



## CALL FOR PAPERS

**2027 ESIL Research Forum, University of Maribor, 22–23 April 2027**

### **THE EUROPEAN UNION, THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE, AND OTHER REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS IN A CHANGING WORLD**

The 2027 ESIL Research Forum will take place on **22–23 April 2027** and will be hosted by *the Faculty of Law, University of Maribor, Slovenia*. The ESIL Research Forum is a scholarly conference that promotes engagement with research in progress by members of the Society in the early stages of their careers. It has a small and intensive format. A maximum of 25–30 papers will be selected, and presenters will receive detailed feedback on their presentations from members of the ESIL Board and invited experts.

Early-career scholars are:

- postgraduate law degree candidates,
- PhD candidates, or those who defended their PhD no more than three years prior to the abstracts' submission deadline,
- individuals in the first five years of their career following their most recent non-PhD degree, who have published legal research.

The 2027 Research Forum addresses the following topic:

**“The European Union, the Council of Europe, and Other Regional Organisations in a Changing World”**

The relationship between regional organisations, including the European Union (EU) and the Council of Europe, and international law is being reshaped in response to broader transformations in the international legal order. While the international legal system has traditionally been understood as state-centred and treaty-based, it is now characterised by a growing density of legal norms, institutions, and actors operating across overlapping regimes. In this evolving context, regional organisations play an increasing role not only in implementing but also in shaping international law through their own legal and institutional frameworks.

One significant change concerns the redistribution of normative authority in international law. The emergence of new influential states and the diversification of institutional actors have reduced the relative centrality of traditional Western powers in shaping legal development. At the same time, multilateral institutions increasingly face challenges to their authority and effectiveness, as states and other actors contest established interpretive practices and compliance expectations.

A further development is the increasing fragmentation of international law into specialised regimes, such as trade, environmental protection, human rights, security, and investment law. These regimes often operate with distinct institutional frameworks and interpretive logics, which can result in normative overlap and potential conflict. Regional organisations are frequently situated at the intersection of these regimes, particularly in areas such as trade and environment or security and human rights, where they must navigate competing obligations stemming from different legal sources.

In addition, there is a growing tendency toward regulatory diffusion through unilateral or regional measures with extraterritorial effects. The EU is a prominent example of this phenomenon, as its internal regulatory standards in fields such as data protection, environmental regulation, migration matters, and financial governance often influence or condition external actors. This development reflects a broader shift in international law towards governance through regulatory networks and standards rather than exclusively through classical inter-state treaty frameworks, raising doctrinal questions concerning jurisdiction, legitimacy, and the spatial reach of legal norms.

Finally, the increasing role of regional organisations contributes to a more layered and decentralised international legal structure. Entities such as the EU, the Council of Europe, the Southern Common Market (Mercado Común del Sur, MERCOSUR), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the African Union do not merely implement international law but actively participate in its development and interpretation through their own legal systems. This contributes to a pluralised legal environment in which coherence is no longer assumed but must be actively constructed through interpretive techniques, institutional coordination, and conflict-management principles.

As a unique entity that operates both within and alongside the international legal system, the EU, and also other regional organisations, not only responds to these changes but also contributes to shaping them. This makes them a particularly useful case for examining how international law is adapting to a more complex, contested, and pluralistic global environment.

**The organisers of the 2027 ESIL Research Forum invite submission of papers on aspects of “The European Union, the Council of Europe, and Other Regional Organisations in a Changing World”, including the following themes:**

- Trade, Environment, and Sustainable Development
- Human Rights, Security, and Sanctions in the EU and International Practice
- Migration and the Limits of International Law
- Investment Protection
- Emerging Technologies, Digital Regulation, and Global Norm-Making
- Regional Organisations and the Transformation of International Law

To apply, please submit an abstract (maximum 650 words) to [esil-rf.2027@um.si](mailto:esil-rf.2027@um.si) by **30 September 2026 (12:00 CET)**.

Submissions should include the following information: name, affiliation, email address, whether you are an ESIL member, and a one-page curriculum vitae.

The organisers also welcome proposals for poster presentations.

Successful applicants will be notified by email by **1 November 2026**. The deadline for submission of the complete drafts (3,500–4,000 words) to be discussed at the Research Forum is **28 February 2027**. To ensure a broad range of speakers at ESIL events, and to provide the opportunity for new participants to present for the first time, as a general rule, submissions from applicants who have not spoken at the most recent Annual Conference or Research Forum will be given priority.

The 2027 Research Forum will be held in Maribor as an in-person event. Speakers will be expected to bear the costs of their own travel and accommodation. A limited number of ESIL travel grants (link: <https://esil-sedi.eu/travel-grants/>) and carers' grants (link: <https://esil-sedi.eu/carers-grants-2/>) will be available to offer partial financial support to ESIL members who have exhausted other potential sources of funding. The deadline for grant applications is **15 January 2027**.

Participation requires ESIL membership (link: <https://esil-sedi.eu/individual-members/>). Most participants will be eligible for a reduced ESIL membership fee, and there are no registration fees to attend the Research Forum. Moreover, lunch will be offered on both days and a dinner for conference participants will be hosted on **22 April 2027**.

ESIL Interest Groups are invited to organise online workshops in connection with the Research Forum. These may be scheduled in the days immediately before or after the event. Conveners interested in organising a workshop are invited to contact [esil.secretariat@eui.eu](mailto:esil.secretariat@eui.eu) to express their interest. The ESIL Secretariat, in coordination with the Research Forum organisers, will advertise the Call for Papers and the workshops programme.