

Helga Pedersen
Moot Court Competition



Development Strategy

**HELGA PEDERSEN MOOT COURT
COMPETITION**

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

elsa

The European Law Students' Association



PREFACE

As a simulation of proceedings before the European Court of Human Rights, the Helga Pedersen Moot Court Competition (HPMCC) holds a unique position, offering law students across Europe the chance to engage deeply with human rights law in an environment modelled after one of Europe's foremost international judicial bodies. The European Court of Human Rights plays an essential role in upholding the rights and freedoms established by the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, a commitment undertaken by the member states of the Council of Europe.

ELSA, as the world's largest independent, non-profit association for law students and young lawyers, holds the vision of a just world where human dignity and cultural diversity are respected. Contributing to legal education and human rights awareness are central to ELSA's mission, and the HPMCC is among its most effective initiatives toward these goals. Through simulated hearings, the HPMCC challenges participants to apply their legal knowledge to real-world human rights issues, enhances their understanding of other legal systems, and fosters skills in advocacy, analysis, and cross-cultural collaboration.

*This Development Strategy of the Helga Pedersen Moot Court Competition is based on the work of Maciej Łodziński, Vice President in charge of Competitions 2023/2024, and Nikola Grochowska, Assistant for Competitions' Development of the ELSA International Team 2023/2024. It reflects the commitment of ELSA to foster legal education and promote human rights awareness in a dynamic and impactful way. It is essential to ensure the continuous evolution and long-term impact of the Competition. With the rapidly changing landscape of human rights, it is important to regularly update and align the Competition's objectives with the strategic goals of ELSA International and the educational needs of future participants. Such a strategy will enable the HPMCC to **expand its reach, maintain high standards of inclusivity, and ensure equitable access to resources and knowledge** for all participants. This structured approach not only safeguards the relevance and quality of the Competition but also strengthens ELSA's vision.*

Warm regards,

Aliena Trefny

Vice President in charge of Competitions

International Board of ELSA 2024/2025

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Goal 1: Visibility of the HPMCC

The Helga Pedersen Moot Court Competition is one of the biggest and best-established moot courts in the field of international human rights law, thanks to its presence for over 10 years and ELSA's stable cooperation with the Council of Europe. It is recognisable throughout ELSA Groups all over Europe. However, there is still a lot of potential to make the Competition more known beyond the ELSA Network and increase the participation of students from even more universities.

Subgoal 1.1: University Outreach

We aim to enhance the visibility of the HPMCC, expand its reach to universities and institutions and strengthen the HPMCC's presence within academic networks. This will spread knowledge and awareness of the Competition, its values and benefits among universities and students who are not familiar with it yet.

Means:

- Identify universities and institutions that have only demonstrated interest or have not engaged with the Competition so far;
- Create promotional materials targeting universities and institutions with a focus on the relevance of the HPMCC in international human rights law, development of soft skills, and career opportunities;
- Engage ELSA Groups and faculty staff who can act as promoters for HPMCC within universities and institutions;
- Host webinars or information sessions aimed at students, in collaboration with universities or faculties.

Subgoal 1.2: Diversify Participants

Our objective is to expand our outreach to underrepresented countries, ensuring a diverse pool of students and equal opportunities for participation across the entire Network. We aim to increase participation from countries and universities with low or no engagement in the HPMCC so far.

Means:

- Use targeted and tailored marketing campaigns and marketing strategies to connect with universities in underrepresented regions, adapted to local and regional circumstances or adapted formats to better engage potential participants;

- Localise promotional materials in collaboration with National and Local Groups, including translations, and testimonials from successful past participants from those regions (if available);
- Map out underrepresented regions and assess the challenges and obstacles to their participation (logistical, financial, awareness, ...);
- Offer support for teams from countries with lower participation through training, workshops and webinars on successfully participating in the HPMCC and how to get financial support from local institutions;
- Collaborate with ELSA Groups to directly target these underrepresented regions by hosting regional or local workshops or promoting on the relevant platforms.

