

Crisis Management and Common Situations in Competitions

6th C Open Call | 4th of March 2026



The European Law Students' Association

Purpose of this Open Call

→ Most competitions are currently running or about to launch!

Objectives:

- Identify the most frequent crisis situations in competitions
- Provide response frameworks
- Share best practices from across the network



International Update

John H. Jackson Moot Court Competition

- 1st European Regional Round done!

Next Steps

- 2nd European Regional Round
- West & South Asia Regional Round
- All-American Regional Round
- African Regional Round
- Call for IOC: 1st of April (Final Oral Round from the 23rd to the 27th of June)

Helga Pedersen Moot Court Competition

- Regional Round Birmingham and Regional Round Malta, done!

Next Steps

- Regional Round Athens
- Call for IOC: 17th of March (Final Oral Round from the 1st to the 5th of June)



What is a Crisis in a Competition Context?

An unexpected situation that threatens:

- Timeline
- Quality
- Reputation
- Participant experience
- Financial stability

The 4-Step Crisis Response Framework

Pause & Assess

- What exactly happened?
- What is the impact?
- Is this urgent or important?

Decide

- Evaluate options
- Choose a solution

Stabilize

- Secure essential functions

Communicate

- Solution-oriented

Common Crisis Scenarios & How to Handle Them



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Scenario 1: Judges Drop Out Last Minute

Immediate Actions

- Check contract/confirmation status
- Activate backup list
- Ask existing judges if they can extend time
- Consider virtual judging option

Prevention Tips

- Always have 1–2 backup judges
- Confirm 1 week before
- Send calendar hold + reminder 48h or 24h before

Scenario 2: Not Securing the (Ambitious) Prize

The Situation

- Sponsor pulls out
- Budget falls short
- Prize not as attractive as planned

Options

- Reframe prize (exposure and visibility
- Marketing comes in!)
- Replace cash with value-based rewards e.g. Post graduations/courses
- Secure in-kind partnership

Key Principle

Participants care about:

- Recognition
 - Opportunity
 - Exposure
- Not only money.**

Scenario 3: Low Registration

Immediate Responses

- Extend deadline strategically
- Personal outreach to universities
- Alumni Participants push



Scenario 4: Venue Cancels / Logistics Fail

Emergency Actions

- Activate backup venue list
- Move to hybrid/online format
- Reduce scale but keep structure

→ Golden Rule

Secure venue contract early.

Always know 1 alternative location.

Scenario 5: Participant Complaints

Examples:

- Bias accusations
- Transparency concerns
- Unfair judging

Response Structure

1. Acknowledge
2. Clarify facts
3. Provide process transparency
4. Offer formal complaint channel

Golden Tool: *Prevention!*

Before Launch Checklist:

- Backup judges confirmed
- Backup venues confirmed
- Prize agreements signed
- Budget contingency
- Crisis decision-maker defined
- Emergency contact list (Judges/Venues)

Open Discussion

- What crisis are you currently facing?
- What situation scared you most in past competitions?
- What solutions worked well?

