

**Dear Professor Bite,**

First of all, I would like to sincerely thank You, Professor Jokubauskas and the University for supporting our participation in the Helga Moot Court Competition held in Birmingham. I am truly grateful for this opportunity to participate in such an international competition.

During the competition, we had the opportunity to plead against the University of Birmingham as Respondent and later against University of Utrecht as Applicant. Competing against such strong teams challenged us intellectually and strengthened our advocacy skills and ability to respond to complex questions from the bench. It was very nice to be in such an academic environment and to engage with students and professionals from different countries.

While our previous participation in the PAX Moot Court focused on private international law, the Helga Moot Court was centered on human rights and the case law of the European Court of Human Rights. Preparing the case required in-depth research of ECHR jurisprudence and a different analytical approach, which broadened my academic perspective and my understanding of human rights law in practice.

This experience would not have been possible without the support of the Faculty and the University. I would also like to express my gratitude to our coach, Ivan, who dedicated the past six months, starting in September, to organizing our preparation, guiding us through the case materials, and continuously encouraging us to improve.

I am also grateful to have shared this journey with Olena. Working closely together over these months strengthened not only our arguments but also our teamwork and confidence.

Beyond the competition itself, visiting Birmingham was also a valuable cultural experience.

Overall, this Moot Court experience significantly contributed to my academic growth and practical legal skills, and I am sincerely thankful to you, Professor Jokubauskas, and the University for making it possible.

Kind regards,

Magda Khalvashi

**Dear Professor Bite,**

I would also like to share my reflections regarding our participation in the Helga Moot Court Competition 2025–2026.

The Helga Moot Court Competition in Birmingham was designed as a simulation of proceedings before the European Court of Human Rights. The case required teams to analyse a fictional dispute concerning the use of AI-generated evidence and its compatibility with the right to a fair trial under the European Convention on Human Rights.

Our team prepared submissions for both the Applicant and the Respondent. This involved addressing admissibility questions, defining the scope of the alleged violation of Article 6 ECHR, and constructing arguments using the Court's established methodology: interpretation of Convention rights, proportionality analysis, assessment of necessity in a democratic society, and consideration of the State's margin of appreciation. The preparation relied primarily on detailed case-law analysis rather than doctrinal sources, which required careful comparison of precedents and development of fact-sensitive legal reasoning.

During the oral rounds, we pleaded against teams from the University of Birmingham and Utrecht University. Each hearing followed a strict format (35 minutes for main pleadings and 5 minutes for rebuttal/surrebuttal) and involved intensive questioning from the bench. The judges regularly intervened to test the legal foundation of our submissions, requiring immediate reference to Strasbourg case law and clear justification of how competing interests should be balanced. This format strongly developed our ability to present concise arguments, adjust strategy in real time, and defend legal positions under pressure.

Our preparation period lasted approximately six months and included extensive research, drafting structured arguments, and repeated oral practice sessions. One practical challenge was the limited possibility of holding more in-person training sessions and involving a broader working group, which could have made the preparation process more efficient and allowed for additional rounds of feedback.

Our coach, Ivan, played an important role throughout this period: he coordinated the preparation schedule, organised training sessions, reviewed our drafts, conducted mock hearings, and continuously guided us on how to improve both the structure of our arguments and our oral delivery. His sustained involvement was essential to maintaining consistency and focus during the long preparation stage. He also assisted us with organisational matters during the competition, ensuring that all practical arrangements ran smoothly and allowing us to focus fully on the pleadings in Birmingham.

We also benefited from the support and advice of Remigijus Jokubauskas, whose comments helped us refine our reasoning and identify areas requiring further clarification in order to achieve a stronger result.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to my co-counsel, Magda Khalvashi, for her dedication, collaboration, and professionalism throughout the preparation and the competition. Our close teamwork allowed us to test arguments critically, maintain consistency between written and oral positions, and support each other during the hearings.

Finally, I would like to thank the University and You personally for making our participation possible. This experience provided valuable practical insight into ECHR litigation methodology and allowed us to represent the University in an international academic environment.

Best regards,

Olena