Subgoal 1.3: Assess Potential for Growth

One key element of moving forward with the development of the HPMCC will be evaluating the potential for expansion of participating teams. This includes determining whether the number of teams should increase or remain steady. Our objective is to determine whether the focus should be on expanding the number of participating teams or maintaining a manageable level, with a priority on ensuring the high integrity of the competition and the experience of the participants. To achieve this, it will be necessary to assess the feasibility of expanding to more teams and determining the ideal number of teams, bearing in mind the long-term sustainability of the Competition.

Means:

- Analyse data on participation from the previous editions of the HPMCC to understand trends in team size, quality of performances, and regions of origin;
- Consult with the stakeholders of the Competition (Regional Round Organisers, Judges, Coaches) to understand the logistical implications of increasing the number of teams (venue size, management, judging capacity);
- Benchmark against similar competitions, like the René Cassin Moot Court, but also the Jessup or Vis Moot, to draw comparisons on how they handle team growth and structure.

Evaluation of the Progress in Achieving These Goals

- Number of new universities and institutions engaged;
- Increase in participation from underrepresented regions;
- Diversity and representation among participants from different regions and countries;
- Feedback from different stakeholders involved in the Competition.

Goal 2: Continuous Qualitative Improvement

The various stages and processes throughout the Competition all come with different challenges. To ensure the ongoing development and refinement of the HPMCC, a strong emphasis should be put on gathering feedback from all stakeholders involved in the Competition.

Subgoal 2.1: Sustainability of the Regional Rounds

Our objective is to utilise the valuable knowledge of Regional Round Hosts to enhance both the experience for the participants and the Organising Committees. Organising such a big project can come with logistical, financial, and practical challenges. To master these challenges, ensure a higher quality of the Regional Rounds every year and make them more sustainable as a whole, the support provided by ELSA International to the Hosts is crucial. The goal is therefore to target concrete improvements of this support system.

Means:

- Continuously collect updates and feedback from the Regional Round Hosts to assess logistical, operational, and participant-related challenges;
- Have evaluation meetings with the Hosts after the event to gain deeper insights into areas of improvement, particularly focusing on the experience of Organising Committees;
- Involve the previous Hosts in the first calls and trainings with the newly selected Regional Round Hosts, to share their experiences, best practices and tips for improvement.

Subgoal 2.2: Memorable Experiences

Our objective is to utilise the insights of participants, coaches and judges to identify areas for improvement and enhance their overall experience. A special focus during the transition of the Vice President in charge of Competitions should be put on the findings of the feedback gathered in previous editions of the HPMCC.

Means:

- Create a comprehensive feedback and evaluation survey for participants, coaches and judges that covers aspects such as competition structure, clarity of rules, communication from the Organisers, and the overall experience;
- Implement changes based on participant feedback, prioritising improvements that directly enhance their engagement and satisfaction during the competition.

Evaluation of the Progress in Achieving These Goals

- Survey response rate;
- Satisfaction of the Regional Round Hosts, participants, coaches and judges;
- Reduction in common and recurring challenges;
- Time to analyse and implement feedback;
- Feedback on improvements and changes.

Goal 3: Standardisation of Resources and Knowledge Available

To promote equitable participation in the HPMCC, we aim to standardise the level of resources and knowledge available to participants. By addressing the disparities in educational levels and resources across countries, we can encourage students from diverse educational backgrounds to participate and excel in the Competition.

Subgoal 3.1: Equalise Opportunities

Our objective is to overcome differences in the resources available to participants from different countries and educational systems. This will allow us to highlight the disparities in resources and educational levels among the participating countries and tailor the support from ELSA International to ensure more equality among participating teams.

Means:

- Collect information on available educational materials, databases, and training resources available and utilised in each country;
- Analyse this information to pinpoint specific areas where more action, involvement and support from ELSA International is necessary.

