EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS
COUR EUROPÉENNE DES DROITS DE L'HOMME

Press Release
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Helga Pedersen Moot Court Competition – Grand Final at the European Court

The final round of the 14th edition of the Helga Pedersen Moot Court Competition will be held in Strasbourg from 1-5 June 2026. The competition, consisting of mock legal proceedings conducted in English and based on a simulation of an individual application before the European Court of Human Rights, is open to law students from across the Council of Europe's member States.

It offers law students a unique opportunity to deepen their knowledge of the European Convention on Human Rights while refining their skills in legal research, drafting, and oral advocacy. Teams present arguments on behalf of both the applicant(s) and the respondent state. The competition is organised jointly by the Council of Europe and the European Law Students' Association (ELSA).

After months of written submissions, regional rounds and many pleadings, the 18 qualified university teams (from the 56 that participated in the regional rounds), and hailing from a range of 13 countries[1] will go head-to-head in the final preliminary rounds, quarter-finals and semi-finals at the Council of Europe, followed by the Grand Final at the European Court of Human Rights. The teams will compete to win a fictitious case concerning criminal behaviour in cyberspace, artificial intelligence tools in the administration of justice, and the right to a fair trial.

The Grand Final will be held in the Grand Chamber hearing room of the European Court of Human Rights at 1.30 p.m. (CET) on Friday 5 June 2026, before a panel made up of experts and practitioners, together with the case author. The panel will be chaired by Judge Diana Sârcu of the European Court.

The prizes will be awarded by Mattias Guyomar, President of the Court, and Marialena Tsirli, the Court's Registrar. The members of the winning team will win a one-month traineeship at the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. The prize for the best orator will be a traineeship at the Council of Europe's Liaison Office in Brussels.

Further information about this year's competition and previous competitions can be found here and on the Helga Pedersen Moot Court Competition website.

[1] Austria, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, the Slovak Republic, Switzerland, Ukraine and the United Kingdom

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The European Court of Human Rights was set up in Strasbourg by the Council of Europe member States in 1959 to deal with alleged violations of the 1950 European Convention on Human Rights.