



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands



ASSER
INSTITUTE



Centre for International & European Law

[Call for papers] Peace, justice and Europe in the Age of Geopolitics – PhD Workshop Series

The T.M.C. Asser Instituut's Centre for the Law of EU External Relations (CLEER) and Leiden University are organising a two-day Ph.D. workshop on the legal implications of the EU's "geopolitical awakening".

The workshop will take place at the premises of the Asser Institute in The Hague, on **6-7 May 2024**. The event is part of a workshop series jointly organised by the Asser Institute and Leiden University, with generous financial support by the Municipality of The Hague.

Workshop theme

The war against Ukraine has forced a radical rethinking of the EU's role as a geopolitical actor. As High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell put it, we are witnessing the "belated birth of a geopolitical EU". This brings to the fore already existing security concerns with a renewed sense of urgency. These are not merely framed in military terms and are not limited to Ukraine. Hybrid warfare including cyberattacks and disinformation, energy dependency, the instrumentalisation of migrants, the retreat of democratic freedoms, foreign intervention campaigns, and geo-economic competition are but a few examples of the various threats facing the EU and its Member States in the current global landscape. As a result, legal and policy debates on the EU's role as a global actor focus on the need to achieve 'strategic autonomy' - a term connoting the ability of the Union to act independently on the international stage to safeguard its fundamental values, interests, independence and security - while also remaining committed to a rules-based global order.

Moreover, the purported "geopolitical turn" has already resulted in a host of new legal instruments at EU level, such as the Anti-coercion instrument, the European Chips Act, and regulations on joint military procurement. The awakening of a geopolitical EU thus raises a host of new politico-legal questions that remain underexplored despite their increasing significance. These developments create a demand for innovative legal scholarship regarding, for instance, decision-making procedures, institutional balance, effectiveness, transparency, access to justice, and compatibility with international law. Furthermore, the legal contours of concepts that are vital to shaping the identity of the EU as an emerging geopolitical actor - such as 'strategic autonomy' - remain nebulous. More fundamentally, the developments described above create a crisis of narratives. The EU has consistently portrayed itself as a polity committed to the ethos of international law and multilateralism and to certain values such as solidarity that are central to its identity.

Some of the questions these developments raise, are: How is the quest for multilateral solutions to be squared with calls for more autonomy? Does the Union show solidarity, and to whom? What factors will determine how the EU forges new partnerships? What implications could this turn to geopolitics have on the EU's existing supply/value-chains in strategic goods, raw materials and energy? What implications could have on the European Green Deal? What future for the Common Foreign and Security Policy? Can the EU remain true to its founding values in its new ambition to become a geopolitical actor?

In light of the developments and questions, we are hosting a doctoral workshop for the merging generation of researchers to critically reflect on these issues and push the boundaries of scholarship further.

Abstract submission and process

- Current PhD scholars and early career researchers (defined here as having been awarded their PhD in 2020 or later) are invited to submit abstracts of no more than 500 words by **10 February 2024**. The abstract (and final paper) can also be based on the applicant's current Ph.D. or post-doc research.
- Successful candidates will be invited to submit a draft paper (8,000-12,000 words) by 10 April 2024. Selected candidates will present their work in a closed workshop and more receive feedback and guidance from senior scholars in the field. The closed workshop will be followed by a public event consisting of a roundtable discussion by policy and law practitioners and other experts on the implications of the EU's geopolitical turn.
- The organisers aim to publish the papers stemming from the workshop in the CLEER paper series, subject to peer-review.
- A limited number of scholarships to facilitate participation in the event will be provided – a motivated application for such scholarships (max. 300 words) should be submitted separately.

In order to submit your abstract, please use the forms provided [here](#).

Organising committee: Dr. Narin Idriz (Asser Institute), Dr. Eva Kassoti (Asser Institute) and Dr. Joris Larik (Leiden University).

Please note also that it is envisaged that another instalment of the Workshop Series will take place in November 2024.