

## **Annual Report 2025 of the ESIL Interest Group on Human Rights Law**

In the last year, the IG organized a series of different activities for its members, listed below. Moreover, in November 2025, three of its co-convenors finished their term (Joyce de Coninck, Pierre Thielbörger and Otto Spijkers) and three new convenors were elected (Annalisa Ciampi, Ezgi Özlü and Sotirios Lekkas) who joined Elena Abrusci in convening the IG.

Below is a summary of the past activities and the plan for next year.

### **1) The Reconstruction of Victimhood in International Human Rights Law**

The Pre-Conference Workshop of the Interest Group on International Human Rights Law with the topic “The Reconstruction of Victimhood in International Human Rights Law” was part of the ESIL Annual Conference on “Reconstructing International Law”, hosted by the Department of Law of the *Freie Universität Berlin* from 10<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> September 2025.

The workshop was held on the 11<sup>th</sup> of September 2025 and jointly organized by Elena Abrusci, Joyce De Coninck, Otto Spijkers and Pierre Thielbörger. Various speakers presented the multifaceted understanding of victimhood in international human rights law in eight different papers, analyzing how the concept is understood in different aspects of human rights law which highlighted common themes and distinct features of the concept. The workshop included perspectives of established academics, early career researchers as well as practitioners.

The first panel, moderated by Otto Spijkers, dealt with victimhood before UN Treaty Bodies (Betül Durmuş), the legal recognition of victim status in international human rights law (Flore Heinrich), the “Innocent Civilian”-concept (Heidi Gilchrist) and victimhood in the context of climate change litigation with a focus on the Inter-American Human Rights system (Sol Meckievi & Gastón Medici-Colombo).

The second panel, moderated by Pierre Thielbörger, included a presentation of Rachel López (also on behalf of Meredith Elizalde on Kempis Songster) on “Restoring Justice”, of Nina Bries Silva on Nasa indigenous territories, of Tamar Luster on the ‘deprivation of victimhood’, and lastly of Anastasiia Zhuravel on victimhood in relation to international humanitarian law, human rights and *jus ad bellum*.

The workshop was attended by more than 30 participants, and each presentation received several interested questions from the audience. The co-convenors thank all presenters and the audience for a very lively and thought-provoking discussion.

### **2) Scholarship in progress sessions**

The IG issued a call for interest for ‘Scholarship-in-progress’ sessions, aimed at providing researchers at any stage of career a platform to showcase their work and receive feedback on ongoing draft project. We held the first session in November 2024 with Erick Guapizaca Jimenez presenting on indigenous rights and the issue of consent and Dr Colin Luoma acting as discussant. We had to pause further sessions for unforeseeable circumstances but we remain keen to organize something similar this year.

### **3) Special Issue forthcoming in International Journal of Human Rights**

The Special Issue on 'Technology, Vulnerability and Human Rights' that resulted from the 2024 IG's workshop is still in preparation. It will be published by the end of this year in the International Journal of Human Rights.

### **4) Edited book on ‘Mapping the Evolution of Reparations across the Transforming Human Rights Regime’**

The book ‘Mapping the Evolution of Reparations across the Transforming Human Rights Regime’ edited by the IG IHRL conveners Otto Spijkers, Iakovos Iakovidis, Pierre Thielborger and Elena Abrusci is in the final stages of production and should be published by the end of the year/beginning of 2026. The book is the result of the pre-conference workshop the IG organized at the ESIL Annual Conference in 2023 in Aix-en-Provence.

### **5) Future activities- ‘IHRL Work-in-progress’**

In addition to the pre-conference workshop at the Annual Conference in September, the IG is planning to organize regular monthly sessions to discuss current issues of interest to the IG community. In particular, we invite early career researchers (broadly understood) to present on ongoing research in an informal and supportive environment. More details will be shared soon with a dedicated call for interest.