

Projects: those who cannot remember the past...

II International Strategy Meeting

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Did you know...

That year after year we always discuss the same problems?

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21st ICM Sofia, 1992

“The VP Marketing on the IB is also responsible for training. Lisa explained that this had doubled her workload, and that this is a lot of work for one person. It may be necessary sometime in the future to separate the tasks of marketing and training by creating a new post on the IB, responsible for training. The IB should give this some thought.”

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23rd ICM Hamburg, 1993

“We have been lucky to witness a huge expansion of ELSA. This has increased enormously the workload of the IB Treasurer. On the other hand for the credibility of ELSA a professional, high quality control of the finances and accounting is needed. It should be furthermore possible for the Treasurer to work for fundraising and general financial planning”

“The workload of the Treasurer is enormous, and the work is mostly invisible”

25 Member National Groups; 5 Observer National Groups

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27th ICM Amsterdam, 1995

“I have been lucky enough to be able to establish my own support team called the ELSA International Financial Management Unit. (...) Without such internal and external help the Treasurer cannot effectively deal with the enormous workload.”

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35th ICM Opatija 1999

“**IB:** gave an introduction to the Input Paper on an International Essay Competition included in the WM. (...).

ELSA X: stated that this might be true, but nevertheless the workload builds up bit by bit and that there might be a point where any additional work would be too much.

ELSA Y: was also of the opinion that instead of concentrating on different competitions the attention should be directed to the programs that have already been started.”

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37th ICM Warsaw 2000

“ELSA X: isn't it possible to put HR temporarily under S&C or AA? It is closer in reality than to the president?”

IB: it is an in-force decision that it falls under the area of the president. Of course, it is up to any board to organise it themselves. I can delegate the responsibility, but it falls under me. The officers you mentioned already have a very big workload.”

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43rd ICM Athens 2003

“**IB** – traditionally 3 types of people in ELSA; social part, academic part, international part. More and more people joining for CV building. A lot of people staying very short in ELSA – huge problem in the long term. Why do you have directors? Huge workloads sometimes for the officers and directors can help. Problem with director comes when you have a director instead of an officer. Never a good solution.”

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57th ICM Malta, 2010

“ELSA X: Another question to IB: VPSC’s task is to coordinate delegations. Has your workload increased?

IB: About the workload: I can’t say if the workload has increased, because I wasn’t VPSC last year. It’s a lot of administrative tasks which take time of course. When the deadline is coming it’s a very big part of my work. That’s actually my reason for bringing this issue up: I would love to assist the delegates so much more and this could be done by the coordinators. The VPSC should of course be involved and coordinate administrative tasks. But the coordinator should help with academic preparations because there is no time for the VPSC to do that.

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You got the point?

But wait... there is more.

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59th ICM Poznan 2011

“[While discussing the allowances of the Director for Moot Courts]

IB: The agreement with the Council of Europe (CoE) is renegotiated just now. At the moment we don't have enough human resources for this project. Partners need to receive what they were promised. We are not signing the next agreement with the Moot Court in it if we are not sure about having the human resources. (...)

ELSA X: It feels like ELSA International is trying to blackmail us.

IB: It's not blackmailing, but we can't work 48 hours a day, the workload cannot be increased anymore”

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67th ICM Cluj-Napoca 2015

“IB: (...) This is an ongoing discussion within the IB team as well, as we do not have enough human resources. At the moment we have 827 applications for delegations and this would bring extra work for ELSA International. (...) We are strictly against imposing additional administrative bureaucratic work on the members and the IB.”

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67th ICM Cluj-Napoca 2015

“**IB:** I will try that even though it is not in my normal obligations. I will try to do it. I honestly feel demotivated because the Council constantly puts more work on the International Board as it happened with approved recent proposal that obliged ELSA International to notify all not selected applicants. This is a huge workload and that’s why I have to reconsider all other additional things out of my duties I did as a favour for the Network”

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72nd ICM Sarajevo 2017

“**IB:** We also decided to strike out the ELSA Law Review, and we considered how useful the project was and how many human resources invested. And the conclusion was that the human resources invested was not worthwhile.”

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72nd ICM Sarajevo 2017

IB: EHRMCC was moved back to AA last year and this caused issues for AA. So moving the competition didn't solve the problem it was meant to solve. The Law Review is still being finalised. LRG has just been brought back. There is a general lack of time for officers on the IB because the workload is getting bigger and bigger with time. We discussed these issues also with the previous International Boards during former IBs Weekend. They suggested for example to keep supporting areas as a base of the Board and then have AA separated into project managers.

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72nd ICM Sarajevo 2017

“ELSA X: Firstly, remember the debate we had upon moving the EHRMCC to VP AA. These exact difficulties were raised then. What did you think about the change?”

IB: (...) The change has been very helpful because Michelle can improve the EMC2 but it didn't solve the actual problem, which was stated during the change too. It was difficult for any of us to predict this outcome, as you do not realise the actual workload before starting to work, so you do not know it beforehand for appropriate decision-making. I would like to do a more diverse project catalogue, which takes more time from the VP AA than predicted last year.”

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72nd ICM Sarajevo 2017

“IB: I do not know if we’ll be moving it back. (...) Structurally the IB is not working the way it is supposed to. (...) One task is to govern the association and the second is to improve events. At the moment we cannot do both at the same time. (...)”

