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NETHERLANDS NETWORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS RESEARCH

Netherlands Network for Human Rights Research

October 2026 Newsletter

Announcement

[Save the date] NNHRR Toogdag 2027



- **Date: 10 June 2027**
- **Location:** University of Amsterdam

Please save the date for the NNHRR Toogdag 2027, which will take place on **10 June 2027** at **University of Amsterdam**. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Toogdag, so we hope to celebrate it with you. Please also note that a PhD activity is set to precede the Toogdag on **9 June 2027**. Stay tuned for more information!

Calls & Opportunities

[Call for Abstracts] Conference on 'Hosting Global Justice: The Netherlands as Host State of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the International Criminal Court (ICC)'



- **Date:** 15 April 2027
- **Location:** Leiden University (The Hague)
- **Deadline: 1 December 2026**

Organised by **Otto Spijkers** and **Letizia Lo Giacco**, and supported by a KIEM grant, the 'Conference on Hosting Global Justice: The Netherlands as Host State of the

International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the International Criminal Court (ICC)' will take place at Leiden University in The Hague on **15 April 2027.**

The conference explores the unique role of the Netherlands as host state of two of the world's most important international courts. It brings together scholars, practitioners and activists to examine the legal, political and societal dimensions of hosting global justice. The organisers invite abstract submissions by **1 December 2026**.

More information here.



[Call for Applications] Research Methodologies Workshop

- **Date:** 27, 28 and 29 January 2027
- **Location:** Röling Building, University of Groningen
- **Deadline: 8 January 2027**

The Groningen Centre for Health Law, University of Groningen is delighted to present its second version of the annual Methodologies Workshop - Global Health Law and Human Rights, to be held on 27-29th January 2027 at the University of Groningen's Rolinggebouw (Faculty of Law), Groningen, the Netherlands.

This workshop aims to provide legal scholars, public health scholars, PhD researchers and Masters students with tools to understand, choose and apply different research methods for global health law and human rights research. The focus will lie on the implementation of a human rights approach to global health law research. The programme is suitable for those interested in international law, Global Health Law and human rights. The first two days will finish with an opportunity to discuss individual research projects with other participants and lecturers, and the programme for the last day holds an opportunity to present and get feedback on individual projects.

Further information and registration can be found here.



[Call for Abstracts] Workshop 'Community Interests in International Law: Theory, Adjudication and Human Rights'

- **Date:** 11 June 2027
- **Location:** Radboud University (Faculty of Law)
- **Deadline: 15 January 2027**

The workshop 'Community Interests in International Law: Theory, Adjudication and Human Rights' will take place in person at Radboud University, Nijmegen (Faculty of Law) on 11 June 2027.

The deadline for abstract submissions is **15 January 2027.** The workshop organisers invite submissions examining how community interest norms are conceptualized, addressed by international courts and tribunals, and how the nexus between serious human rights violations and breaches of community interests norms can be assessed.

More information here.

[Opportunity] Shine a Spotlight on your PhD Research



- **Deadline: ongoing**

Are you conducting innovative human rights research during your PhD, or know someone who is? We would love to interview you on our newest initiative for PhD members: **PhD Spotlight**! To participate, send a portrait picture and a filled out version of the following document to **nnhrr@asser.nl** with the subject line "PhD Spotlight - [your name]".

Events & Education



[Webinar] Book Discussion: Hate Speech and the European Court of Human Rights

- **Date:** 18 November 2026
- **Time:** 14:00 CET
- **Location:** Online (Registration Required)

Join **Katerina Tsampi** (University of Groningen) and **Christos Giannopoulos** for a discussion of the book 'Hate Speech and the European Court of Human Rights' written by **Natalie Alkiviadou** (Vanderbilt University).

The webinar is organised and moderated by **Lauren Bakir** (University of Strasbourg) and will be held online Wednesday **18 November** 2026, at 14:00 CET. The webinar is **free** to attend, but **registration is required**.

Register here.

[Symposium] INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON RECOGNITION, DIALOGUE AND REDRESS AFTER INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION



- **Date:** 19 and 20 November 2026
- **Location:** University of Humanistic Studies (UvH) Utrecht

What does meaningful recognition and redress after intercountry adoption require? How can we foster dialogue about the lasting consequences of past intercountry adoption, and what should follow from them for the present and the future?

19 and **20 November** 2026, scholars, practitioners, and people with lived experience from different countries will come together at the **University of Humanistic Studies (UvH) in Utrecht** to explore these questions. Across two days, the recent inquiries and developments in receiving countries and countries of origin, the long-term impact of intercountry adoption, and different approaches to recognition, redress, and repair will be discussed .

The symposium is organised on the occasion of the **inaugural lecture** of **Elvira Loibl** as Endowed Professor of Recognition, Dialogue and Redress after Intercountry Adoption. The inaugural lecture will take place on **19 November 2026, 15.30 CET,** at the Pieterskerk in Utrecht.

Participation in the symposium and inaugural lecture is **free**, but **registration is required.**

You can **register** for the event here.



