

RACSE/ANESC Moot Court Competition on the European Social Charter

Rules

Terminology: the opposing parties are referred to as “Complainants” and “Respondent Governments”, and their respective pleadings as “Complaint” and “Memorandum”.

1. The moot case

1.1. The moot case shall raise an issue regarding the consistency of a practice or law of a moot State Party with the European Social Charter’s treaty system. The subject matter is brought moot before the European Committee of Social Rights via a moot collective complaint.

1.2. The moot case is written by the Scientific Committee. The statement contains sufficient guidance for the opposing teams to focus their procedural writing on identical issues, while being drafted simultaneously.

2. Teams

2.1. Contest entry is open to law students registered in any university from the Members States of the Council of Europe.

2.2. Each participating university can only send one team.

2.3. By drawing lots, half of the teams in the lists receive the status of “complainants”, and the other half the status of “respondent governments”.

2.4. If there are more than twenty universities registered in the competition, only the best 10 teams in each category at the end of the written phase can take part to the Oral Phase.

2.5. Each team has two “litigants” (students), a legal / linguistic “advisor” (student) and a coach (assistant / doctoral student / professor). The legal / linguistic “advisor” helps the litigants prepare the reply and the answers to the jury’s questions. He may speak in debates only at the stage of replies and questions. The distribution of roles between litigants and legal / linguistic adviser can be modified during the final hearing.

3. The Scientific Committee

3.1. The Scientific Committee is composed of seven persons, as follows:

a) the General Coordinator of the ANESC, or the First or Second Deputy General Coordinator, or another member of the ANESC Coordination Committee designated by the General Coordinator;

b) the Coordinator of a national section of ANESC which, whenever possible, is not represented in the competition by one of the competing universities;

c) a member of ANESC who does not teach and has not taught at any of the competing universities;

d) a member of the European Committee of Social Rights;

e) a former member of the European Committee of Social Rights;

f) two members of the Department of Social Rights of the Council of Europe with experience of the collective complaints procedure.

3.2. The Scientific Committee is appointed by the Coordination Committee of the Network after consultation with the Department of Social Rights of the Council of Europe; the Scientific Committee's members shall be appointed in such a way as to belong, to the extent possible, to various Member States of the Council of Europe.

3.3. If one or more of the appointed members under the previous article are unavailable, they may be replaced by persons with a great expertise in the field of European Social Charter law, in any phase of the competition.

3.4. The Scientific Committee drafts the moot case, answers the questions asked by the teams relatively to the case, and assigns a note to the writings.

4. Juries

4.1. Juries (Plenary Jury and Sub-juries) act as the European Committee of Social Rights. They hear the oral submissions of the participating teams during the oral phase of the competition.

4.2. The Plenary Jury consists of six persons, namely the members of the Scientific Committee except for the General Coordinator of the ANESC (or the First or Second Deputy General Coordinator, or another member of the ANESC Coordination Committee designated by the General Coordinator – see Art. 3.1. a)).

4.3. The Plenary Jury designates a President and a Vice-President from among its members. In the event of a tie, the President has the casting vote.

4.4. The Plenary Jury is composed of two sub-juries of three persons. The President of the Plenary Jury sits on one of the two Sub-juries and serves as its chair. The other Sub-jury is chaired by the Vice-President of the Plenary Jury.

4.5. Sub-juries hear oral argument at the stage of “qualification hearings”.

4.6. The Plenary Jury hears the final hearing, proclaims the victorious team of this final and awards the prizes in accordance to Article 9.

5. The written phase

5.1. The written phase consists of the drafting of either a collective complaint (for “claimant” teams) or a memorandum (for “respondent governments” teams).

5.2. The complaint or memorandum may not contain more than 9,000 words (including footnotes), otherwise points will be lost.

5.3. The complaints and the memorandums must be sent to the ANESC's Secretariat e-mail address (info@racse-anesc.org), in anonymous form, within the deadline set by the competition timetable, failing which they will not be accepted. The Secretariat forwards each complaint/memorandum to each member of the Scientific Committee, within maximum two days from the day of receipt.

5.4. A maximum of 2 questions per team may be asked to the Scientific Committee, within the deadline set by the competition schedule. The questions asked and their answers are communicated to the other teams.

