

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE INTEREST GROUP ON SOCIAL SCIENCES AND INTERNATIONAL LAW  
2020/2021

**Past activities (2021)**

1. *Webinar: 'Sustainable Development and the Law. Potential and Challenges of Using Behavioural Insights', Hamburg, Institute for Law and Economics, 23-24 September 2021.*

This conference brought together researchers from different disciplines including law, psychology, political science, and economics to explore the potential of using behavioural insights in law- and policy-making to promote sustainable development, as well as how to overcome the challenges associated with it.

The webinar was a great success with active participation from all over the world, wonderful keynotes by Anne van Aaken and Arden Rowell, and great contributions by Michael Faure, Shen Yayun, Josephine van Zeben, Jean Galbraith, Mary MacLennan, Claire Hobden, Adam Chilton, Julia von Thienen, Lars Walsleben, Katharina Luckner, Fabrizio Esposito, Samuel Becher, Jan Trzaskowski, Kai Purnhagen, Hendrik Bruns, Eva van der Zee, and Leona Henry.

2. *ESIL Annual Conference Workshop – 8 September 2021, Stockholm*

At its first meeting in at the Annual Conference, the IG discussed the promises and perils of the social sciences in international legal scholarship. At the meeting, we discussed issues such as:

1. What are the important theoretical or epistemological differences between international law scholarship and other social sciences?
2. How should international legal scholars engage with the social science scholarship given (amongst others) the complexity of social sciences approaches, the level of expertise required, and the translation challenges between fields?
3. What are the limitations on transposing methodologies and behavioural insights elaborated in the context of the social sciences to international law scholarship and how can these be overcome?

This meeting of the IG was not held in a 'conventional' conference-style format. Instead, we discussed these issues in an informal setting that allowed us to become acquainted with each other, our research, and our disciplinary outlooks. The workshop was very successful due to the participation of many, and in particular due to our speakers and discussants and commentators Anne van Aaken, Ezgi Yildiz, Umut Yuksel, Silvia Steininger, Raphael Oidtmann, Monika Naime, Moshe Hirsch, Tommaso Soave, Phil Saengkrai, Nadia Kornioti, Sigurd Dhondt, Matjaž Nahtigal and Teodora Dragneanu

3. *Webinar: 'Bias in International Law', Hamburg, Institute for Law and Economics, 22-23 April 2021*

This workshop showcased the latest research in the area of empirical and behavioural international law and looks specifically at how international law influences our behaviour when – as international lawyers – we undertake the roles of judges, practitioners, mediators, decision-makers, and even activists and consumers.

The webinar was a great success, with many participants from around the globe as well as excellent presentations and discussions by Anne van Aaken, Moshe Hirsch, Jonathan Kolieb, Shiri Krebs, Benedikt Harald Pirker, Izabela Skoczen, Runar Hilleren Lie, Harlan Grant Cohen, Jose Reis, Sophie Duroy, Eva van der Zee, Evangelia Nissioti, Daniel Peat, Veronika Fikfak, Ezgi Yildiz, Brian Christopher Rathbun, and Tomer Broude.

#### **4. Membership**

The current list of members is held by the ESIL Secretariat, and it counts 107 persons (as of September 2021).

We welcome proposals from our Members for the organization of conferences, seminar, research fora and other similar events concerning social sciences and international law.

#### **5. Governance**

The IG is governed by three co-chairs, Veronika Fikfak (University of Copenhagen, iCourts), Daniel Peat (Leiden Law School), and Eva van der Zee (Hamburg University, Institute of Law and Economics). They run the IG, administer its webpage and organize regular events. The co-chairs meet regularly on Zoom.