[Online Course] Ethics, Law and Governance for Climate and Environmental Action in Public Health

- **Format:** Live virtual course
- **Number of Sessions:** 10
- **Day and Time:** Wednesdays, 16:30-18:00 CET
- **Course Period:** 23 September - 2 December 2026

ASPHER and the European Climate and Health Observatory are hosting a **free APHEA-accredited CTEE course** on 'Ethics, Law and Governance for Climate Environmental Action in Public Health'.

More information here.

[Presentation] Pick Our Brains - with Phil Clark - Why Tackling Inequality Matters for Reconciliation: Lessons from Post-Genocide Rwanda



- **Date:** 27 November 2026
- **Time:** 13:15-14:45
- **Location:** Faculty of Law, Maastricht University (*and online)*

The Pick our Brains sessions of the Maastricht Centre for Human Rights are open to students, PhD students, and more senior members of our Centre, as well as to members of other research centres and universities. These sessions are intended to foster intellectual stimulation and exchange, and to potentially promote collaborations within and outside the Centre. Each session consists of a short presentation followed by a lively debate.

On **27 November** the speaker will be **Phil Clark** (SOAS University of London). Phil Clark is a Professor of International Politics at SOAS University of London. He specialises in conflict and post-conflict issues, including transitional justice, peacebuilding, statebuilding, welfare and reconciliation after mass atrocity in Rwanda, Uganda, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi. The title of his presentation is **Why Tackling Inequality Matters for Reconciliation: Lessons from Post-Genocide Rwanda**.

Register here.



[Short Course] Climate Litigation and Regulation – International and European Perspectives

- **Date:** 7–8 December 2026
- **Location:** T.M.C. Asser Institute, The Hague

The T.M.C. Asser Institute, in collaboration with SEVEN — the University of Amsterdam's interdisciplinary climate institute, is offering a two-day short course on **Climate Litigation and Regulation – International and European Perspectives**.

The programme provides participants with a practical understanding of the rapidly evolving landscape of international and European climate law. Topics include human rights and the climate, the UN climate regime, the ICJ Advisory Opinion on Climate Change, strategic climate litigation, the European Climate Law, the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD), and corporate climate obligations.

Designed for legal and non-legal professionals alike, the course is open to policymakers, corporate counsel, NGOs, academics, diplomats, and practitioners seeking to deepen their understanding of climate law and its practical implications.

More information here.

[Save the date] Inaugural Lecture – Prof. Nadia Bernaz



- **Date:** 5 March 2027
- **Location:** Wageningen University

Please save the date for the inaugural lecture of NNHRR Steering Committee member **Nadia Bernaz,** Professor of Law and Corporate Justice at Wageningen University, which will take place on **5 March 2027 at 16:00** at Wageningen University.

An official invitation, including further details on the programme and registration, will be shared in due course.

Publications

Call for Contributions!

Would you like us to feature your recent or upcoming publication in the NNHRR Newsletter? Reach out to **nnhrr@asser.nl**.

Human Rights Here

Human Rights Here Blog

Call for Submissions!

Submissions to the Human Rights Here blog are invited from scholars and practitioners both inside and outside of the Netherlands on topics related to human rights. Members of the NNHRR and early career scholars are especially welcomed to submit blog content. Please send your contribution to **humanrightshere@asser.nl** and check here for the requirements.



All that Glitters is Not Gold: The State of Reproductive Health and Rights in the Netherlands and the Unequal Access to Abortion Care - *EQUALS Conference Blog Series: Challenging Health Inequalitiess in a Digitalised World*

- **Lilianne Ploumen**

In the second part of the '*EQUALS Conference Blog Series: Challenging Health Inequalities in a Digitalised World*', **Lilianne Ploumen** explores how the criminalisation of abortion contributes to unequal access and argues that regulating abortion exclusively through health law would better protect both reproductive rights and equality in access to healthcare.

You can read the blog post here.

EQUALS Conference Blog Series: Challenging Health Inequalities in a Digitalised World - Introduction



- **Tina Stavrinaki**

Dismantling inequalities improves health outcomes across society. EQUALS - Equality Legal Studies, the Research Platform on Equality Legal Studies at Utrecht University's School of Law, for its inaugural seminar on 24 February 2026, brought together a diverse group of scholars to rethink health systems and focus on those who have been left out.

Tina Stavrinaki reflects on the outcomes of this conference, and thereby opens the 'EQUALS Conference Blog Series: Challenging Health Inequalities in a Digitalised World'.

Her contribution sets the stage for three insightful blog posts by **Lilianne Ploumen**, **Rachel Horton**, and **Leigh Kamore Haynes**. Read together, the three forthcoming contributions converge and highlight how health inequalities are produced and sustained: (i) by frameworks that treat one kind of care as exceptional, (ii) by legal regimes that partially address individual acts while leaving research and coordination gaps untouched and (iii) by technical systems whose discriminatory effects have never been assessed.

To explore these topics in greater depth, follow the series over the coming week as the remaining contributions are published.

You can read the blog post here.