ELSA X: My immediate comment would be not to develop a new flagship project but sustain and focus the ones we have at the moment. (...)”

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76th ICM Constanta 2019

IB: We have working hours between 9:00 – 18:00, I personally am not an early bird, so I start at 10 and go back to my room at around 11 pm and keep working on materials until late. But I believe it was like that before the ICM, I think the workload will be less after the ICM.

IB: I don't have time to go back [home] so I try and communicate with friends and family as much as I can. I try to arrange meetings with them in order to keep in touch properly but unfortunately the nature of my position does not allow me to be very flexible.”

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So...

We have an issue

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Why does it appear year after year?

1) Constant creation of projects/initiatives:

- a) Workload expands -> Need to prioritise responsibilities -> Discussion on deleting something -> Agreement -> Workload diminishes -> Project created/reinvented -> Workload expands

2) Short lifespan in ELSA:

- a) Average of 1 to 4 years of active international involvement. We are not aware that we are repeating ourselves and that no solution is found:
 - i) 1989: ELR was born;
 - ii) 1997: ELR is transformed into SPEL;
 - iii) 2010: SPEL is deleted;
 - iv) 2015: ELR is brought back;
 - v) 2017: ELR is deleted;
 - vi) 2018: ELR is brought back with the constant topic of human rights.

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Why does it appear year after year?

- 3) Different Officers value different projects, creating a lack of agreement regarding what to prioritize:
- a) AAer - The Law Review is the only international legal writing project we offer. We have to keep it;
 - b) MCCer - The JHJMCC is the biggest project in ELSA and it contributes significantly to the financial sustainability of the International Board;
 - c) PDer - ELSA Traineeships is our oldest project and the only flagship related to Professional Development. We need it;
 - d) S&Cer - Delegations is one of the biggest projects of ELSA. We cannot delete it as it attracts a lot of students and we cooperate closely with important international institutions;



Why does it appear year after year?

- 4) Lack of an optimal solution, when there is a lack of agreement on what to delete
 - a) Two moot courts = too big of a workload
 - b) 2012/2017 = MCC deals with both
 - i) Result: too big of a workload for the MCCer
 - c) 2017/2021 = AA and MCC deal with them
 - i) Result: too big of a workload for the AAer
- 5) Attempts at compromises by creating new positions without deleting projects have shown to be ineffective
 - a) MCC did not solve the problem of two moot courts and the rise of competitions. The solution found created a loop of AA v. MCC when it comes to the HPMCC;
 - b) Creation of intermediate solutions such as the EIT are not sustainable;
 - c) Impossibility of expanding the number of Board positions.

**And thus, the loop
continues...**

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How do we stop it?

We have an idea

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Let's start with the principle

What should the IB do?

- Priorities: Association/Network management;
- Secondary goals: projects that are better carried out by the IB.

We suggest to simplify the projects and leave the Association/Network management for next terms.

The logo for the European Law Students' Association (elsa) is displayed in a stylized, lowercase, blue font.

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Projects better to be carried out by the IB

- Are they our flagships?
 - It depends on what a flagship is
- Is a project a flagship if it is in the DB?
 - What if we decide to put there Career Launch? Does it become an important project of ELSA?
 - What if we decide to take our WELS/SELS? Does it stop being important?
 - It is not because a piece of paper says that something is important, that something becomes important - we need to look at what is behind it.

Flagships are not a fixed list of projects, but a group of initiatives that have a set of common characteristics that enable them to represent ELSA.

- Which ones? Let's find out.



Why is [insert name here] a Flagship?

Let's start with the obvious ones:

- HPMCC;
- JHJMCC;
- ELSA Law Schools;
- ELSA Delegations;
- ELSA Traineeships;



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Why is [insert name here] a Flagship?

Does that apply to these ones?

- ELSA Law Review;
- ELSA Webinar Academies;
- International Conferences of ELSA;
- Client Interview Competition;
- Rule of Law Education Campaign;
- ELSA Negotiation Competition.



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That being the case

Here is what we propose

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We propose to reconsider our Flagships

International Conferences of ELSA

- Reasons:
 - Lack of Network implementation;
 - Lack of existence as a steady project of ELSA;
 - Lack of added value as a Flagship;
 - Before becoming a Flagship project, it should be well developed within the Network and not the other way around.
- Thus, we suggest removing ICEs from the Flagship list, while still keeping the project regulated under S&C.

ELSA Negotiation Competition

- Reasons:
 - Completely impossible to implement the EFR;
 - Flawed structure and division of responsibilities - The IB cannot organise an EFR without coordinating the National Rounds;
 - Wrong understanding of what the ENC is, leaving Groups with the idea that they are organising National Rounds when they are not;
 - Same as ICE.
- Thus, we suggest deleting the ENC, but keeping the project of Negotiation Competitions.

We propose to make Flagship creation harder

Reasons:

- To avoid creating more loops of projects extinction/revivals that are relevant only for one term, but not for the next ones;
- To ensure that IBs focus on a steady set of projects that does not expand/contract according to the preferences of individual IBs;
- To ensure that Key Areas have enough room to work on developing the current flagships instead of just ensuring that they happen

How:

- Defining Flagship;
- Objective criteria (ex. Existence for a set number of years);
- Making the process last longer than a year;

**Questions?
Suggestions?**

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