7TH YOUNG LEGAL RESEARCHERS CONFERENCE 2026

Law under Pressure: Resilience, Resistance and Reinvention in Challenging Times



CONFERENCE
PROGRAMME

Hasselt University

4 December 2026

YOUNG LEGAL RESEARCHERS CONFERENCE #YLRC UHASSELT
FACULTEIT RECHTEN UHASSELT
DOCTORAL SCHOOLS UHASSELT KNOWLEDGE IN ACTION
Vlaamse overheid

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1. Conference Theme

The Faculty of Law of Hasselt University is pleased to announce the 7th edition of the Young Legal Researchers Conference (YLRC), which will take place on Friday 4 December 2026. The conference will take place in person at the city campus of Hasselt University (Martelarenlaan 42, 3500 Hasselt, Belgium). As always, the aim of the conference is to bring together young researchers to share, discuss, and exchange ideas on their research with one another.

Across the world, legal systems are increasingly placed under pressure. Democratic institutions face erosion, deregulation waves reshape legal systems, courts are politicised, migration systems are strained, and armed conflicts and geopolitical tensions challenge international legal orders and humanitarian protections. Environmental emergencies demand urgent responses, while technological surveillance challenges civil liberties, and economic instability and social inequality test the capacity of legal frameworks to protect the most vulnerable. Pressure can expose weaknesses within legal systems, but it can also catalyse reform, innovation, and resistance.

Accordingly, the 7th Young Legal Researchers Conference welcomes presentations from all areas of law, including interdisciplinary legal research, that engage with this year's theme: **"Law under Pressure: Resilience, Resistance, and Reinvention in Challenging Times".**

2. Conference Schedule

Time	**Event**	**Location**
09:30 - 10:00	Registration and coffee	Café Cour Campus Oude Gevangenis - Hasselt University
10:00 - 10:15	Welcome speech *Dr. Loth Van Der Auwermeulen, Postdoctoral researcher and research manager at Hasselt University*	Aula Louis Roppe (*OG-Aud2)*
10:15 - 10:45	Keynote speech: *From PhD to professor: kindness, creativity and a huge amount of... Luck* *Prof. dr. Jonas Voorter, Assistant Professor of Environmental Law at Utrecht University*	Aula Louis Roppe (*OG-Aud2)*
10:50 - 12:20	Parallel Sessions (I)	See the table below
12:20 - 13:30	Group photo and lunch	Cafe Cour/Panopticon
13:30 - 15:00	Parallel Sessions (II)	See the table below
15:00 - 15:30	Coffee break	Cafe Cour
15:30 - 16:45	Parallel Sessions (III)	See the table below
16:50 - 17:20	Keynote speech: *Law under Pressure: An Equal Opportunities Perspective* *Mr. Rob Beenders, Belgian Minister of Equal Opportunities*	Aula Louis Roppe (*OG-Aud2)*
17:20 - 17:30	Closing remarks *Prof. dr. Niels Appermont, Vice Dean of the Law Faculty and Associate Professor at Hasselt University*	Aula Louis Roppe (*OG-Aud2)*
17:30	Reception	Cafe Cour

Panellists will, depending on the number of presentations per panel, have 10-15 minutes to present their research, followed by 5-10 minutes of discussion time, during which they will answer questions from the audience.

3. Parallel sessions

Parallel Sessions I
10:50 - 12:20

Room	Session	Moderator	Presentations
FR 0.01	Human Rights Under Pressure: A Resilient Way Forward	Prof. dr. Matthias Vanhullebusch	1. **Paulina Salmun -** Remedying Systemic Discrimination: Towards Collective and Proactive Relief 2. **Lewhat Kifleyesus** - Who May Define Professional Competence? Children's Rights, Academic Freedom, and State Authority in Higher Education 3. **Elena Cisneros Cabrerizo** - Digital Governance and Fundamental Rights: The European Framework in a fragmented world 4. **Justine Channac -** The European judge's action in protecting the value of democracy
FR 0.02	Geopolitical Tensions and Resistance through the Rule of Law	Prof. dr. Aleydis Nissen	1. **Costanza Amendolito -** The international legal personality of non-state armed groups: a dynamic perspective 2. **Victor Van Steendam -** A legitimacy framework for regional criminal courts prosecuting the crime of aggression 3. **Maëlie Olouman -** Adapting to Geopolitical Instability: Rethinking Post-Brexit EU-UK Security and Defence Legal Cooperation 4. **Giolena Exarchou -** Are Global Commons Untouchable? Preserving Collective Interests in The Area and Outer Space
FR 0.03	Building Legal Pathways Towards a Resilient Environment	PhD Candidate Ifigeneia Tsakalogianni	1. **Julio Oliveira -** Who Will Regulate Health Through Climate? Legal Scenarios for a Fragmented International Order 2. **Nikolay Boshnakov -** EU and US Energy Policies in the Context of the Green Transition: A Comparative Analysis 3. **Júlia Souza Luiz -** The Constitutionalism of Disaster: A Distributive Analysis of Institutional Neutralisation in South America 4. **Obbie Afri -** Failing the Green Transition: The Environmental Blind Spot of EU AI Governance 5. **Niken Astiningrum -** The Long and Winding Road: Mapping Harm and Damage in Climate Tort 6. **Özgenur Özyalçın Biçici -** CBAM under Pressure: Legal Classification between Climate Policy and Trade Competitiveness

