

2026 ILA-ASIL EastMed-MENA Research Forum

Dates: 9-10 July, 2026

Venue: Athens, Greece

Overview

The ILA-ASIL EastMed-MENA Research Forum, organized every two years by the Hellenic Branch of the International Law Association and the American Society of International Law (ASIL), brings together academics, practitioners, policymakers, and researchers working on contemporary issues of international and comparative law in the Eastern Mediterranean (EastMed) and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) regions.

The forum event aims to strengthen regional scholarly engagement, provide an interdisciplinary platform for emerging and established voices in international and comparative law and foster research exchange and regional cooperation.

The 2026 edition of the ILA-ASIL EastMed-MENA Research Forum benefits from the support and will be held under the auspices of the WTO Chair at Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) and the Danish National Research Foundation's Centre of Excellence for International Courts and Governance at the University of Copenhagen (iCourts), as well as the ASIL International Law and Technology Interest Group (ILTechIG).

2026 Theme

The 2026 ILA-ASIL EastMed-MENA Research Forum will explore how international and comparative law can foster sustainable trade, investment, and economic and financial integration across the Eastern Mediterranean and MENA regions and beyond. Against the backdrop of shifting global supply chains, energy transitions, and new emerging trade corridors linking Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia, the Forum will examine how international legal frameworks, ranging from WTO and investment law to regional and plurilateral agreements, infrastructure finance, and digital governance, can support cooperative development and resilient integration across regions.

The Forum will also consider how international legal regimes interact with domestic policy trends and processes such as industrial policy, foreign subsidies, digital transformation, and resource security, all of which increasingly shape international, regional and national strategies. Particular attention will be given to the role of law in facilitating or constraining connectivity initiatives,

energy partnerships, and the financing of green and blue economy transitions, as well as the challenges of regulatory fragmentation, overlapping jurisdictions, and divergent national reform agendas. Special attention will be given to the rise of new adjudicative hubs in the areas of international commerce, outer space, and digital platforms, and their role in reorganizing authority, legitimacy, and competition in a fragmented global legal order.

The conference aims to build a multidisciplinary dialogue between legal scholars, economists, and policymakers on reimagining cross-border connectivity and integration in an era of geopolitical fragmentation and industrial transformation, while assessing whether existing international legal instruments are equipped to respond to changing regional priorities, and what forms of legal innovation may be required moving forward.

A provisional timetable for the 2026 ILA-ASIL EastMed-MENA Research Forum is outlined below:

- Thursday, July 9, 2026: Opening ceremony and Forum sessions
- Friday, July 10, 2026: Forum sessions and closing ceremony

Suggested Thematic Clusters / Panels

- The emergence of new economic corridors
- Connectivity, infrastructure, and sustainable blue economy regulation
- WTO reform, regional Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), and plurilateral cooperation in an era of trade securitization
- Trade, human mobility and migration in regional cooperation frameworks
- Digital transformation in national, regional and international agendas
- Digitalization of adjudication and economic governance
- Industrial policy, foreign subsidies, and de-risking strategies
- Perspectives and experiences from trade remedies across the region
- Free zone courts, international commercial courts and transnational litigation
- Legal innovation and new adjudicative hubs in the areas of international commerce, outer space, and digital platforms
- International adjudication and regional arbitration in investment and trade disputes
- Sustainable and green investment
- Financing the energy transition: hydrogen, renewables, and critical raw materials
- Investment facilitation, ESG governance, and sustainable finance frameworks
- Regional maritime law

Call for Papers

Scholars, practitioners, and researchers are invited to submit paper proposals addressing any aspect of international or comparative law relevant to the EastMed and MENA regions. Submissions may

engage with the Forum's 2026 theme by examining how international legal frameworks shape regional cooperation, sustainable development, and economic integration.

Interdisciplinary approaches are welcome, provided they retain a considerable legal and policy focus. Contributions may be doctrinal, analytical, empirical and/or policy-oriented, and may examine national experiences, regional initiatives, or global developments, with implications for the EastMed-MENA context. The Forum encourages submissions from both established and emerging voices, including early-career scholars and doctoral candidates.

Selected papers will be organized into thematic panels to promote substantive exchange and collaboration.

Submission guidelines:

Interested participants are invited to submit a complete submission package consisting of

- a 300–500-word abstract, and
- a short CV of up to two pages, including current affiliation and full contact details.

Abstracts should clearly articulate the research question, central argument, methodology, and projected contribution to the Forum's overarching theme. All submissions must be received by 10 February 2026 at: contact@ilahellenic.gr. Contributors will be notified of the outcome by 25 February 2026, and authors of accepted proposals will be required to submit their full paper (6,000–10,000 words, including footnotes) by 30 June 2026.

- **Abstract:** 300–500 words
- **Short CV:** maximum 2 pages (including affiliation and contact details)
- **Submission deadline:** 10 February 2026
- **Notification of acceptance:** 25 February 2026
- **Full papers due:** 30 June 2026
- **Abstracts and inquiries** should be sent to: contact@ilahellenic.gr

Selected papers may be considered for publication in a peer-reviewed special issue of a law journal or an edited volume with a reputable publisher.

Participation and attendance at the 2026 ILA-ASIL EastMed-MENA Research Forum will be open to the public, subject to registration. Speakers, chairs and other participants will be expected to bear the costs of their own travel and accommodation.

Registration Fees (in Euros)

Registration Fees	Early-Bird (until March 31, 2026)	Regular (after March 31, 2026)
Speakers/Chairs	€ 100	€ 130
ILA / ASIL Members	€ 120	€ 150
Non-Members	€ 150	€ 180
ILA/ASIL student members	€ 50	€ 80
Students	€ 60	€ 90

Registration fees cover access to all sessions, as well as lunches, coffee breaks, and receptions.

2026 ILA-ASIL EastMed-MENA Research Forum Co-Convenors:

Anastasios Gourgourinis, President of ILA Hellenic Branch, Assistant Professor, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

Georgios Dimitropoulos, Professor of Law, WTO Chair, and Associate Dean for Research, Hamad Bin Khalifa University

Marios Tokas, Postdoctoral Researcher, iCourts, Danish National Research Foundation's Centre of Excellence for International Courts and Governance of the University of Copenhagen