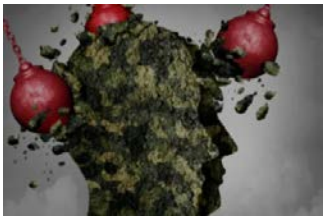
Accidental Activists

- **Brian Dooley**

What makes an ordinary person become an activist? Drawing on the stories of unlikely human rights defenders across Europe, **Brian Dooley** explores how people with no formal training or ambition to lead a movement found themselves taking extraordinary risks to confront injustice

You can read the blog post here.

Recalibrating Freedom of Thought: Power Asymmetry and Positive State Obligation amid Cognitive Warfare



- **Aimen Taimur**

As civilians become targets of cognitive warfare, the power asymmetry between individuals and those seeking to influence their thinking raises questions about what states owe them. This contribution by **Aimen Taimur** examines how freedom of thought can ground positive obligations to protect individuals against cognitive interference by foreign actors.

You can read the blog post here.



Beyond Delays: The Enduring Relevance of the UN Human Rights Committee - Insights of Prof. Dr. Yvonne Donders – *Interview Series Marking the 60th Anniversary of the Adoption of the ICCPR and its First Optional Protocol*

- **Elena Mouli, Moniek Veen, and Greta Barho**

The final interview of the blog series marking the 60th anniversary of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights was conducted by **Elena Mouli**, **Moniek Veen**, and **Greta Barho** with Prof. Dr. **Yvonne Donders**, an elected member of the UN Human Rights Committee.

The interview explores the Committee's continued relevance despite persistent challenges to its work - such as procedural delays and limited resources.

Prof. Dr. Donders explains that the Committee remains attractive due to the centrality and justiciability of civil and political rights under the ICCPR, as well as the wide ratification of its complaint mechanism. Institutional familiarity and geopolitical

developments, such as restricted access to regional courts, also encourage individuals to submit communications.

While delays are acknowledged, these have not significantly diminished the Committee's appeal, which operates as part of a complementary global system rather than in competition with regional courts. The interview further addresses evolutive interpretation, emphasizing the ICCPR as a "living instrument" while cautioning against overstepping into norm creation.

Prof. Dr. Donders highlights the importance of grounding innovation in existing practice to maintain legitimacy and avoid state resistance.

You can read the blog post here.

If International Law Does Not Work for Everyone, It Does Not Work For Anyone: Insights of Dr. Prof. Helen Duffy – *Interview Series Marking the 60th Anniversary of the Adoption of the ICCPR and its First Optional Protocol*



- **Aidana Bock, Kata Jácinta Éles, and Ana Sušin**

As the second part of the Human Rights Here blog series marking the 60th anniversary of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, **Aidana Bock**, **Kata Jácinta Éles** and **Ana Sušin**, interviewed Prof. Dr. **Helen Duffy** on the complexities and opportunities of strategic human rights litigation.

Prof. Dr. **Helen Duffy** discussed the tensions between individual client interest and broader strategic goals, the challenges of enforcement, and the role of litigation as one tool amongst many in advancing justice and accountability.

This piece echoes a similar sentiment as the first part of the series, emphasising the enduring relevance of international law in addressing human rights violations.

You can read the blog post here.



An Interview with Professor Manfred Nowak, on the Drafting of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) – *Interview Series Marking the 60th Anniversary of the Adoption of the ICCPR and its First Optional Protocol*

- **Henrietta Daly, Osmar A. Muñoz Rodríguez, and Sooriyan Nisha Thangeswaran**

2026 marks the 60th anniversary of the adoption of the Intenrational Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and its First Optional Protocol. What can the drafting history of these instruments teach us about the state of human rights today? This interview with Professor **Manfred Nowak**, conducted by **Osmar Muñoz Rodríguez**, **Sooriyan Nisha Thangeswaran**, and **Henrietta Daly**, explores the origins, dynamic interpretation, and enduring relevance of international human rights law

You can read the blog post here.

Legal Protection for the Mind: Exploring the Future of Psychological and Neurotechnological Influence



- **Janneke Gerards, Sjors Ligthart, Gerben Meynen, and Rebecca Zeilstra**

In their blog, **Janneke Gerards**, **Sjors Ligthar**t, **Rebecca Zeilstra**, and **Gerben Meynen** reflected on the Netherlands Network for Human Rights Research funded research workshop titled “Legal Protection for the Mind: Towards a Normative Evaluation of Psychological and Neurotechnological Influence on Behaviour” which took place in Utrecht on the 2nd of July 2026.

The workshop was centred on the question of how law should respond when technology can increasingly influence the way we think, decide, and behave. Bringing together perspectives from neuroscience, psychology, ethics, and law, the workshop discussed possible directions for the law to address some of the challenges at the intersection of technological innovation and fundamental rights. The workshop did not simply treat technological development as something to which law and ethics must respond. Instead, it created a space to think about the deeper values that should shape the law in the era of fast technological progress.

You can read the blog post here.

Would you like your news item included in the next newsletter?

Email **nnhrr@asser.nl** with the desired text and image before the end of the month!

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Netherlands Network for Human Rights Research

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