



UNIVERSITÀ
degli STUDI
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DIPARTIMENTO di
GIURISPRUDENZA

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EUROPEAN
SOCIETY OF
INTERNATIONAL
LAW



CALL FOR PAPERS

2025 ESIL Research Forum | University of Catania, 20-21 March 2025

INTERNATIONAL LAW IN THE AGE OF PERMACRISIS

The 2025 ESIL Research Forum will take place on **Thursday 20 and Friday 21 March 2025** and will be hosted by the Department of Law of the University of Catania.

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: no more than 25-30 paper submissions will be selected. During the Forum, selected speakers will receive comments 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 longer than three years prior to the submission of an abstract.
- Individuals in the first five years of their career after their last academic degree (excluding PhD), who have published legal research.

The 2025 Research Forum addresses the following topic:

“International Law in the Age of Permacrisis”

Crisis-centred languages are traditionally an inherent part of international law discourses. They offer an alternative vocabulary to explore the deconstruction and rebuilding of legal systems and may have transformative effects on their constituent elements and interactions.

‘Permacrisis’ is a new concept that refers to ‘an extended period of instability and insecurity resulting from a series of catastrophic events’ (*Collins Dictionary*). This emerging narrative

captures the current condition where overlapping crises follow one another with an increasing frequency and spread faster in a highly interconnected world. This exposes the international legal order to a permanent state of crisis characterized by a prolonged sense of emergency, high levels of uncertainty, fragility and unpredictability.

Climate change and environmental catastrophes, emerging infectious diseases, devastating armed conflicts, increasing cross-border movements of people and global governance institutional crisis, and the accompanying structural economic challenges that come with these crises, are calling for unprecedented and extraordinary responses, highlighting the inadequacy of instruments, shifting the focus towards preparedness, and triggering processes of transformation.

Against this backdrop, the 2025 Research Forum aims to reflect on the status of international law and its potential transformation in the age of permacrisis. Two underlying themes will shape the discussions: how international actors, norms and processes are deploying old and new tools and methods to face emerging challenges, and broader reflections on how permacrisis narratives gain traction and reframe international legal discourse.

The organizers of the 2025 ESIL Research Forum invite submission of papers on aspects of “International Law in the Age of Permacrisis”, including the following themes:

1. The impact of the semantics of permacrisis on the sources of international law, including on the hierarchy of its norms.
2. The ‘normalisation’ of crisis response mechanisms in practice and in international legal discourse.
3. The adequacy of existing crisis-response mechanisms within particular institutions (eg, the institution of ‘derogations’ in the human rights context).
4. The impact of permacrises on the interpretation of international instruments, by States and international institutions.
5. The impact of permanent states of crisis on the traditional models of governance of international organizations, including the European Union.
6. Implications and normative challenges for specific policy areas related to constant exposure to crisis phenomena.

To apply, please submit an abstract of no more than 650 words to 2025esilrf.catania@gmail.com by **30 September 2024 (13.00 CEST)**.

The following information should be included with your abstract: your name, affiliation, email address, whether you are an ESIL member, plus a one-page curriculum vitae. The organizers also welcome proposals for poster presentations.

Successful applicants will be notified by email by **30 November 2024**. The deadline for submission of the complete drafts to be discussed at the Research Forum is **21 February 2025**.

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 2025 Research Forum will be held in Catania as an in-person event. Speakers will be expected to attend the Research Forum, though online participation may be possible in exceptional cases. Speakers will be expected to bear the costs of their own travel and accommodation. A limited number of ESIL [travel grants](#) and [carers' grants](#) 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 **20 January 2025**.

It is a condition of participation that all attendees must be [ESIL 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 **Thursday 20 March 2025**.

ESIL Interest Groups are invited to organize online workshops linked to the Research Forum. The workshops can take place in the days just before or just after the event.

Interested IG conveners are invited to write to esil.secretariat@eui.eu to express their intention to arrange a workshop; the Secretariat and the RF organisers will advertise the Call for Papers and the programme of the workshops.