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*Réseau européen de formation judiciaire  
European Judicial Training Network*

# **THEMIS COMPETITION GUIDE FOR JURY MEMBERS**



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## 1. Introduction

The European Judicial Training Network (EJTN) is organising each year the THEMIS Competition, opened to judicial trainees from all training institutions who are members (35 member institutions from all EU Member States) or observers of EJTN (including 8 institutions from non-EU Member States). Teams of three judicial trainees accompanied by one teacher/tutor may enrol in the competition which consists of four semi-finals and a grand-final. The official language of the competition is English.

The maximum number of teams participating in a semi-final is eleven. The winner and the runner-up of each semi-final will enter the grand-final, consequently there will be eight teams in the grand-final.

The topics of the semi-finals and the grand-final are different, as follows:

1. Semi-Final A: EU and European Criminal Procedure
2. Semi-Final B: EU and European Family law
3. Semi-Final C: EU and European Civil procedure
4. Semi-Final D: Judicial Ethics and Professional Conduct
5. Grand Final: Access to Justice

The jurors for the THEMIS Competition are appointed by the EJTN's Secretary General, following the advice of the Chair of the Steering Committee and the Convener of the Working Group Programmes.

The jury comprises three members in the semi-finals and five members in the grand-final. The jury members must not have the same nationality as the teams they assess, unless in extraordinary circumstances for the semi-finals.

## 2. Schedule of the competition

### 2.1. General information

During the first day of the semi-final/grand-final, a meeting will be organised at the venue with all the members of the jury and the EJTN's Secretary General. The SG will brief the jury members on the rules of the assessment, the assessment criteria and the need to give the reason for the jury's final decision.

During this meeting the jury members will choose the Chair of the jury. The responsibilities of the Chair of the jury are the following:

- to monitor the enforcement of the THEMIS Rules during the semi-final/grand-final,
- to coordinate and approve the format of the evaluation form in accordance with the criteria from the THEMIS Rules. The approved evaluation form will be the same for all the members



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of the Jury and will be provided upon request to the competing teams and the sending institution. All the jury members will need to provide their assessments to the EJTn representative.

- to coordinate the presentation of the oral report on the results of the semi-final/grand-final during the closing ceremony,
- to announce the winning teams of the competition.

## **2.2. Semi-finals**

Each semi-final consists of three stages: a written paper (before the semi-final), an oral presentation of the paper and a discussion with the Jury (during the semi-final).

Each team should draft a **written paper** on any subject related to the topic of the relevant semi-final and submit it to EJTn 2 weeks before the first day of the semi-final. All the written papers will be uploaded into EJTn's Moodle platform and access (username and password) will be provided to jury members. By accessing the Moodle platform jury members will have the possibility to read and print the papers and also to share opinions and comments in a discussion forum opened exclusively to them.

During the semi-final, each team will have 30 minutes to make an **oral presentation** of its written paper. This presentation shall involve all team members, but not the teacher/tutor. The order of the presentations is decided by draw by the SG.

Following each oral presentation, one team will be asked to address **questions to the presenting team**. The team addressing the questions will also be selected by draw. Neither a team of the same nationality as the presenting team nor one that has already been drawn on a previous similar procedure will be entered into any new daily draw. The maximum number of questions that can be addressed will be three, one per team member and the allocated time for questions and answers is 15 minutes.

Immediately after the presentation and the answers to the questions, the Jury will conduct a **discussion** with the presenting team about the content of the written paper, that will be around 30, but must not exceed 45 minutes. Jury members are invited to individually address questions to the team. The 45 minutes must be fairly distributed between all the jurors so that each one can make a proper assessment.

All the discussions during the semi-final will be moderated by the jury.

During the semi-final, the jury members have access to a room equipped with computer and internet, in order to assess the teams and deliberate. On the third day of the semi-final, after the presentations and discussions with all the competing teams are finalised, the jury members are invited to proceed to deliberations in the jury room.



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### 2.3. Grand-final

The final of THEMIS Competition lasts three days and a half.

The final consists of two stages: a written report on a common legal question and an oral debate with another team in front of the Jury.