Subgoal 3.2: Enhance Availability of Resources

A common obstacle preventing students from signing up for a moot court is that they are intimidated and have a feeling of lacking the necessary skills and resources. The aim is to empower students and assure them that by the relevant time, they will possess all the required tools.

Means:

- Research and identify legal database providers that can offer discounted or free access to their resources for participants;
- Develop promotional materials that highlight the benefits of these partnerships to potential participants and encourage participation across varying educational levels;
- Training and webinars prior to the deadline for Written Submissions and the Regional Rounds about researching, Written Submissions drafting, best practices in mooting etc., to help participants become more confident and knowledgeable about participating in the HPMCC.

Evaluation of the Progress in Achieving These Goals

- Availability of resources;
- Participation rate from different educational levels;
- Partnership(s) established with legal database providers;
- Feedback from participants on available resources;
- Participation and utilisation of the opportunities provided by ELSA International;
- Reduction in disparities between regions and countries.

Goal 4: Relevance

To ensure the HPMCC remains relevant and effective, a focus should be put on regularly updating the HPMCC Development Strategy. Additionally, it is important to be mindful that the ongoing development of the Competition aligns with the Strategic Goals of ELSA International.

Subgoal 4.1: Implementation of Feedback

The objective is to utilise feedback from participants and stakeholders to update the HPMCC Development Strategy regularly. This will not only improve the quality of the Competition every year but also ensure that we can work towards changes that adapt the format of the HPMCC to the current needs of students and other stakeholders. The findings of the annual evaluation of the Competition and its development shall be summarised in a report.

Means:

- Collect feedback from participants, Regional Round Hosts, the International Organising Committee, Judges and Partners to identify key areas for improvement;
- Analyse the feedback of the current HPMCC edition to highlight recurring issues that need addressing in the Development Strategy;
- Annually review and revise the Development Strategy;
- Draft an annual report, in addition to the Final Report, that outlines the necessary updates and proposed changes to the strategy;
- Incorporate feedback from past years in the Development Strategy, with a strong emphasis on monitoring and evaluation processes.

Subgoal 4.2: Alignment with Goals of ELSA International

Our objective is to ensure that the HPMCC's Development Strategy remains consistent with the broader Goals of the Strategic Plan of ELSA International and the One Year Operational Plan of the International Board in charge at the time of each edition.

Means:

- Annually review the HPMCC Development Strategy and the progress in achieving its goals at the beginning of each edition of the HPMCC;
- Conduct meetings with the Strategic Planning Team of ELSA International to discuss strategic alignment and updates, as well as prioritisation of achieving the respective goals;
- Create an overview of how the objectives of the HPMCC align and are coherent with the Goals of ELSA International, and identify and mitigate potential disparities.

Evaluation of the Progress in Achieving These Goals

- Assessment of the feedback that is effectively implemented;
- Frequency and timeliness of updates of the Strategy;
- Alignment with the Strategic Goals of ELSA International;
- Satisfaction of stakeholders with the updates and implementation of changes.

Goal 5: Legacy of the HPMCC

As the HPMCC will reach a significant milestone in the term 2026/2027 - its 15th anniversary - there is a need to start reflecting on how to celebrate the Competition's growth and evolution. By commemorating key moments, we aim to strengthen the legacy of the HPMCC and enhance its reputation within the legal and academic communities.

Our objective is to leverage major anniversaries and milestones to promote the achievements and impact of the HPMCC. To achieve this, the first steps should be taken towards the organisation of commemorative activities that celebrate the Competition's accomplishments and its role in advancing legal education.

Means:

- Start preparing promotional campaigns that highlight the HPMCC's history, growth, and the influence it has had on its participants and the broader legal community;
- Start collecting and developing a timeline of achievements showcasing the HPMCC's evolution over the years;
- Start creating a marketing campaign around the anniversary.