised for a strictly legal, academic and impartial approach to Human Rights.”

During several years of cooperation, ELSA has been involved in different initiatives promoted by the Council of Europe. The most significant examples are:

- The Essay and Photo Competition “Our Rights, Our Freedoms”, organised on the occasion of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the European Convention on Human Rights

- The ELSA for Children Legal Research Group, as part of the Council of Europe campaign to stop sexual violence against children (One in Five)
- The European Human Rights Moot Court Competition, first English European wide human rights moot court
- The Essay Competition “Online Hate Speech: right or crime”, as part of the Council of Europe campaign of European youth against online hate speech

ELSA and the Council of Europe have commonness: they are both committed to Human Rights and to the respect of the rule of law. Therefore, ELSA and the Council of Europe are perfect partners.

## Patron of ELSA

### **Mr Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General of Council of Europe**

Mr Thorbjørn Jagland is the 13th Secretary General of the Council of Europe. The Secretary General has the overall responsibility for the strategic management of the Organisation. Mr Jagland was elected in September 2009.

The former Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Norway, Thorbjørn Jagland, aged 62, was also the President of the Storting (Norwegian Parliament) and the leader of the Norwegian Labour Party. He is currently the Chairman of the Norwegian Nobel Committee, which awards the Nobel Peace Prize.

He became the Patron of ELSA in February 2013.



*The International Board of ELSA with Mr Thorbjørn Jagland during the Final Round of the European Human Rights Moot Court Competition, February 2013. © Council of Europe*

## The European Human Rights Moot Court Competition

In order to provide law students with an opportunity to gain practical experience in the field, ELSA organises a Europe-wide moot court competition on the European Convention on Human Rights in cooperation with the Council of Europe. The competition simulates the procedure of complaints to the European Court of Human Rights: The teams examine a fictive case and draft written submissions for each party. The teams are evaluated based on their written admissions and the best 16 teams compete in the European Final at the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

The first edition of the EHRMCC took place in 2012/2013 and the Finals in Strasbourg from the 24th to the 28th of February 2013.

The European Human Rights Moot Court Competition works as a unique contribution to university curricula in helping students understand the principles and implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights. Furthermore, through the competition students gain practical experience that can only be paralleled by pleading a real case in the European Court of Human Rights itself.

ELSA has long-standing experience in organising moot court competitions on national and international level. Through the European Human Rights Moot Court Competition ELSA wishes to extend the tradition of mooting and to answer to the need for an English language moot court competition on Human Rights voiced by students across Europe.

For further information regarding this outstanding competition please contact the VP Moot Court Competitions at [mootcourts@elsa.org](mailto:mootcourts@elsa.org) and check the website <http://www.humanrightsmootcourt.org>



## Benefit from the cooperation with Council of Europe

There are several possibilities to benefit from the cooperation between ELSA and the Council of Europe. For our Network it is important to use the different possibilities in order to reinforce our cooperation with the Council of Europe, not only at the international level but also in the 41 ELSA member groups. Furthermore, for ELSA International it is very important to know about the direct cooperation of the different local and national groups with the Council of Europe. That is why you should always be in contact with the Vice President Academic Activities of ELSA International before contacting the Council of Europe. You can reach the VPAA of ELSA International by using the mail address **vpaa@elsa.org**.

### **Apply for speakers from the Council of Europe including European Court of Human Rights**

If you are organising a large Human Rights' event, whether it is a law school, a seminar, a conference or even a moot court, you have the possibility to apply for speakers from different departments of the Council of Europe including judges from the ECHR.

Write an email with your request to **vpaa@elsa.org** and the VP AA of ELSA International will help you in getting a speaker. The following information should be provided in your request: the details of the event, the approximate number of participants, the topic of the speech to be delivered and the date, time and length of the speech. If you wish information material to be sent, you should provide your full postal address including your phone number.

When planning an event with such speakers, you have to keep in mind that the travel costs and the accommodation of the speaker have to be covered from your budget. If you want to invite a speaker and your budget is too small to cover (app. 300 – 400 € if you book the flight early + accommodation), please do not forget about the ELSA Development Foundation (EDF) where you can apply for a grant. Please contact the treasurer of your National Group or ELSA International for further information.

