



## Call for Abstracts

### International Health Governance (IHG): Infectious Disease Epidemics Control from an IPA perspective

International Workshop for Researchers, Post-docs, Doctoral Students and  
International Health Practitioners in general

3 and 4 March 2016

At the MPIL in Heidelberg, Germany

Keynote speaker: Prof. Dr Michael Marx  
(Managing director evaplan International Health at the University  
Hospital Heidelberg, Germany)

The Forschungsstätte der Evangelischen Studiengemeinschaft e.V. Institute for  
Interdisciplinary Research ([FEST](#)) and the Max-Planck-Institute for Comparative Public Law  
and International Law ([MPIL](#)) are pleased to announce this joint workshop as part of the  
German Cluster of Excellence, The Formation of Normative Orders, at Frankfurt University.  
This workshop marks the first milestone of a larger IPA research project on IHG.  
Information on the broader IHG project can be found [here](#).

The workshop serves the following core purposes:

- To share individual research findings and discuss them among a peer group,
- To craft a deeper and more detailed understanding of IHG, and
- To create links across institutions with joint research interests, and provide a forum  
for networking.

IHG structures considerably affect peoples' lives, particularly when aid delivery is  
necessary. Yet research on IHG remains scarce and fragmented. We choose to focus on the  
following sub-areas of IHG research: responsibilities of IHG actors (1), coordination of IHG  
actors (2), and publicly-financed research (3). For the initial research stage, we will refer  
to the recent Ebola crisis as a particular example.

We are particularly interested in the legal mechanisms related to infectious disease  
epidemics control, especially in light of the recent Ebola crisis taking place in West Africa

and the structural deficiencies manifested in its wake. The international community could have reacted sooner during the main Ebola peaks, but valuable time was lost due to shortcomings within the particular national health systems of the primarily affected countries, and a lack of coordination in the international arena. The international and regional response to these challenges frequently occurs through non-binding acts and instruments that do not fit under formal categories of public international law. Despite this fact, they can perform a game-changing role (arguably, e.g. WHA resolution 19.16 was the internal legal tool employed by WHO towards smallpox eradication), and can even amount to authorizing restrictions of certain individual human rights (e.g. WHO Director General's temporary recommendations regarding quarantine and isolation measures). The concept of International Public Authority (IPA), a research approach employed across various projects (and utilized by various investigators) at [MPIL](#), can serve as a methodological basis for analyzing these acts. The aim is to discuss the possibility of a framework capable of responding to some of the conceptual and practical challenges that arise, as well as to questions about the legitimacy of such acts. At the same time, states are still the entities primarily responsible for the health of their population. In this regard, the response to disease outbreaks requires a minimum set of surveillance and response capabilities, such as the ones established by the current International Health Regulations (IHR). Thus, there is a continuous emphasis within a multi-level approach to strengthen national health systems as a necessary step towards a universally robust framework for infectious disease epidemics alert and response.

To summarize, the core purpose of this workshop is to define the international duties and responsibilities of states, international organizations, and private actors as well as public-private collaborations in IHG in light of infectious disease epidemics control. This increasingly developing field is characterized by a multilevel network of different actors that goes beyond common structures of public international law. Therefore, the workshop aims at gaining deeper insights into the current status of IHG as well as an understanding of the status and requirements of international law in this area. Despite this particular international law or IPA perspective, the workshop encourages participation from all relevant disciplines in order to enable a more comprehensive understanding of this matter.

Here is a non-conclusive list of relevant research questions in consideration of the initial workshop:

- Responsibilities of IHG actors during the Ebola crisis: What are the legal, political, and ethical responsibilities of relevant IHG actors, and what are the claims? How do these responsibilities interact? In the self-perception of actors, to which sets of responsibilities do they relate? Which potential sets of responsibilities can we infer from the global justice debates?
- Coordination of IHG actors during the Ebola crisis: What are the key determinants for lack of coordination? What is the normative standard for coordination? How do the overlapping and partly conflicting logics of public health, national security, and aid effectiveness interact with each other?
- Human right to health: How can we specify the contents of the human right to health in the Ebola case?
- Legal pluralism: How are local legal norms relevant in the context of Ebola coordination, and how do they interact with other norm layers (domestic, regional, and international law)?
- Publicly-financed research on Ebola: What research is lacking? How is its relevance and priority determined? How are research funds governed, and with what effects?

**Abstracts:** We especially encourage researchers, post-docs, doctoral students, and international health practitioners in general to submit academic abstracts for paper presentations on topics related to the workshop's theme. Although there is a specific interest in law-related papers, submissions of other disciplines are highly welcome to broaden the view, inspire discourses, and to enrich the legal analysis. Proposals shall be no longer than 500 words and be submitted with short biographical notes of no more than 100 words to [katarina.weilert@fest-heidelberg.de](mailto:katarina.weilert@fest-heidelberg.de) no later than 30 November 2015. Early submissions of proposals are highly welcome. Information on the acceptance of a proposal will be provided latest by 15 January 2016.

**Workshop format:** The workshop will be held from the afternoon of 3 March until midday of 4 March. The workshop's language will be English. In order to ensure a high level of discussion, the workshop will offer time for the discussion of up to 10 papers.

**Further information:** We will discuss a publication format as a follow-up to the workshop depending on the quality and degree of development of papers. We can cover some workshop costs for those presenting, and will provide details at a later stage.

**Open distribution:** Please feel free to distribute this call among peers, colleagues and friends who share a relevant research interest in the respected area. However, should you not wish to be included in our distribution list any further, please let us know.

*For further questions please primarily contact:*

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