

Proposed operating process for the ACA Forum

I Registering for the forum.

1.1 Ordinary members.

Every judge from the ACA's member courts can register for the forum on the ACA's website. To do so, all they need to do is to complete the form at the following address: <http://www.aca-europe.eu/forum/index.php>.

1.2 Forum correspondents.

Each court should appoint a correspondent for the ACA Forum.

The correspondents have the task of ensuring that their court replies promptly to any questions submitted which particularly concern it and of posting certain information on the forum.

The choice of correspondents should be made in such a manner as to ensure that the said correspondent:

- Is a judge from the court concerned, in order that he himself may reply to a number of questions;
- Can fulfil this role for a reasonable period of time;
- Will be the contact person (either the judge himself or the department to which he reports within the court) to whom his colleagues can immediately turn if they have any questions concerning comparative law. Appropriate information must be circulated in each court.

The forum administrator will maintain an up-to-date list of correspondents.

II Submitting and replying to questions on the forum.

1. Spontaneous question: posting a new conversation "topic" on the forum.

The forum today operates as a standard shared web space: each person may post a "topic" to which the forum members are free to submit spontaneous replies. This operating method for the forum has generated spontaneous discussion and dialogue and we do not propose restricting this.

2. Question requiring a reply from the correspondents.

For some questions, it has been proposed that we add the possibility to flag the subject on the correspondents' network, notifying either all of them or some of them that the question has been submitted.

An e-mail will then be automatically sent to the correspondents concerned, detailing the subject of the question and stating the desired response time.

The correspondents will then have the task of replying to the question, either by themselves or by drawing upon their court's internal resources. They then send the reply to the person submitting the question and publish it at the same time on the forum in order that each of the members may consult this. Once the subject has been published on the forum, other spontaneous responses from members of the forum may be published.

This procedure should make it possible to ensure the most efficient use of the forum by guaranteeing speedy replies.

At the same time, only the correspondents would be authorised to send a question to the other correspondents' network. The members of each court wishing to use this system should therefore pass via the correspondent for their court.

Each correspondent must therefore ensure that sufficient information about the forum and its operating method is circulated in his court.

To handle this workload, should he so wish each correspondent will be authorised to accredit two people who (under his responsibility) may access the forum and post questions there or reply to questions asked on the forum by other correspondents.

III Managing the forum

The forum administrator should:

- ensure that the forum contains only relatively recent conversation topics. In principle, the forum is not a permanent source of documentation on certain subjects but rather an instrument to obtain a specific reply to a specific question. Previous questions may be consulted in the forum's archives.

- ensure balanced use by the various countries of the option to submit a question to the network of correspondents.