### **Get materials from the Council of Europe upon request**

The Council of Europe can also provide general information material presented online at:

<http://www.coe.int/aboutCoe/index.asp?page=pourPlusDinformations&l=en> , specific material reflecting the CoE's activities and a wide variety of marking products.



There are also many different campaigns organised by the Council of Europe. For information concerning the current campaigns of the Council of Europe, please check: <http://hub.coe.int/web/coe-portal/campaigns>

The on-going campaigns of the Council of Europe are the following:

1. One in five: campaign to stop sexual violence against children, <http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/children/1in5/>
2. Building a Europe for and with children, <http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/children/>
3. Dosta! Fight prejudice towards Roma
4. European Youth Against Online Hate Speech

The organisation of ELSA events within the topics of the campaigns of the Council of Europe facilitates the access to relevant materials concerning the addressed topics. The materials that are available consist of informative and visibility materials, including marketing products.

The request of materials must be addressed to the VP AA of ELSA International at [vpaa@elsa.org](mailto:vpaa@elsa.org), including information about the topic, dates and number of participants of the event. Information concerning the organizer, including name, postal address and phone number is also requested. Note that the request shall always be sent well ahead.

### **Possibility to get a patronage**

You can ask the Council of Europe to grant a patronage for one of your events. The event should be international and with participants from at least **five** different countries. The Council of Europe is eager to grant a patronage for ELSA events, and that makes it much easier for you to find further partners for the event. Also marketing is more successful with the logo of the Council of Europe in your materials. However, please notice that you will not be entitled to use this logo until you receive the patronage.

You can find the patronage form through the following link: [http://www.coe.int/form/patronage/default\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/form/patronage/default_en.asp). Please remember to contact the VP AA of ELSA International before sending in the patronage form. Since the Council of Europe is an international institution, ELSA Groups are not entitled to contact it directly without previous approval of ELSA International.

### **Promotion of an event by the Council of Europe**

If you are organising an event related to one of the topics the Council of Europe is focusing on in their campaigns, there is even the possibility that Council of Europe promotes your event on their webpage or in some other

marketing materials. However, this should clearly consist of a common project/event with the Council of Europe.

### **Special guided tour for an Institutional Study Visit in Strasbourg**

When you are organising an Institutional Study Visit to Strasbourg, the Council of Europe and the European Court of Human Rights are definitely places that you can't miss. You can find information on visiting the Council of Europe through the following link: <http://www.coe.int/aboutcoe/index.asp?page=quiSommesNous&sp=visitCoe#b> The sessions of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) are special indicated times for study visits (they take place 4 times a year).

Information on visiting the European Court of Human Rights can be found here:

<http://www.echr.coe.int/ECHR/EN/Header/Visitors/Information+for+visiting+groups/How+to+request+a+visit/#visit>. Please remember to contact the VP Seminars & Conferences of ELSA International in [vpssc@elsa.org](mailto:vpssc@elsa.org) before sending in the requests.

In addition to the regular visits, there is a possibility to arrange a special guided tour or a lecture for ELSA members. Please inform ELSA International as soon as possible, but at least 10 weeks before you are planning to visit Strasbourg to arrange such a special guided tour.

### **Cheaper accommodation in Strasbourg (for groups that are making a study visit)**

It is not always so easy to find accommodation in Strasbourg, and normally you will have to pay about 40 € for one night per person. Through the Council of Europe you have the great opportunity to get cheap accommodation in the guesthouse of the European Youth Centre of the Council of Europe. You can even ask them to lower the price for your group (see the 2013 Price List below). Please inform ELSA International as soon as possible about the date when you plan to visit Strasbourg.

#### European Youth Centre Strasbourg contact:

European Youth Centre Strasbourg 30, Rue Pierre de Coubertin - 67000 Strasbourg Tél. : +33 388412300 Fax : +33 388412777 e-mail : [reception.eycs@coe.int](mailto:reception.eycs@coe.int)

#### European Youth Centre Strasbourg – Pricelist 2013:

[http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/eyc/Holding\\_activity\\_2013\\_en.asp#TopOfPage](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/eyc/Holding_activity_2013_en.asp#TopOfPage)