

Interest Group on
International Legal Theory & Philosophy
IGILTP

IGILTP Report for September 2025 - September 2026[1]

1. Activities:

On 8 March 2026, in accordance with the general theme of the 2026 ESIL Conference in Málaga, the Coordinating Committee of the IGILTP (hereinafter 'CC') issued a call for papers, whose content had been previously discussed among the five members of the CC. The goal of the IGILTP was to organize a Pre-Conference Workshop in connection with the ESIL annual conference in Malaga. The title the call was 'A World without Rules? The Responsibility of International Law Scholars in Times of Fatigue'. The call attracted 16 submissions.

A three-member committee, chosen within the CC, composed of Andrea Carcano, Kevin Crow, and Kostia Gorobets jointly reviewed the submissions, and selected 6 abstracts, and identified possible replacements. The criteria adopted in the selection process included quality and originality of the abstract, equality of gender, and geographical representation. The list of selected candidates was approved by the ESIL IGs coordinators.

As a result, the IGILTP held a pre-conference workshop on 2 September 2026 at the 21st ESIL Annual Conference at University of Málaga. It had the title 'A World without Rules? The Responsibility of International Law Scholars in Times of Fatigue' under the chairmanship of Andrea Carcano and Nina Mileva and divided into two distinct thematic sessions. Four papers were presented by Emanuele CIMIOTTA (Italy, University of Perugia); Milena STERIO (USA, Cleveland State University); Matina PAPADAKI (United Kingdom, University of Glasgow); Liliana TYMCHENKO (Lithuania, European Humanities University). Some 25-30 people attended the event and numerous questions were asked. This workshop was followed by a collective session on contemporary issues. This was devoted to a reflective discussion on the question: ***How does it feel to practise international law in these rule-less times?*** The 16 participants explored how to recognise and respond to professional fatigue, and whether and why it is important for international lawyers to reflect on the emotional and professional dimensions of their work. The discussion took place in a thoughtful and contemplative atmosphere, highlighting the different roles and experiences of international law across various parts of the world. Participants appreciated the opportunity for this kind of exchange and expressed interest in repeating the format at future meetings.

On 8 April 2026, the IGILTP hosted a workshop on the subject Normalizing Sustainability: Theoretical Perspectives on Stability and Change in International Law. The workshop took place within the confines of the 2026 ESIL Research Forum (Krakow), and per the guidelines of the event it took place entirely online. The topic of the workshop was selected to align with the broader Forum theme – "Sustainable International Law Reconciling Stability and Change". "Sustainability" has become one of international law's most successful travelling concepts. From climate treaties and trade agreements to peacebuilding mandates,

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investment contracts and human rights reporting, the language of sustainability offers an apparently self-evident orientation for governing the planet. Yet the concept's very plasticity invites further investigation. Against this background, the workshop approached "sustainability" as a site of translation between disciplines and forms of expertise. The workshop consisted of opening remarks delivered by IG Coordinating Committee member Nina Mileva, followed by two panels chaired by Coordinating Committee members Kevin Crow and Kostia Gorobets respectively. The panels were structured in the format of presentation – commentary – response for each speaker, followed by a plenary discussion round. Speakers circulated their draft papers in advance to facilitate this format. Each paper was assigned a commentator within the panel, allowing for detailed engagement. Panel 1 was dedicated to Sustainability as Form in International Law. The papers presented in this panel focused on "sustainability" as a concept that has been introduced in various regimes of international law (international investment and trade law, the law of treaties, and EU law), examining how this introduction affected legal forms in the regime in question. The speakers in this panel were: Claudia Milli (Ca' Foscari University of Venice), Nevena Jevremović (University of Aberdeen), Güzide İrem Can (University of Szeged), and Luca Tenreira (European University Institute). Panel 2 was dedicated to Sustainability as Structure in International Law. The papers presented in this panel focused on "sustainability" as a structuring tool in different fields of international law, examining how the concept has transformed norms, processes, and metrics in the fields under consideration. The speakers in this panel were: Judith van Veldhuizen (European University Institute), Dobrosława C. Budzianowska (University of Wroclaw), and Edward S. Koellner (University of New Hampshire, Franklin Pierce School of Law).

In accordance with the planning mentioned in the previous report, the IGILTP has acted as co-organiser with the Department of Law of the University of Groningen of a symposium "Strengthening International Law through Constructive Thinking?" which took place on 29 April 2026 at the University of Groningen (The Netherlands). The symposium is part of IG's *en tour* series, which aims at hosting yearly events around Europe in collaboration with local organisers. This event was dedicated to Monica Hakimi's recent paper "Thinking Constructively About International Law" and focused on effects and assumptions of the sovereigntist theoretical model of international law, which often blocks our capacity to (re)imagine international law beyond state-centric paradigms. The symposium was a great success, attracting 60+ on-site participants. Among the speakers at the symposium were Prof. Veronika Bílková (Charles University of Prague), Prof. Marcel Brus (University of Groningen), Dr. Gemma Lligadas (Friedrich-Alexander University of Erlangen-Nuremberg), Prof. Wouter Werner (Free University Amsterdam), Mr. Doruk Erhan (Yale University), and, of course, Prof. Monica Hakimi herself. The event was further published as a series of blog posts on Verfassungsblog.

2. Planned Events for the 2026-2027 reporting period:

1) The CC of the IGILTP will consider making an application for an Agora panel at the next annual conference, and prepare a call for papers for the event. Failing that, the CC shall strive to organise a pre-conference workshop which may be, once more, followed by a reflective discussion.
2) Having meetings of the IGILTP in presence in the cities closer to us, such as: Lund, Groningen and Modena. It would be a sort of '**IGILTP *en tour***'.

3) Creating an "**IGTLIP Online Reading Club**" where members of the IGILTP, together with authors could meet and discuss new and interesting scholarship (articles and books) in the field of the theory of international law broadly interpreted.

3. Interest Group Governance

4. On May 2025, Kostia Gorobets, Valentin Jeutner, and Nina Mileva were elected to sit in the CC for a 4-year term. They replaced Ozlem Ulgen and Noora Arajärvi whose mandate had come to an end, and Panos Merkouris who also stepped down due to work commitments. The CC wishes to express its appreciation and gratitude to Ozlem, Noora, and Panos for all the important work done by them. At a meeting held on 2 June 2025, Andrea Carcano was nominated **Acting Chair** of the Coordinating Committee formally replacing Ozlem Ulgen (the previous chair). On 15 August 2025, Andrea Carcano was elected by the CC, in its new composition, to be the **Chair of the Coordinating Committee** of the IGILTP. Andrea Carcano' term in the Coordinating Committee shall end in May 2027. Elections for the vacant position will be held by that time.

5. The following distribution of functions have been agreed to in a meeting held on 22 September 2022 and continue in effect: Nina Mileva will be the **Events Manager**, responsible for coordinating the organisation of the IG's events (such as pre-conference workshops or stand-alone seminars); Kostia Gorobets will be the **Communications Manager**, responsible for maintaining the social media accounts and communication with the ESIL board; Kevin Crow shall continue as **Website Manager**, responsible for keeping it running, updating the information, etc.; and Valentin Jeutner will be the **Deputy-Chair** of the CC.