Parallel Sessions II
13:30 - 15:00

Room	Session	Moderator	Presentations
FR 0.01	The Societal (?) Role of Corporations at a Crossroads: Towards Resilience and Reinvention	PhD Candidate Roel Sprenghers	1. **Gentrita Bajrami -** Beyond Party Autonomy? The Legal Effect of Corporate Social Responsibility Norms in International Commercial Arbitration 2. **Anushka Srivastava -** From Boilerplate to Behaviour: Can ESG Clauses in Contract Deliver Meaningful Corporate Compliance? 3. **Priya Garg -** Adapting to Remain Relevant: Tracing the Existence of and the Need for the German Model of Steward-Owned Corporations in Other Jurisdictions 4. **Giulia Rizzo -** Law Under Informational Pressure: How Institutional Design Shapes Regulatory Resilience in the Digital Age
FR 0.02	The Rule of Law, Courts, and Constitutional Resilience	Prof. dr. Daan Bijnens	1. **Dora Pavković -** Constitutional identity (re)invented in Croatian constitutional order in moments of need 2. **Mohamed Sobhy -** Procedural Allocation of Artificial Intelligence in Adjudication: Building Resilient Justice under Pressure 3. **Laurien Nijenhuis -** The temporal dimensions of crises in judicial review 4. **Pawel Natorski -** The Right to Self-Determination under Pressure: Between Resilience and Destabilisation in Post-Cold War Europe 5. **Viven Rao Krishna Moorthi -** ASEAN and the International Criminal Court
FR 0.03	Rethinking Law & Legal Theory in Challenging Times	Prof. dr. Sara Vancleef	1. **Kyra Koesler -** What is a 'critical' approach to EU law? 2. **David English -** The Rule of Law and Arbitrary Governance in the 21st Century 3. **Nazrin Naghiyeva -** Constitutional Resilience in the Age of AI: Referendums, Digital Disinformation, and the Protection of Democratic Self-Determination 4. **Niko Jarak -** Rethinking the Political in Constitutional Adjudication: Kelsen's 'Negative Legislator' in Contemporary Discourse on Constitutional Courts 5. **Himanshu Thakran -** When truth becomes synthetic: rethinking legal responsibility in the age of deepfakes

Parallel Sessions III
15:30 - 16:45

Room	Session	Moderator	Presentations
FR 0.01	Resilience in Financial Law: Challenges, Responses, and New Directions	Prof. dr. Niels Appermont	1. **Zohra Kangarli -** Bank Secrecy under Pressure: Reconfiguring Confidentiality in the Age of Financial Transparency, Digital Surveillance and Regulatory Resilience 2. **Emese Hargita Vörös -** Where Are the Legal Boundaries of Money? Legal Resilience under the Pressure of Digital Financial Innovation 3. **Paulius Bareika -** From Deference to Discretion: How the Punitive Character of Supervisory Measures Shapes Judicial Review Intensity 4. **Yilin Liu -** Climate-related Counterclaims: A Cushion Before Revolutionising Investment Law in the Climate Change Crisis
FR 0.02	A Resilient Europe: EU Law in Times of Transformation	Prof. dr. Marie DeCock	1. **Tomasz Kosicki** - Composite Proceedings and the Statement of Reasons in Administrative Decisions: The Problem of Attributing Responsibility for the Content of the Decision in a Multi-Stage System of Integrated Administration 2. **Salvatore Stanizzi -** Administrative Discretion under Algorithmic Pressure: Rethinking Human Oversight in AI-Assisted Public Decision-Making 3. **Shaoxuan Lei -** Digital Fairness under Regulatory Pressure: The DSA, the PLD and Online Marketplace Liability 4. **Huiying Jin -** Rethinking News Copyright Liability in the Wake of Generative AI: A Layered Approach from a Comparative EU–China Perspective 5. **Laura Dumont** - Insourcing, Privatization, and Everything in Between - Towards a Transnational Legal Typology for Local Service Delivery Methods
FR 0.03	Resilience and Justice in Criminal Law: Navigating Challenging Times	PhD Candidate Marie Laure Luykx	1. **Ērika Gribonika -** The Foundational System of Criminal Procedure as the Basis for Sustainability Amid the Winds of Effectiveness and Economy: A Latvian Perspective 2. **Zsanett Dorang** - Criminal-Law Dilemmas of Punitive Drug Policy: Hungary's 2025 Reform 3. **Grigoraș Ruslan & Olga Postolachi-** The Right to Abortion under Pressure: Criminal Liability and the Protection of Prenatal Life 4. **Simone Antonio Luciano -** Domestic Prosecution of the Crime of Aggression in Europe: Towards a Decentralised Enforcement Model