



International Organisations  
Interest Group

## ESIL Interest Group on International Organizations

Call for Papers | ESIL Annual Conference 2026 | Malaga

The ESIL Interest Group on International Organizations welcomes submissions for the interest group workshop taking place as part of the ESIL Annual Conference on **Thursday, 3 September 2026, 09.00-12.00**, in Malaga (Room TBC) and online.

### **Conflict Unbound? Revisiting International Organizations and Contestation**

International Organizations have traditionally been viewed as institutions mitigating conflict, promoting peace and cooperation among their members. While there is truth in this picture, the reality is that international organizations represent more than mere fora where members cooperate or even occasionally present their disagreements. International organizations form complex independent actors that are themselves often parties to disputes and confrontation, as opposed to witnesses of what states and other actors do. Thus, international organizations increasingly find themselves in dispute with members on a variety of matters that are not always related to membership obligations. They likewise often find themselves in disagreement or competition with other organizations and in clashes with non-members. Divergence may also exist within organizations, either between different agencies/organs or between different elements within a single agency or organ. Finally, international organizations have often been accused of consolidating existing power discrepancies as well as imperial and (neo-)colonial tendencies. The role of international organizations in this respect often comes with its own conflictual dimension, not just with members' governments at the level of abstract policymaking but also with local constituents at the level of concrete injustices and human rights violations.

The Interest Group thus invites papers to discuss the role that law and legal argument may or may not play in navigating conflicts with or within international organizations. We welcome both submissions that analyse recent examples of conflict involving international organisations (in the broad sense defined above) and theoretical perspectives on how to conceptualise different instances of conflict within the parameters of international organisations law and general public international law. Some suggested subthemes are as follows:

- Conflict in the relationship between states and contingents of international organizations after the ICJ's Advisory Opinion on *Obligations of Israel in relation to the Presence and Activities of the United Nations, Other International Organizations and Third States in and in relation to the Occupied Palestinian Territory.*
- International organizations being involved in local injustices or rights violations either through the implementation of policymaking or through acts on the ground.
- Lessons learned from the work of administrative tribunals and other conflict resolution mechanisms that exist within international organizations.
- Examples questioning the legality of an act/stance taken by an international organization and consequences thereof (legal and others).
- International organisations used as a stage/forum for conflict between member states (even when it is unrelated with their mandate).
- Theoretical/analytical approaches to the application of general international law to international organizations.
- Studying less flashy, day-to-day tensions between international organizations (e.g. applying the core of the EU's standards of data protection to other international organizations).
- Conflict between international organizations and Big Tech.
- Problems of applicable law between international organizations and private parties.
- Understudied low-level relationships and potential friction between organizations or between different agencies/organs of the same organization.

These themes are indicative only, and the Interest Group looks forward to reading about different angles on the topic of conflict and international organizations.

The abstracts should be between 500 and 600 words, and be submitted, alongside a short biography of 200 words maximum in the same document, to [igioesil@gmail.com](mailto:igioesil@gmail.com). The deadline for submission of the abstract is Friday, 10 April 2026. Participants will be expected to submit an extended abstract of 3,000 words ahead of the Conference.

Given the aims and format of the panels adopted by ESIL, the Interest Group will select abstracts pursuant to the following criteria:

- Submissions by early-career scholars
- Originality and innovativeness of the work
- Relevance to the Panel theme
- Geographical and gender balance

The following information must be provided with each abstract:

- The author's name and any affiliation
- Small biography (should be included in the same document)
- The author's contact details
- Whether the author is a current ESIL member

The ESIL encourages anyone participating in its activities to become a member, as the Society relies primarily on membership contributions to ensure its sustainability.

Organising Committee

- Christiane Ahlborn (Trinity College Dublin)
- Orfeas Chasapis Tassinis (University of Cambridge)
- Lorenzo Gasbarri (Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna)
- Rita Guerreiro Teixeira (Utrecht University)
- Mara Tignino (University of Geneva)

The Interest Group is unable to provide funding for travel and accommodation. Selected speakers will be expected to bear the costs of their own travel and accommodation. Some [ESIL travel grants](#) and [ESIL carers' grants](#) will be available to offer partial financial support to speakers who have exhausted other potential sources of funding. Please see the [ESIL website](#) for all relevant information about the conference. All participants at ESIL Interest Group workshops are required to register for the Annual Conference. There will be an option to register just to attend the IG workshops; however, all participants are warmly invited to attend the entire event.

ESIL Early-Career Scholar Prize

Papers accepted for this interest group workshop will be eligible for the ESIL ECSP. Candidates have to be ESIL members at the time of the submission of the abstract. More details about the prize, eligibility and procedure can be found here: <https://esil-sedi.eu/esil-early-career-scholar-prize/>