REPORT TO THE BOARD OF THE EUROPEAN SOCIETY OF INTERNATIONAL LAW
INTEREST GROUP ON ENERGY AND INTERNATIONAL LAW
2025 - 2026

ESIL IG Co-convenors:

Dr. Elena Cima, University of Geneva
Prof. Ilaria Espa, Università della Svizzera Italiana
Dr. Martin Švec, Právnická fakulta Masarykovy univerzity

1. ACTIVITIES

A) Webinar Series "International Energy Law Dialogues"

The IG on Energy and International has launched a new webinar series titled "International Energy Law Dialogues". The rationale for launching this webinar series arises from the need to ensure continuous engagement and exchange beyond the in-person events that the IG organizes. As a result, the series is aimed at providing a platform for dialogue on contemporary issues at the intersection of energy and international law, strengthening the IG's visibility and attract new Members, and reinforcing the ESIL community and promoting knowledge exchange throughout the year.

As part of this series, the IG has organized the following webinar on 26 February 2026 on the topic **"International Energy Law Dialogues: The End of Fossil Fuels? International Law Perspective",** featuring, as speakers, Dominic Coppens (Maastricht University) and Helionor de Anzizu (CIEL), and Elena Cima (University of Geneva). 107 people have registeres for the seminar and the participants were around 55 in addition to the speakers.

B) Workshop at ESIL Annual Conference in Malaga "International Law and Conflict: and Enduring Tension?" Wednesday 2 September 2026

On 2 September 2026 the IG on Energy and International Law organized a Workshop as part of the 21st ESIL Annual Conference in Malaga. The Workshop was titled "*From Interdependence to Weaponisation: Energy Security and International Law*", it was organized based on an international call for papers.

The workshop explored how geopolitical competition, security concerns and the energy transition are reshaping international law and transforming energy from a source of mutual interdependence into an instrument of geopolitical power. Presentations addressed a broad range of issues, including critical minerals and deep-sea mining, international trade and investment law, climate obligations, economic sanctions, energy sovereignty and European

energy security. Particular attention was paid to the role of international law not only in responding to the securitisation and weaponisation of energy relations, but also as an instrument through which geopolitical power is exercised.

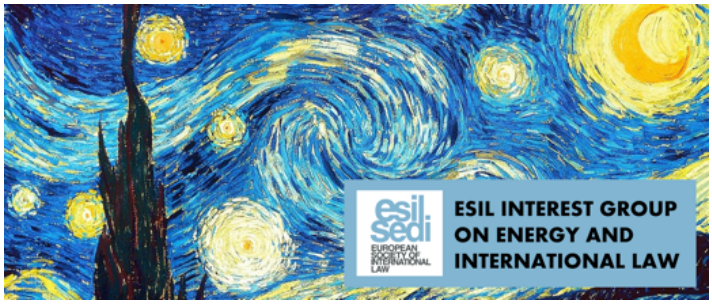
The program of the Workshop is attached to this Report as Annex I.

2. FUTURE ACTIVITIES

The ESIL IG on Energy and International Law is exploring the possibility to organize workshops as side events at both the 2027 ESIL Research Forum organized in Maribor (Slovenia), and at the 22nd ESIL Annual Conference that will take place in Lisbon. More detailed information on forthcoming activities will be communicated as soon as the relevant details are finalized.

3. GOVERNANCE

Since September 2025, following a call for applications for the Interest Group's Coordinating Committee, two members of the Coordinating Committee have agreed to renew their mandates. They are joined by the sole eligible candidate. As a result, the Energy and International Law Interest Group is governed by three Co-conveners: Elena Cima (Chair) (University of Geneva), Ilaria Espa (Università della Svizzera Italiana), and Martin Švec (Právnická fakulta Masarykovy Univerzity). They run the Interest Group's day-to-day business and organize its regular events. They have also managed to meet during Conferences and Seminars of common interest.



From Interdependence to Weaponisation:

Energy Security and International Law

Pre-Conference Workshop of the Interest Group on Energy and International Law
Convened by Elena Cima, Ilaria Espa, and Martin Švec

2026 ESIL Annual Conference on "International Law and Conflict: An Enduring Tension?"
2 September 2026, 15:00-18:00
Facultad de Derecho, Bulevar Louis Pasteur, 26 (Campus de Teatinos), Málaga, Spain

Energy, once framed primarily as a source of mutual interdependence, is increasingly deployed as an instrument of power in an increasingly conflictual international order. Geopolitical tensions, security concerns, and technological change are reshaping energy relations and raising new questions for international law.

This workshop seeks to explore the different forms of conflict associated with these transformations, which may include military and security conflicts (such as attacks on energy infrastructure, cyber operations, or resource exploitation in situations of armed conflict), as well as economic and trade conflicts (including sanctions, export controls, transit disputes, and investment claims arising from security-driven energy measures).

More broadly, the workshop seeks to explore geopolitical rivalries, including the weaponisation of energy dependencies, competing regulatory spheres of influence, and sovereignty disputes over resources, as well as technological and transitional conflicts related to digitalisation, critical minerals, and the restructuring of global supply chains in the energy transition.

By doing so, the discussion will try to assess how international law responds to (and is re-shaped by) the securitisation of energy in an era marked by escalating confrontation and the erosion of multilateralism and rule-based frameworks.

Program

15:00–15:10	**Welcome and Introduction** **Elena Cima**, Senior Lecturer, University of Geneva **Ilaria Espa,** Associate Professor, Università della Svizzera Italiana **Martin Švec,** Assistant Professor, Masaryk University
Panel 1 **Critical Minerals, Resource Control, and the Geopolitics of the Energy Transition**	
15:10–16:05	**Cédric Henet**, Visiting Professor, UCLouvain; Lawyer, Simont Braun *Deep-Sea Mining of Critical Minerals: A Coming Conflict between EU Environmental Law and UNCLOS?* **Sunayana Sasmal**, Research Fellow, University of Sussex *Securing Critical Minerals Through "Predesigned Control" and "Tacit Influence": International Law as a Tool of Geoeconomic Power* **Nicolò Andreotti**, PhD Graduate, University of Padua *Security Exception Clauses and Critical Minerals Governance: Reassessing Investment Treaty Constraints.* **Discussion**
16:05–16:20	**Coffee Break**
Panel 2 **Investment Law, Sanctions, and the Weaponisation of Legal Instruments**	
16:20–17:15	**Lilit Nagapetyan**, PhD Candidate, Queen Mary University of London *Arbitrating the Critical Minerals Arms Race: ISDS, Resource Nationalism, and the Weaponisation of Supply Chain Governance* **Chen Yu**, Assistant Professor, City University of Hong Kong *Reassessing the Modernization of International Investment Treaties through the Lens of the Energy Trilemma* **Ted Gleason**, Associate Professor, Grenoble Ecole de Management *Emerging Customary Climate Obligations and the Limits of Fossil Fuel Investment Protection: Insights from Recent Events in Venezuela* **Bruno Garcia da Silva**, Associate, Linklaters *The Unintended Consequences of EU Sanctions' Legal Design on European Energy-Intensive Industries* **Discussion**

Panel 3 Energy Sovereignty, Regionalism, and Contested Legal Orders	
17:15–18:00	**Paolo Davide Farah**, Visiting Professor of Law, University of Tulsa; Professor, West Virginia University; President, gLAWcal *Energy Sovereignty Under Constraint: Tribal Governance, Global Infrastructure, and the Politics of Knowledge in the Energy Transition* **Urban Rusnak**, Masaryk University *Do We Have a Carpathian Anomaly in the European Energy Security System?* **Discussion & Conclusions**