



Initiative of the Constitutional Court – school students’ drawing and essay competition devoted to the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia

The competition was at first organised in honour of the centenary of Latvia and to mark 96 years since the adoption of Satversme – the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia

Three years later more than 790 pupils have participated in this competition

Goal of the initiative: to promote school children’s and students’ loyalty to Latvia and their confidence in the Constitution, to strengthen their statehood consciousness and to encourage them to participate in state processes, as well as to promote their interest in and awareness of the Constitution and its significance. The competition was held in order to improve the school youth’s knowledge of the fundamental values of Latvia as a democratic state governed by the rule of law, to acquaint them with the Constitutional Court, explaining its role in a democratic society, and to encourage their creative self-expression.

Target audience and theme of the drawing competition: the 6th grade pupils of general and special education institutions were invited to produce and submit drawings on the theme proposed by the Constitutional Court.

First year’s theme – My Constitution ("Mana Satversme")

Second year’s theme – My Fundamental Rights in the Satversme ("Manas pamattiesības Satversmē")

Third year’s theme – A Free Person in Independent Latvia ("Brīvs cilvēks neatkarīgā Latvijā")

Target audience and theme of the essay competition: the 9th and 12th grade students of general, special, and professional education institutions were invited to write and submit essays expressing their thoughts on the theme proposed by the Constitutional Court.

First year’s theme – My Latvia and My Constitution ("Mana Latvija un Satversme")

Second year’s theme – “The Next Hundred Years of the Latvian Satversme” (“Latvijas Satversmes nākamie simts gadi”)

Third year's theme – Why are my fundamental rights contained in the Satversme important for Latvia? (“Kāpēc Latvijai ir svarīgas manas Satversmē ietvertās pamattiesības?”)

Charter:

I General points – indicates the organiser and the goals of the competition, the contact person, and provides a reference (link) to the Constitutional Court's website section where updated information about the competition and its progress is to be posted regularly.

II Participants of the competition – indicates the target audiences and the working themes of the drawing competition and the essay competition.

III Tasks of the competition – describes clearly what the pupil's task is, what the pupil needs to do and to what extent. Below are the particular requirements for the execution, layout (formatting) and submission of a competition piece.

- The working task within the drawing competition was to produce a drawing on the theme of that year on A3 size paper, using pencils, crayons, felt pens, paints or any other techniques or their combinations. Works had to be submitted unfolded, in an A3 envelope.
- The task of the essay competition was to write an essay in Latvian on the theme of that year; the essays of the 9th grade students had to be 250–300 words long, of the 12th grade students – 350–400 words long; the essay had to be hand-written or computer-typed. Very particular layout (formatting) and submission requirements were set out. Each essay needed to have a title page indicating the student's first name and family name, the school, the teacher's first name and family name, as well as the essay title. According to the requirements, the work needed to be written on A4 size paper, keeping the left and the right margin and using *Times New Roman* font, size 13. It was stressed that the work needed to be well-structured, i.e. to contain an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. When using quotes and thoughts published by other authors, students needed to adhere to the specified citation and referencing guidelines, according to which, in a computer-typed text, references needed to be numbered in superscript at the end of a citation and/or another author's thought using the *Footnote* tool. A list of all writings by other authors used in the essay needed to be provided at the end of the work. Essays could be submitted in person, by post or by e-mail. A work submitted electronically via e-mail needed to be in PDF.

IV Progress of the competition – includes a time schedule containing descriptions and end dates for all competition stages.

The competition was divided into the following stages:

- registration for the competition;

- submission of works;
- assessment;
- publication of the results;
- Awards ceremony.

V Assessment Panel – indicates that an Assessment Panel will be formed to ensure assessment of the works submitted. This section also contains information on the composition of the Panel, including a clause on its competence. The Assessment Panel within this competition consisted of all the judges of the Constitutional Court.

VI Drawing competition assessment criteria – specifies particular criteria for assessing a work, as well as the minimum and maximum number of points for each criterion.

Assessment criteria:

Criterion	Number of points
<i>Content (compliance with the task requirements)</i>	<i>0-10</i>
<i>Ingenuity (creative interpretation of the theme)</i>	<i>0-10</i>
<i>Quality of technical execution</i>	<i>0-5</i>
<i>TOTAL (maximum number of points)</i>	<i>25</i>

VII Essay competition assessment criteria – specifies particular criteria for assessing a work, as well as the minimum and maximum number of points for each criterion.

Assessment criteria:

Criterion	Number of points
<i>Content (compliance with the task requirements)</i>	<i>0-20</i>
<i>Language (grammar and style)</i>	<i>0-10</i>
<i>Ingenuity (creative interpretation of the theme)</i>	<i>0-20</i>
<i>Conformity with the format requirements (text length, layout, references)</i>	<i>0-5</i>
<i>TOTAL (maximum number of points)</i>	<i>55</i>

VIII Determination of the winners and the recipients of merits certificates – Three students who receive the highest number of points from the Assessment Committee become the winners of the competition, whereas certificates of merits are awarded to a certain number of students whose works have scored next best quantities of points after the winners.

IX The award ceremony of the drawing and essay competition – provides information on when and where the respective award ceremony will take place.

X Additional information on the competition – provides that the works submitted are not returned to the authors after the competition, and that the Constitutional Court, after the competition is over, has the right to use the works as it sees fit, with credit to the author.

Annex: the Charter is supplemented with informative educational materials that could help both the school youth and the teachers in getting to know the Constitution.

The Charter is supplemented with the following informative educational materials:

- *Satversme* – the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia;
- assessment criteria to be applied within the competition;
- Articles from *Jurista Vārds* – a specialised legal journal;
- Articles on the *Satversme* and the Constitutional Court published in the youth magazine *Ilustrētā Junioriem*;
- an animated video about the Constitution created by the *Saeima* (the Parliament of Latvia),
- Previous years' retrospective videos.

Competition awards ceremony: The winners of the competition, the recipients of merits certificates, their teachers, as well as guests, were invited to the event. The list of guests included representatives of all branches of state power, as well as the partners with whose cooperation the competition was held. The event opened with festive addresses to honour the laureates, then their teachers. Each of the school children or students was awarded a diploma or a certificate of merit, while the teachers received gratitude for their contribution to the promotion of legal consciousness. During the event, those present were entertained with music performances; the event closed with the addressing speeches of the cooperation partners, and the awarding of special prizes.

Further information:

The Charter of the competition, the assessment criteria, the materials annexed to the Charter, a retrospective video about the competition, as well as the works of the competition laureates (both drawings and essays), in Latvian, are available in the section *Konkurss* on the website of the Constitutional Court [in Latvian]: <http://www.satv.tiesa.gov.lv/konkurss/>

Pictures from the award ceremony can be viewed here:

First year's - <http://www.satv.tiesa.gov.lv/satversmes-tiesa/galerija/skolenu-zimejumu-un-domrakstu-konkursa-svinigais-nosleguma-pasakums-satversmes-tiesa-15-02-2018/>

Second year's - http://www.satv.tiesa.gov.lv/galerija/gl-2019/4/?envira_id=26252

Third year's - <http://www.satv.tiesa.gov.lv/galerija/gl-2020/>

Retrospective videos for each year with subtitles in English are available here:

First year's - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GrJ598QdGLs>

Second year's - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GrJ598QdGLs>

Third year's - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CCgLj2dJ_j0