The EJTN's Secretary General will invite some of the jury members to draft, before the grand-final, the common legal question for the written report (one for all the teams) and the case studies/topics for the oral debates (4 in total). The legal question and the case studies/topics should be sent to EJTN Secretariat 15 days before the starting date of the grand-final.

The common legal question will be given to the competing teams immediately after the opening ceremony in the first day of the competition. The teams will have until 18h00 the same day to prepare a **written report** on the legal question and to hand it to the EJTN representative.

All the jury members are expected to be present at the venue of the grand-final from 18h00 the first day of the competition onwards.

At 18h00 in the first day of the grand-final, the jury members will receive the 8 written papers and will have until 14h00 the next day to overview them.

The **oral debates** begin the second day of the grand-final at 14h00. Each two teams will be asked to take opposing stance in relation to the case study/topic drafted by the jury and sent to the teams, by EJTN Secretariat, 2 weeks before the grand-final. Each pair of teams will debate a different case study/topic.

The teams will be paired using a draw by the SG before the grand-final. The team starting the presentation will be determined in inverse alphabetical order of the English names of the countries.

The full time available for each pair of teams is 100 minutes, as follows:

- 1) First team's presentation – 20 minutes
- 2) Second team's presentation – 20 minutes
- 3) The second team answers two questions asked by the first team - 5 minutes
- 4) The First team answers two questions asked by the second team - 5 minutes
- 5) First team's closing arguments - 10 minutes
- 6) Second team's closing arguments - 10 minutes
- 7) Jury discussion with the teams - 30 minutes

All the discussions during the grand-final will be moderated by the jury.

During the grand-final, the jury members have access to a room equipped with computer and internet, in order to read and evaluate the written papers, to assess the teams and deliberate.



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### 3. Assessment methodology

#### 3.1. Semi-finals

The Jury will assess teams' performance according to the following **criteria**, where appropriate:

- a) quality,
- b) originality,
- c) reference to the relevant case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union and European Court of Human Rights,
- d) in-depth analysis of the latest European debates on both ethics and EU Law,
- e) anticipation of future solutions.

The jury may grant every team a maximum of **100 points**, to be shared as follows:

- written paper: 30 points
- oral presentation: 30 points
- discussion: 40 points

The jury may use the Evaluation Form provided by EJTN's Secretariat.

Based on the assessment, the jury will decide the first three teams with the highest score (the winner, the runner-up and the third place).

Special awards of distinction may be given by the Jury, at their full discretion.

During the closing ceremony the jury will announce the winner, the runner-up and the third place. He will make a short oral assessment of the performance of each team at all stages of the Competition, explaining the decision taken.

The jury members will hand certificates to the winning teams and to the other participants.

The jury members should present closing remarks in the closing ceremony.

The jury members will select the written papers that will be included in the THEMIS Annual Journal, the official EJTN publication. One of the jury members will be appointed as the Chief Editor and will collect the comments from other jury members. After each semi-final, the jury members will select the papers which they would like to be included in the THEMIS Annual Journal and will provide the comments to the teams to include in the final version. The Chief Editor will receive the final versions and forward them the EJTN for publishing.



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### **3.2. Grand-final**

The Jury will assess teams' overall performance on the written report and the debate, according to the following **criteria**, where appropriate:

- a) quality,
- b) originality,
- c) reference to the relevant case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union and European Court of Human Rights,
- d) in-depth analysis of European standards on both ethics and EU Law,
- e) anticipation of future solutions,
- f) critical thinking,
- g) communication skills,
- h) clarity, attractiveness and persuasiveness of oral skills and consistency.

The jury may grant every participant a maximum of **100 points**, to be shared as follows:

- written report: 40 points
- oral presentations: 60 points

Based on the assessment the jury will declare one of the competing teams as THEMIS winner. The jury will also announce the second and third place winners.

During the closing ceremony the Chair of the jury will announce the winning team. He will make a short oral assessment of the performance of each team at all stages of the Competition, explain the decision taken and award the trophies and certificates. The jury members may present closing remarks in the closing ceremony.