

Achieving Sex-Representative International Court Benches: On-going Challenges of Diversity and Legitimacy

22 March 2022, 12:30 – 13:30 Zoom Webinar

Abstract

The proliferation, and strengthening, of international adjudication over the past two decades has been hailed as a step towards an international rule of law but has also provoked concerns about legitimacy, both in academic and political discourse. As a result, much recent scholarship has called for a turn towards a 'democratic' model of legitimacy for international courts, with the aim of greater responsiveness to the broader public affected by their decisions. However, this turn has mainly focused on geographic and state-centred models of representation and has so far neglected broader issues of diversity. This is especially virulent when it comes to the diversity of the judiciary with respect to gender (but also of language, race and ethnicity).

This is the starting point of an SNF project on Diversity on the International Bench: Building Legitimacy for International Courts and Tribunals led by Professor Andrew Clapham and myself at the Graduate Institute (Geneva). One pillar of the project seeks to sharpen the normative case for a stronger representation of women which may rest not only on democratic but also other, especially epistemic and social legitimacy grounds which are often neglected in the existing literature

Biography of the speaker



Neus Torbisco-Casals is currently Visiting Professor at the International Law Department of the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, where she teaches courses relating to human rights, international law and political justice, and a Senior Research Fellow at the Albert Hirschman Centre on Democracy. She is also Associate Professor of Law at Pompeu Fabra University (Barcelona). In 2000 she was awarded a doctorate in Law from Pompeu Fabra University. From 2007 to 2009 she held a research position at the Law Department of the London School of Economics, and in 2012 she was appointed Visiting Professor of Law at Harvard Law School (USA). Professor Torbisco-Casals primary research areas are human rights, minority rights and theories of justice, antidiscrimination law and policy, gender equality and cultural diversity. She is the author of *Group Rights as Human Rights: A Liberal Approach to Multiculturalism* (Springer, 2006); 'Beyond Altruism? Globalising Democracy in the Age of Distrust' (*The Monist*, 2015, 98, 4) and, more recently, "The Legitimacy of International Courts: The Challenge of Diversity" (*The Journal of Social Philosophy*, 2021; 52).

This lecture is part of the Gender Lecture Series 'Know the GAP! Looking for Gender Parity' organized by **Prof. Elisa Fornalé** who leads the SNSF-funded research project '*Gender Equality in the Mirror (GEM): Clothing the Invisibility of Women's Participation at International Level*' housed at the World Trade Institute, University of Bern.

ENTER ZOOM WEBINAR WITH THIS [LINK](#)

OR WITH WEBINAR ID 937 5074 8913

Participation is open to the public and free of charge

For further information please email Ms Sophia Thompson (sophia.thompson@wti.org)