



ESIL Interest Group on Migration and Refugee Law

Report on the activities of the ESIL Interest Group on Migration and Refugee Law

(1 October 2018 – 30 January 2021)

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1. Introduction

The Interest Group on Migration and Refugee Law (IG MigRefLaw) is one of the 16 interest groups of the European Society of International Law (ESIL/SEDI). The Interest Group focuses on the law and policy of States and international organisations with regard to people who seek entry to their communities. The movement of people across borders is a defining reality of our time. The IG MigRefLaw aims to provide a forum for discussion on the (international) legal principles and processes governing the movement of people as well as their reception in host communities. By doing so, the group hopes to build a shared knowledge base among ESIL members interested in international migration and refugee law.

The IG MigRefLaw has been in existence for more than five years now and presently has about 300 members. Our IG membership is highly diverse: both young PhD students and more experienced/ senior academics, alongside with practitioners, judges and staff from international organisations and EU bodies follow the IG and contribute to its newsletter, blogs and various other activities.

In 2020, the outbreak of COVID-19 has deeply impacted the IG activities and challenged the IG capacity to be dynamic in a changing world. All planned meetings have been postponed and the elections for the Coordinating Committee's renewal in January 2020 had no candidates.

The Coordinating Committee made all possible efforts to keep the IG network alive while projecting a restyling of this Interest Group on Migration and Refugee Law, departing from its mission and concept. The idea is to make the IG a functional exchange platform for its members, capable of boosting the visibility and audience of both individual and network-based initiatives.

With a view to making the IG an attraction pole for research spill-over while enhancing its visibility and audience, four key areas of intervention have been identified. First, a more active posting activity on social media and sharing platforms, including revitalising our twitter account (https://twitter.com/ig_migreflaw). Second, and linked to the first point, some changes on the IG webpage are needed (<https://migreflaw.wordpress.com/>) to make it catchier and more user-friendly. Third, we will work to unleash new synergies with national and European research groups and networks dealing with migration and refugee law, starting from next Catania Research Forum (15 April 2021), organised in cooperation with the Academy of Law and Migration (ADiM) at the University of Tuscia, Italy. Forth, we have invited all members to have their say on the governance of the IG.

We believe this can make the difference.

The IG MigRefLaw Coordinating Committee,

Kristof Gombeer, Tamás Molnár, Tom Syring, Daniela Vitiello

2. Activities of the Interest Group (2019-2021)

2021 ESIL RESEARCH FORUM – CATANIA

On 15 April 2021, the IG on Migration and Refugee Law will host a Webinar titled '*Understanding solidarity under international and EU refugee law: Between a rock and a hard place?*'.

The Webinar has been organised in the framework of this year's ESIL Research Forum in Catania ('*Solidarity. The Quest for Founding Utopias of International Law*'), with the collaboration of the Academy of Law and Migration (ADiM) at the University of Tuscia, Italy.

It targets scholars at an early stage of their careers, who have been selected through Call for Papers and will deal with the following issues: 1) The criminalisation of solidarity towards refugees and migrants; 2) The crisis of solidarity within the Common European Asylum System; 3) European solidarity towards third transit countries; 4) Other regional approaches to burden and responsibility-sharing in the framework of asylum policies; 5) Solidarity and vulnerability in the Global Compacts on migrants and refugees.

The link to access the Webinar will be shared with the IG members via email in due time.

16th ESIL ANNUAL CONFERENCE – STOCKHOLM

The IG on Migration and Refugee Law will host a Pre-conference Workshop on Wednesday 8 September 2021, within the framework of the 2021 Annual Conference on '*Changes in International Lawmaking: Actors, Processes, Impact*', to be held in Stockholm on 9-11 September 2021. Therefore, a Call for Papers will be launched by the end of March and the selection process will be completed by the end of April with a view to publishing the Workshop programme by mid-May. You will find further communications about travel/carers' grants and the Young Scholar Prize on the ESIL website. Please send us an email if you have any questions.

PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP – ATHENS, 12 SEPTEMBER 2019

The IG on Migration and Refugee Law organized a pre-conference side event on 12 September 2019 in Athens (Greece) entitled "*Children in the context of migration and asylum: a further layer of legal standards limiting State sovereignty?*", in the framework of the 15th ESIL Annual Conference held on 12-14 September 2019. The workshop focused on international legal issues concerning children in the context of migration and asylum, also to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The workshop revisited the international legal standards and safeguards protecting children

on the move in need of protection, which represent additional limitations to State sovereignty when it comes to these children's admission to, stay in, and expulsion from the territory of host States.

WORKSHOP ON 'MIGRATION AND THE RULE OF LAW' – GÖTTINGEN, 3 APRIL 2019

The IG on Migration and Refugee Law organized side-event in the framework of the 2019 ESIL Research Forum in Göttingen, which targeted scholars at an early stage of their careers. The workshop focused on the function and implications of the rule of law in migration issues, including the rule of law and appropriate state responses to migratory movements; the place and role of the rule of law in the global migration governance; the rule of law in the reception policies of migrants, refugees and/or forcibly displaced persons; and the role of regional and international organisations in supporting the rule of law in national legal, administrative and judicial processes, when dealing with migration issues.

3. Website

In accordance with paragraphs 5, 9 and 10 of the ESIL Interest Groups Policy Guidance, each Interest Group is required to set up a website which includes information about the group's activities, the names of the members of the Coordinating Committee members (including their contact details), the Group's past and future activities and information about how to become an ESIL member. The IG MigRefLaw has a WordPress website which includes the requisite information at <http://migreflaw.wordpress.com/>.

The website contains info the IG's activities (past and future events), the members of the Coordinating Committee and on how to become a member. In addition to our newsletters (*infra*), the website contains descriptions of new publications by IG members, blog entries written by members of the Interest Group, relevant calls for papers and vacancies.

Since September 2018, the Interest Group also has a Twitter-account 'ESIL MigRefLaw Group' ([@ig_migreflaw](https://twitter.com/ig_migreflaw)) in order to promote its activities and to share information relevant to the field of migration and refugee law. The Twitter account is managed by the members of the Coordinating Committee.

4. Newsletter

The Interest Group also prepares a quarterly Newsletter which reaches our subscribing IG members via e-mail (in future, sent out by the ESIL Secretariat) and which can also be found on our website: <https://migreflaw.wordpress.com/newsletter/>. The Newsletter updates our members on the activities of the IG and contains further info on upcoming events and conferences, calls for papers, new publications, vacancies, etc. In addition, they provide a useful e-platform to introduce new members.

5. Elections

New elections for the IG Coordinating Committee were held in January 2020.

Unfortunately, they had no candidates. As a result, the current co-convenors will continue for the next two years.

6. Contact

If you have any questions regarding the Interest Group or want to contribute to our website or events, please contact us at our functional e-mail address migreflaw@gmail.com or at:

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