

ANNUAL HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN OUTLINE 2023/2024

CORRUPTION AND HUMAN RIGHTS



elsa

The European Law Students' Association

1. What is the Annual Human Rights Campaign (AHRC)?

Every year, the ELSA Network orchestrates a Human Rights Campaign, aiming to enhance awareness about the significance of safeguarding human rights and providing a platform for the voices of law students and young lawyers throughout Europe. **The Annual Human Rights Campaign** sees the entire ELSA Network, spanning 43 countries and over 350 local groups, collaborating to create a unique human rights forum. In this forum, our members have the opportunity to engage in discussions concerning both national and international standards for the protection and implementation of human rights. The **AHRC** unfolds over the course of the academic year. In the term **2022/2023**, ELSA focused on an information campaign related to International Humanitarian Law. In the term **2023/2024**, the Annual Human Rights Campaign will shift its focus to **Corruption and Human Rights**.

2. What is ELSA Day?

ELSA Day constitutes a part of the Annual Human Rights Campaign and was first introduced to the ELSA Network in 2012. It takes place on the last Wednesday of November, which falls on 29 November 2023. The aim of the ELSA Day is to jointly demonstrate our Human Rights commitment by providing legal education and opportunities that enable law students to be independent and critical members of society. The event is also dedicated to raising awareness of human dignity and cultural diversity. Its structure unifies the Network and has hosted more than 1,000 ELSA Day events throughout the previous ten editions. Make sure to use **#ELSADay** and **#alldifferentaltogether** when sharing the news regarding your ELSA Day event in order to achieve efficient joint promotion.

As said by Federica Toscano, the Vice President in charge of Seminars and Conferences of ELSA International 2012/2013 and the founder of ELSA Day:

A culture of sharing and understanding shall not halt at some political borders, but should go beyond these frontiers: human dignity is not connected with a certain passport or the place where we are born. Let us ensure then that we move the discussions from the constraints of national borders and unite them under the ELSA Day.

3. How is the Annual Human Rights Campaign (AHRC) organised?

Each National Group appoints a National Coordinator, who is in charge of encouraging and supporting the Local Groups in organising events, passing on information from international to national and local level, reminding and helping the Local Groups in filling in the Specification and Evaluation Forms. ELSA International is in charge of guiding the network through the National Coordinators by creating guidelines and unified marketing materials.

4. Topic of the AHRC and the 12th ELSA Day: Corruption and Human Rights

The general topic of the Annual Human Rights Campaign and ELSA Day is **Human Rights** and any event on this topic will be appreciated. However, as the field of human rights is very diverse, the Campaign focuses on a more specific topic each year. This year's focus will be on **Corruption and Human Rights**.

The United Nations does not provide a single, standalone definition for "corruption and human rights". However, the United Nations has addressed the relationship between corruption and human rights in various documents and publications. **The United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC)** is a key instrument that addresses corruption, and it recognizes the impact of corruption on human rights.

Corruption refers to the abuse of entrusted power or authority for personal gain or to benefit a group, often involving dishonest or illegal activities such as bribery, embezzlement, nepotism, or favoritism. It undermines the fairness and integrity of institutions, diminishes public trust, and can have wide-ranging negative effects on society, including economic, political, and social consequences.

The intersection of corruption and human rights occurs when corrupt practices infringe upon or violate these fundamental human rights, such as when bribery impedes access to basic services like healthcare or education, or when corruption undermines the impartiality of the judicial system, depriving individuals of their right to a fair trial.

The following domains provide a starting point for in-depth research and analysis of the complex relationship between corruption and human rights:

Bribery and Access to Services: Investigating how bribery can impede access to essential services like healthcare, education, and justice.

Corruption in the Judicial System: Examining the impact of corruption on the fairness and integrity of legal systems, including issues related to judicial independence and fairness of trials.

Economic and Social Rights: Analyzing how corruption affects economic and social rights, such as the right to work, housing, and a decent standard of living

Transparency and Accountability: Exploring the role of transparency, accountability, and anti-corruption measures in safeguarding human rights.

Freedom of Expression: Investigating how corruption can hinder freedom of expression, particularly in media and journalism.

Discrimination and Inequality: Assessing how corruption contributes to discrimination and inequality in society, including issues of social and economic disparities.

Whistleblower Protection: Examining the importance of whistleblower protection in exposing corruption and promoting human rights.

International Agreements and Frameworks: Analyzing international agreements and frameworks that address the intersection of corruption and human rights, such as the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC).

Civil Society and Advocacy: Studying the role of civil society organizations and advocacy in combating corruption and promoting human rights.

4. Relevant institutions

Below you will find **crucial institutions** and **organizations** that play a pivotal role in addressing the intersection of corruption and human rights. These institutions work to establish international norms, monitor compliance, and implement measures aimed at combating corruption while safeguarding fundamental human rights worldwide.

- **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC):** [UNODC](#) is responsible for promoting international cooperation in combating corruption, including efforts to align anti-corruption measures with the protection of human rights.
- **GRECO (Group of States against Corruption):** [GRECO](#) is an intergovernmental organization within the Council of Europe dedicated to promoting and assessing anti-corruption measures among its member states. It conducts evaluations, provides recommendations, and facilitates

cooperation to strengthen the legal and institutional frameworks aimed at preventing and combatting corruption in Europe.

