

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

Ius Commune Conference 2026

Workshop “Constitutional Processes in the Global Legal Order”

Leuven, Wednesday 25 November 2026, 09:00–12:00

The Demise of Constitutionalism in International Law?

From the 1990s onwards, constitutionalism became an influential lens through which international lawyers sought to understand transformations in the international legal order. Against the backdrop of globalisation, expanding international institutions, new international courts and tribunals, and an increasingly dense network of international rules and regimes, scholars came to describe international law in constitutional terms.

Different strands of this literature identified processes such as the emergence of normative hierarchies and common values; the reallocation of public authority from states to international institutions; the growing authority of international courts and judicial review; interaction among international and domestic courts; and the development of community interests beyond bilateral interstate relations. Constitutionalism also provided a normative framework for subjecting public authority beyond the state to the rule of law, human rights, democracy, accountability, and checks and balances.

The political and institutional context in which these ideas flourished has, however, changed considerably. International institutions face growing contestation, withdrawal, and defunding; international courts and human rights mechanisms have encountered resistance and direct political pressure, including sanctions against officials of the International Criminal Court and UN Special Rapporteurs. More generally, confidence in globalisation, multilateralism, and international cooperation appears substantially weakened.

Against this background, the workshop asks whether constitutionalism remains a useful lens for understanding contemporary international law. Do the processes once described as constitutionalisation still capture significant developments in the international legal order? Which have endured, weakened, or changed direction? Does constitutionalism still provide a productive framework for analysing the allocation, limitation, and legitimation of public authority beyond the state? Has the role of various universal and regional organisations changed and affected the process of constitutionalisation? And was the prominence of international constitutionalism partly tied to a particular post-Cold War historical conjuncture?

We invite established scholars and, in particular, early-career researchers to submit abstracts for the workshop “The Demise of Constitutionalism in International Law?”

Applicants should submit:

- a presentation title;
- an abstract of no more than 500 words;
- institutional affiliation and contact details.

Proposals should be sent to l.pasquet@uu.nl by **18 October 2026**. The subject line should read: ‘Submission – Demise of constitutionalism’.

Selected speakers will be asked to **submit an extended abstract** of approximately 1000-1500 words by **20 November 2026**. Following the workshop, the organisers intend to work towards the publication of full-length papers developed from the conference presentations and extended abstracts in a special issue of a relevant academic journal.

Please note that the Ius Commune Research School is unable to cover speakers' travel or accommodation expenses.

For any questions, please contact Luca Pasquet: l.pasquet@uu.nl