

**INTEREST GROUP ON INTERNATIONAL HEALTH LAW**  
**CALL FOR PAPERS**  
ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE EUROPEAN SOCIETY OF INTERNATIONAL LAW  
NATIONAL AND KAPODISTRIAN UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS  
12 SEPTEMBER 2019

**PUBLIC HEALTH IN THE AGE OF GLOBALIZATION: QUESTIONING THE  
CONSTRAINTS OF STATE SOVEREIGNTY**

In 1997 the Board on international health of the US Institute of medicine defined the concept of global health as follows: “The world’s nations now have too much in common to consider health as merely a national issue. Instead, a new concept of “global health” is required to deal with health problems to transcend national boundaries, that may be influenced by circumstances or experiences in other countries, and that are best addressed by cooperative actions and solutions.” (America’s Vital Interest in Global Health: Protecting our People, Enhancing our Economy, and Advancing our international Interests, 1997, p. 11).

The blurring distinctions between national and global health contrast with the sovereign rights States claim to retain in the field of public health.

In fact, the exercise of governmental authority in the public health field is essential: governments have to provide and regulate health services, develop strategies and mechanisms for universal access to health care, regulate tobacco and alcohol consumption, control the quality of health products, etc.

At the same time, the exercise of sovereign power in the field of public health is contested in many respects. On the one hand, increased interdependence across nations and increasing commonalities in health problems as consequences of contemporary globalization impose collaboration among states and compliance with basic norms of international health law. On the other hand, international norms and policies on crucial aspects of health care and public health are increasingly set by new actors such as international networks and public-private partnerships.

Challenges are manifold:

- the multiplication of non-state actors in the field of health imposes a discussion on the role, status and legitimacy of these actors under international law
- the recognition of the close connection between public health and human rights (and more particularly the right to health) and the concretization of these rights imposes new obligations and duties on states in the field of health
- the multiplication of global health challenges such as access to medicines, movement of pathogens across borders, intensified migration, increased burden of non-communicable diseases, public health security, climate change and other environmental crises, etc., imposes the need for development and intervention of international rules in order to prevail over issues that had been considered during a long period of time a central domain of sovereign states.

The organisers of the workshop wish to deal with the existing tensions between sovereign powers in the field of public health and the contemporary global health challenges in a globalised world. No subject is imposed but proposals should engage with the challenges and issues mentioned in this call.

Looking forward to reading your proposals!

For any questions, please email us at [stephanie.dagron@unige.ch](mailto:stephanie.dagron@unige.ch)

Your conveners:

Gian Luca Burci  
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## GUIDELINES

### ESIL selection criteria

- originality and innovativeness
- relevance to the theme
- geographical and gender balance

### Submission details

CV and abstract (max 300 words) should be submitted by E-mail in PDF

Please email to: [stephanie.dagron@unige.ch](mailto:stephanie.dagron@unige.ch)

**Deadline for abstract submission 25th of April**

Decision will be announced at the end of May

### GENERAL INFORMATION (PLEASE READ CAREFULLY)

*The Interest Group is unable to provide funding for travel and accommodation. Please see the ESIL website for information about [travel grants](#) and [careers' grants](#) offered to ESIL members, and other relevant information about the conference.*

*Selected speakers are strongly encouraged to become members of the Society and to register for the Annual Conference; please note, however, that the Society is unable to offer reduced conference registration fees to speakers at pre-conference events (please do not register as Agora speakers).*

*Selected speakers can indicate their interest in being considered for the ESIL Young Scholar Prize, if they meet the eligibility conditions as stated on the [ESIL website](#). The [ESIL Secretariat](#) must be informed of all speakers who wish to be considered for the Prize by 15 May at the very latest.*