- **Transparency International:** [TI](#) is an influential non-governmental organization (NGO) that focuses on addressing corruption globally, advocating for transparency, and fostering accountability in both public and private sectors to protect human rights.

5. Non-political vs. advocating for human rights

As you may know, ELSA was founded as an association that is characterised by a **non-political status**, aiming to bridge law students and young lawyers throughout Europe despite political circumstances. This entails that ELSA's purpose is not to approach topics from a political perspective. Therefore, ELSA cannot serve as a stage for political discourse. The non-political nature does not detract from ELSA's purpose of promoting social responsibility on topics such as human rights. In that sense, the non-political character poses no problem to AHRC events that advocate for human rights.

6. Target audience

The need for Corruption and Human Rights and the purpose of raising awareness on this topic are uncontested. It is important, however, to consider amongst what target audience you wish to raise awareness on this topic. Try to clarify whether your events have a **quantitative impact or qualitative impact**. *Quantitative* impact means that your event reaches persons that were not familiarised with the topic yet. *Qualitative* events focus on core discussions and dilemmas that require prior knowledge and interest amongst a more select target audience (such as humanitarian law students). The latter allows for more concrete output, such as a policy paper, for example.

7. Which board member is in charge?

In principle, the Vice President in charge of Academic Activities is in charge and takes the initiative for events that fall in the Annual Human Rights Campaign. It is recommended to National Vice Presidents for Academic Activities to appoint an Officer that is dedicated to coordinating and/or organising AHRC events

throughout the National Network. The fact that the AHRC and ELSA Day fall under the responsibility of the Academic Activities Officer, do not exclude that other Officers (such as the VP PD or VP S&C) organise events that fall under the AHRC. Consider organising a Multi-Area Project (MAP), where lectures, visits and research can be combined, for example.

8. What events could be organised?

Legal debates can be organised on a local level. In order to make an impact on society, remember to advertise the debate among non-lawyers as well. However, always bear in mind the non-political status of ELSA.

Institutional visits (S&C) or “**Lawyers at work**” (PD) are another key event for this topic, where ELSA members will have the opportunity to get in touch with experts and lawyers and acquire practical knowledge on the topic at hand.

Essay Competitions are another impactful project that can be organised; Finding a sub-topic on Corruption and Human Rights and giving the opportunity to law students and young lawyers to express their ideas, insights, and creativity.

The National Groups can conduct **surveys** via questionnaires prior to the ELSA Day on what people think about Corruption and Human rights, how familiar they are with these issues.

To focus on the qualitative aspect of Corruption and Human Rights, **input papers, Legal Research Groups, ELSA Webinars** can be useful. They allow for students to dive into the topic and to find a use for their results afterwards.

8. Specification Form and Council of Europe Materials

During each AHRC, the Council of Europe (CoE) chooses the 40 most impactful, relevant and creative national or local initiatives. The CoE sends promotion materials to the organisers to contribute to the promotion of the initiatives. The exact content includes pens, notebooks, calendars, information brochures, etc. As it takes some time to pack and ship materials, we operate with deadlines (see the timeline at the bottom). When the idea of your event is hatched, please fill in the Event Specification Form that will be sent out in the following week. ELSA International will forward your event to the Council and save your form for the Competition and Report.

9. Evaluation Form and AHRC Competition

In order to develop our association and improve our activities, we need to evaluate our achievements. Furthermore, an Annual Human Rights Competition will be held, which differs from the competition for the visibility Materials from the Council of Europe. The best AHRC initiative will be chosen and celebrated during the Spring ICM in 2024 in Thessaloniki. The prize will be eternal honour and glory – together with an object you proudly can bring back to your ELSA office. This year, we are more than happy to announce that we will also offer a study visit to the Council of Europe for the winning National Group.

10. Partaking in the AHRC Competition

All National and Local Groups that fill in the Specification and Evaluation Forms automatically compete in the Competition.. The Evaluation Form should be filled out at the beginning of March 2024. Keep in mind that your event will not be taken into account for the Competition or final statistics in the Report if there is no Evaluation Form.

Upon the discretion of ELSA International, the guiding criteria are:

- 1. the required forms must be filled in;**
2. at least one ELSA Day event and one event later in the year must be organised;
3. the topic of the events must be relevant to Corruption and Human Rights;
4. the academic quality of the events;
5. impact on society of the events,
6. the level of creativity; and
7. online and offline visibility of the events.

In order to support your application, you are encouraged to submit materials such as pictures, videos, promotion materials etc. to director.humanrights@elsa.org

10. Timeline

Below you will find the schedule used by the International Board as regards the organisation of the Annual Human Rights Campaign. Please note, however, that the timeline may be subject to small changes due to unforeseen circumstances. Nevertheless, compliance with the deadlines below will ensure a well organised ELSA Day as part of the Annual Human Rights Campaign.

Call for National AHRC Coordinators closes	opening: 5 September 2023 closing: 5 October 2023
International Board appoints National AHRC Coordinators	7 October 2023
Deadline for submitting the AHRC specification forms <ul style="list-style-type: none">- if you wish to compete for CoE visibility materials- if you do not wish to compete for CoE visibility materials	opening: 12 September 2023 closing: 9 October 2023 20 October 2023
ELSA Day and the beginning of the AHRC	29 November 2023 (Last Wednesday of November)
Deadline for submitting the AHRC Evaluation Form	1 March 2024
Award ceremony of the competition	Spring ICM 2024 (Thessaloniki)