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# Kluwer Mediation Blog

## In Youth We Trust

Rafal Morek (DWF LLP) · Saturday, April 12th, 2014

On the day when the finals of the world's largest ADR student competition starts, I could not think of any better topic for my blog posting. I have been teaching and coaching students for the last eleven years, and it has become an important part of my life and a highly rewarding experience. Consequently, I have no doubt that there is no better way of promoting ADR than bringing it closer to people in the form of reality-based simulations, exercises and role-plays. Students enjoy learning by doing, and welcome their "moot" experience enthusiastically. The competition teaches them to how to think out of the box and work together as a team.

The Willem C Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot is a particularly remarkable achievement. While in its inaugural 1994 edition 11 teams competed, the 2013 welcomed over 290 teams. Its spiritus movens, Prof. Eric Bergsten was a natural candidate for the first recipient of the ICCA Award for Lifelong Contribution to the Field of International Arbitration, granted a few days ago. The growing ranks of "Vis Mooties" have their own alumni association (the Moot Alumni Association), a law journal (The Vindobona Journal of International Commercial Law and Arbitration), a guidebook, a number of related events (pre-moots), web fun-pages, jargon, T-shirts, and songs. While Vis allows students to enjoy the dynamics of commercial arbitration, there are also some competitions (such as FDI or FIAMC) in the realm of its sister – investment arbitration.

For mediation, I believe that the role of student competitions is even more important. Mediation has the potential to become much more popular and broadly applied than arbitration – transcending "cross-border" and "commercial"/"investment" dimensions. It has been wonderful to observe how quickly the ICC International Commercial Mediation has grown in recent years (see e.g. Christophe Imhoos' report on the 8th ICC Competition or Geoff Sharp's 10 Tips for Teams at the Competition 2014).

International competitions are for many reasons most attractive to students, but the role of their smaller, local counterparts is equally important. Much may be learnt in this regard from the US, where just recently, the 2014 American Bar Association Section of Dispute Resolution Representation in Mediation Competition was concluded at the Section's Annual Conference in Miami. As the ABA reported, over 100 teams from 50 law schools took part in this year's edition, with ten teams competing at the Nationals.

For those taking part in Vis – Good luck, Mooties! Enjoy!

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The graphic features a black background with white text and a circular icon. The icon depicts a group of five stylized human figures, with a magnifying glass positioned over the central figure. The background is accented with horizontal lines in blue and green.

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