5.5. Each complaint and each memorandum are the subject of a note between 0 and 20, delivered by the Scientific Committee on the basis of a grid of quotation which it determines previously. The twenty points will be allocated partly on *formal (subjective) criteria* (such as coherence, structure, clarity, style etc.) and partly on *content (objective) criteria* that are linked to the legal approach of each particular moot case. This note is not communicated before the final “hearing”.

5.6. Seven calendar days before the oral phase, the complaints are communicated, in anonymized form, to all the “respondent governments” teams, with the purpose of allowing the preparation of the hearings. Likewise, the memorandums are communicated to all “complainants” teams.

6. The oral phase

6.1. The oral phase consists of a simulated “hearing” in front of the European Committee of Social Rights, represented by the juries, within the meaning of Article 7 (4) of the Protocol of 9 November 1995. This oral phase consists of two stages: the “qualifying hearing” and the “final hearing”.

6.2. Both in the qualifying hearings and in the final hearing, the performance delivered by the team must not reproduce the argument of the procedural writing, but highlight the important points and respond to the arguments of the opponent. The ability of the teams to respond to the opponent’s arguments and the questions of the juries is taken into account in the scoring of pleadings.

6.3. The “litigants” of each team divide the time between them as they wish. The legal / linguistic “advisor” can only speak in debates at the stage of replies and questions.

6.4. During the “qualifying hearings”, each team faces a team of the opposite status, designated three days earlier by the Jury, by drawing lots. The result of the draw is communicated to the teams the day before the Oral Phase.

6.5. The “qualifying hearings” take place, in parallel, before one or the other of the two sub-juries formed at the beginning of the Plenary Jury in accordance to Article 4.4..

6.6. For each team, the qualifying hearing lasts for a maximum of 20 minutes. Each team has, at most, 3 minutes of reply. At the end of the debates, the jury submits to each team the same two questions. The first question is addressed first to one of the two teams, and the second question is addressed in the first place to the other team.

6.7. The “qualifying hearing” of each team is rated by the sub-jury between 0 and 20 points.

6.8. The final hearing is between the “complainants” team and the “respondent governments” team, whose scores for both the writing and the qualifying hearings (i.e., the average of the two marks) are the highest. In the event of a tie, the teams are broken down into the best in answering **six** questions relatively to the Charter developed by the Scientific Committee.

6.9. The “final hearing” takes place before the Plenary Jury.

6.10. In the final, each team has a maximum of 15 minutes to deliver its argument, and 5 minutes to respond. The “final hearing” cannot be limited to reproduce the arguments developed during the “qualifying hearing”. At the end of the debates, the jury submits to each team the same two questions. The first question is addressed first to one of the two teams, and the second question is addressed in the first place to the other team.

7. Bilingualism

7.1. Each team writes its writing and presents its oral argument in English, French or both languages. **7.2.** During the hearings, the sub-juries and the plenary panel ask at least one of their questions in the language other than the one chosen by the teams to write most of their writings.

7.3. The questions intended to determine the winning team in case of two teams have an equal score at the end of the qualifying hearings (6.8.) are written half in French and half in English.

8. Valorisation of the participation in the competition as part of the study programme

Each university is free to value as it wishes participation in the competition, as part of its own program of study (exemption from practical work, substitution of all or part of one of the classes etc.).

9. Prizes

The plenary jury awards four prizes:

- 1.The winning team of the final hearing;
2. The runner-up (the second team qualified for the final hearing);
3. The best pleader;
- 4.The best procedural writing.

10. Location and timeline

10.1. Traditionally, each edition of ANESC’s Moot Court is hosted by the university whose team won the previous edition, if the latter agrees to accept the invitation of the ANESC’s Coordination Committee. If not, the ANESC’s Coordination Committee will invite successively the universities whose teams/students won the subsequent prizes, or, in case none of them accepts the invitation, any other university interested to host the competition, which belongs to a Member State of the Council of Europe.

10.2. The timeline of the competition is jointly agreed by the ANESC Coordination Committee, the hosting university and the CoE’s Department of Social Rights.

10.3. The General Coordinator of ANESC shall launch the competition in consultation with the Department of Social Rights.