INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CONSUMER LAW (IACL)
20th Global Conference

CALL FOR PAPERS

"Upside Down, Inside Out, Back to Front:

Consumer Law in an Age of Transition"

University of Luxembourg
5–8 July 2027

The International Association of Consumer Law (IACL) and the University of Luxembourg warmly invite scholars, doctoral researchers, practitioners, judges, regulators, and representatives of consumer organisations and international bodies from around the world to submit proposals for the 20th Global Conference of the IACL.

Held every two years, the IACL Global Conference is the foremost worldwide gathering of the consumer law community. In 2027, the conference will take place in Luxembourg for the first time, at the heart of the European Union and a few steps away from the Court of Justice of the European Union.

Conference theme

Consumer law is living through its deepest transformation since it emerged half a century ago. The digital and ecological transitions, the rise of artificial intelligence, shifting geopolitical and regulatory landscapes, and the persistence of economic vulnerability are reshaping and sometimes inverting the discipline's foundational assumptions. Long-settled categories are being called into question by emerging concepts that blur the distinction between consumer and professional; and what was once peripheral is shifting to the center, as vulnerability turns from the exception into the rule.

Under the theme **"Upside Down, Inside Out, Back to Front: Consumer Law in an Age of Transition"**, the conference invites reflection on where consumer law and policy have succeeded and failed, on the opportunities to reorient the field, and on the threats to consumer welfare in a changing world.

Papers focusing on individual jurisdictions are welcome, as are those with a comparative or international scope. Both theoretical and empirical contributions are encouraged.

Topics

The conference will be structured around sixteen thematic workshop sessions, reflecting the main ways in which consumer law is being turned upside down, inside out and back to front. Proposals are invited in particular on the following themes:

- **Consumer law and vulnerability:** vulnerability as the rule rather than the exception, hypervulnerability, the "average consumer" benchmark revisited, consent fatigue and economic vulnerability.
- **New paradigms in consumer law:** foundations, definition, history and evolution of the field; the blurring of the distinction between consumer and professional; dialogue with economics, sociology, psychology, philosophy and the behavioural sciences.

- **Consumer law and new technologies:** e-commerce and digital platforms, the metaverse, the sharing economy, smart contracts, artificial intelligence and AI-driven commercial practices, algorithmic and dark patterns, automated decision-making and AI-assisted dispute resolution.
- **Consumer law and fundamental rights:** consumer protection and human rights, privacy, profiling and scoring, cybersecurity, neurorights, data as contractual counter-performance.
- **Consumer law and the environment:** sustainable consumption and production, circular economy, green claims, right to repair, the ecological transition and the 2030 Agenda.
- **Consumer law and financial law:** credit, insurance and investment products, fintech and crypto-assets, crypto-influencers, over-indebtedness and insolvency, financial inclusion and exclusion.
- **Enforcement and effectiveness of consumer law:** consumer procedural law, collective redress, alternative dispute resolution, public and private enforcement, the role of consumer associations and civil society, legal and institutional frameworks.
- **Global consumer law:** private international law and cross-border consumer disputes, global platforms and platforms as private regulators, comparative and international perspectives.
- **Consumer law and social justice:** access to public and essential services (water, energy), housing and real-estate contracts, consumer participation in decision-making, and the distributive dimension of consumer protection.
- **Consumer law and general legislation:** the interplay between consumer law and general contract law, tort law and product liability, and the interface between consumer protection and competition policy.
- **Products and services:** product safety, labelling and technical standards, consumer protection in health markets and tracking apps, food, tourism and travel.
- **Consumer law, minors and children:** children as consumers, the protection of minors in digital environments, and marketing directed at children.
- **Law and gender from a consumer law perspective:** gender-based differences in pricing, marketing and access to goods and services, and the gendered dimension of consumer vulnerability.
- **Consumer law beyond consumer law:** does consumer law remain a coherent field as it increasingly interacts with data protection, AI regulation and other neighbouring regimes?
- **Consumer protection in politically contested times:** shifting geopolitical and regulatory landscapes, deregulation and simplification agendas, and the resilience of consumer protection.
- **New traders, new consumers:** prosumers, influencers and other emerging actors that challenge the traditional consumer/trader dichotomy.

Proposals on other aspects of consumer protection, including consumer law education and clinical legal education, will also be considered.

Dedicated sessions

Early-career researchers sessions. Two sessions will be specifically dedicated to early-career researchers, giving them the opportunity to present their work and receive feedback from established scholars in the field.

For the purposes of this call, "early-career researchers" are:

- Students currently enrolled in a Master's or doctoral programme who have not yet completed the degree concerned; or
- Researchers who were awarded their doctoral degree no more than three years before the submission deadline and who, at that deadline, hold a postdoctoral position.

Researchers appointed as assistant professors, associate professors, or to equivalent academic positions are excluded from this category. Eligibility is assessed at the submission deadline, irrespective of age. Career breaks, including parental leave and periods of illness, are excluded when calculating the three-year period.

Language sessions. To reflect the linguistic diversity of the consumer law community, the final morning of the conference will host dedicated sessions in French, German, Spanish and Portuguese. Proposals for these sessions may be submitted, and papers presented, in the language of the session concerned.

Submission of abstracts

Proposals should take the form of an **abstract of no more than 300 words, accompanied by 5–7 keywords**. The abstract must be preceded by the following information about the applicant (not counted in the word limit): title, full name, affiliation, position held, and a current e-mail address. Applicants are asked to proofread their abstracts to ensure a high standard of language and style.

Abstracts and any requests for information should be sent to **inascola2027@gmail.com.** Proposals may be submitted in English, French, German, Portuguese and Spanish. Please note that the working language of the conference sessions is English, and that no interpretation will be provided.

All abstracts will be reviewed by the organising committee, assisted by an international scientific committee. Applicants will be notified of decisions as early as possible, so that they can make travel and, where necessary, visa arrangements. Early notification and invitation letters will be issued to support these arrangements.

Format and participation

The conference will combine plenary sessions with parallel workshop sessions of small panels (approximately five papers per session). Presentation time will be limited to 15–20 minutes, followed by dedicated discussion time after each session.

Attendance is open to all: registration is not conditional on presenting a paper. All participants, whether or not they present, are required to register in accordance with the registration policy set out on the conference website, which entails payment of a EUR 180 registration fee. Accommodation is the responsibility of participants; information on hotels near the venue will be made available on the conference website.

The organisers may consider the possibility of publishing selected conference contributions in a journal and/or an edited volume of proceedings. Accepted abstracts and, subject to the authors' consent, papers may also be made available on the conference website. Authors remain free to publish their work elsewhere.

Key dates

- **15 December 2026: Deadline for submission of abstracts**
- **5 January 2027:** Notification of acceptance
- **5 July 2027:** Opening of the conference (afternoon)
- **6-7 July 2027:** Parallel workshop sessions; study visit to the Court of Justice of the European Union
- **8 July 2027:** Final sessions and closing (morning), followed by a cocktail

Further information, the full programme and registration details will be published on the conference website in due course.