



**RIGA
GRADUATE
SCHOOL OF
LAW**



Constitutional Court of
the Republic of Latvia

European Society of International Law
12th Annual Conference
How International Law Works in Times of Crisis

Rīga, 8 - 10 September 2016

Call for Proposals for Agorae from ESIL Interest Groups

The 12th Annual Conference of the European Society of International Law will take place in Rīga, Latvia, hosted by the Riga Graduate School of Law in cooperation with the Latvian Constitutional Court.

Two additional agorae at the Riga Conference will be based on proposals for a full panel. Full agorae proposals can only be submitted by the Coordinating Committee of an ESIL Interest Group.

The purpose of the agorae is to share cutting-edge research in specific areas of international law, to stimulate debate, and to foster contacts between participants. Papers presented in agorae should present innovative ideas, be unpublished at the moment of presentation, and be at an advanced stage of completion.

Proposals for agorae should correspond to the conference theme. To avoid proposals that overlap with fora or agorae already on the programme, submitters should first read the descriptions of the planned fora and agorae (see separate Fora document for the list of fora and the Call for Papers for the list of agorae).

The Theme of the Conference

In recent years the world has yet again been confronted with events that required decisions going to the heart of the international legal order, which it has sought to build since the creation of the United Nations and, especially, since the fall of the Berlin Wall. The 2016 ESIL annual conference in Rīga is taking place at a time when the word 'crisis' frequently comes to mind, either with reference to the European public order or international law in general.

The territorial integrity of many States continues to be undermined. The rise of Islamic State and the continued proliferation of other violent extremist groups provide serious challenges to the world order we have striven to build. Crises around the world range from more traditional threats to territorial integrity and security, through the use of modern technology or forms of warfare to more fundamental challenges to the planet through climate change and environmental threats. Problems in the global, European and national economies and financial markets provide yet further examples of crises. Many of these developments are interlinked. For example, the unprecedented flow of migrants and refugees into Europe is linked to security, the economy, and climate change. This is all taking place at a time when globalization is a reality and traditional societal boundaries are continually being eroded through ever-developing interdependencies while at the same time faced with growing nationalism.

These developments raise challenges at two levels. One is to ask whether international law itself is in crisis. Is it possible to identify challenges to the basic underpinnings of the traditional international

legal order that would be qualitatively different from those faced previously? Another way of posing the question is to enquire whether international law is up to the task of dealing with particular crises.

It should, of course, be recognized that crises are not new for the discipline of international law. It has been argued that a sense of crisis is integral to the discipline. The role, relevance and institutions of international law have always been challenged, especially when faced with different kinds of crisis. Moreover, moments of crisis may offer new possibilities. Historically, such moments have led to new solutions in the world community, including new projects involving normative developments. Be that as it may, international lawyers should confront and address this sense of crisis embedded in their discipline.

Against this background, the ESIL Conference in Rīga will address the theme ***How International Law Works in Times of Crisis***.

The conference will provide an opportunity to discuss the crisis of international law, the international law of crisis, and also different biases and assumptions that contribute to questions about crisis. Questions that will be discussed include: In times of crisis, how does international law work? More specifically: How is international law rising to the challenge of contemporary crises, of capturing old and factually new phenomena and dealing with them in a normative context? What is the role of international lawyers in addressing the old and new crises? What role is assumed by (regional) organizations and the European Union in particular as well as non-state actors in this context of multiple tensions and multiple visions of the past and the future? This focus invites legal and interdisciplinary approaches to address these issues more generally as well as in different specialised areas of international law.

Submission of Agorae Proposals

Agorae proposals must include all information on individual papers that are to be part of the agorae, as detailed in the Call for Papers. Proposals (in word or pdf format) must be submitted via e-mail: esil.agorae@rgsl.edu.lv.

The following information must be provided when submitting an agora proposal:

- The name of the ESIL Interest Group submitting the proposal
- The contact details of the person(s) submitting the proposal, including email address and phone number
- The title of the agora
- A description of the overall theme of the panel and the insights expected from the discussion
- The format of the agora: panel, roundtable, or other format (please note: all agorae will be scheduled for 1.5 hours)
- For each paper, the information required for the submission of an abstract (see Call for Papers)

Timeline

- The deadline for submission of agorae proposals is **31 January 2016**
- Successful applicants will be informed no later than **31 March 2016**
- The deadline for submission of the papers of accepted agorae is **1 July 2016**
- The conference begins on Thursday 8 September and ends on Saturday 10 September 2016
- The deadline for submission of final papers (to be included in the ESIL SSRN series, a future conference publication, and / or the Baltic Yearbook of International Law) is **1 November 2016**

Finances

All selected agora speakers must register for the conference and, if ESIL members, will be eligible for a reduced conference registration fee and an invitation to the conference dinner. ESIL does not cover expenses for travel and accommodation.

Publication

After the conference, ESIL provides the opportunity to publish papers in the ESIL SSRN Series and also plans to publish selected high-quality papers in a book series with a renowned publisher. Some papers will be selected for publication in the Baltic Yearbook of International Law for 2016.