

International Conference – 16 June 2026

The Present and the Future of EU Labour Law

Call for Abstracts

The Alma Mater Studiorum – University of Bologna, within the framework of the Jean Monnet Chair “ESP – European Social Policy”, is pleased to announce the Call for Papers for the forthcoming International Conference “The Present and the Future of EU Labour Law”, to be held in Bologna (Italy) on 16 June 2026.

We welcome the submission of abstracts consistent with the rationale and objectives of the event, which aims to foster debate on the present and future of EU labour law.

Since the proclamation of the European Pillar of Social Rights in November 2017, we have witnessed a renewed EU social commitment aimed at creating a strong Social Europe that is fairer, more inclusive, and rich in opportunities. Despite its lack of binding force, the European Pillar of Social Rights has succeeded in relaunching the EU’s legislative social policy agenda, deeply influencing the development of EU labour law. The EU social agenda has also been shaped by recent transformations, which have placed issues such as sustainability and artificial intelligence at the centre of the EU’s attention and action.

In this context, the International Conference “The Present and the Future of EU Labour Law” seeks to bring together scholars and experts to discuss these evolving dynamics, including from a multidisciplinary perspective. The Conference will be organised into different thematic tracks and sessions featuring invited keynote speakers.

Track no. 1: The trajectory of EU labour law

This track aims to explore the development of European Union labour law by examining its underlying rationales, internal tensions, and future directions. From its market-oriented foundations within the framework of economic integration to the more recent initiatives associated with the European Pillar of Social Rights, EU labour law has progressively reshaped the relationship between market freedoms and social protection. We welcome contributions addressing legislative, judicial, and policy developments at the EU level.

Track no. 2: Sustainability

This track invites contributions examining the legal dimensions of sustainability within the European Union, with particular focus on the green transition and emerging frameworks, such as corporate sustainability and due diligence. As the EU advances its climate neutrality objectives

and strengthens regulatory instruments aimed at responsible business conduct, sustainability has become a central paradigm shaping regulatory, economic, and social governance. We welcome papers addressing the evolving interplay between environmental objectives, social standards, and market regulation, considering the current EU initiatives on these topics. Comparative, interdisciplinary, and critical perspectives are particularly encouraged.

Track no. 3: EU wage policy

This track explores the evolving role of the European Union in the field of wage regulation. Wage-setting has increasingly become the subject of EU intervention through soft coordination mechanisms, economic governance instruments, and, more recently, binding legislative initiatives such as the Directives on adequate minimum wages and pay transparency. We invite contributions examining the scope of EU competence in wage regulation, analysing recent CJEU case law, the transposition of the Adequate Minimum Wage Directive in the Member States, and the interaction between wage regulation and broader objectives such as social convergence, gender equality, and the fight against in-work poverty.

Track no. 4: AI and digitalisation at work

This track focuses on the transformative impact of artificial intelligence and digitalisation on work and labour regulation within the European Union and beyond. The rapid deployment of algorithmic management systems, automated decision-making tools, and data-driven workplace technologies is reshaping the organisation of work, employment relationships, and the exercise of managerial prerogatives.

We invite contributions addressing the regulatory, doctrinal, and theoretical challenges posed by AI and digital technologies in the workplace, considering EU acts such as AI act and the recent Platform Directive. Relevant topics include, inter alia, working conditions in platform work, algorithmic transparency and accountability, data protection and privacy, discrimination and bias, worker surveillance, collective rights in digitally mediated environments.

Submission of the abstract

Lawyers and experts working in the field of EU social policy are invited to submit an **abstract in English** (maximum **500 words**) to the Scientific Committee by **10 April 2026** at esp@unibo.it. The conference will be held exclusively in English and will be **free of charge**.

The abstract should include the following information:

- Title of the Paper
- An abstract of no more than 500 words
- Selected Track
- The name of the author/authors and affiliation
- Contact details (in case of conjunct abstract, please include the main contact person)

Deadlines

- Abstract should be sent in by **10 April 2026**
- Decision on acceptance abstract by **25 April 2026**

Publication

Selected contributors will be invited to submit a paper based on their presentation for publication in the Italian Labour Law e-Journal: <https://illej.unibo.it/index>

Scientific Committee

Emanuele Menegatti, Professor of Labour Law at the University of Bologna
Davide Casale, Professor of Labour Law at the University of Bologna
Giacomo Di Federico, Professor of European Union Law at the University of Bologna
Carla Spinelli, Professor of Labour Law at the University of Bari Aldo Moro
Marco Mocella, Professor of Labour Law at the Mercatorum University
Tamás Gyulavári, Professor of Labour Law at Pázmány Péter Catholic University
Leonardo Battista, Assistant Professor of Labour Law at the University of Bologna
Carlo Tovo, Assistant Professor of European Union Law at the University of Bologna
Silvia Rainone, Senior Researcher at the ETUI

Venue of the International Conference:

Aula Poeti and Sala Boschereccia, Palazzo Hercolani, Strada Maggiore 45, Bologna

Fees

The International Conference is free of charge.

Contacts

Do you have any questions regarding the organisation of the International Conference? Please feel free to contact us at esp@unibo.it or visit the ESP website at: <https://site.unibo.it/esp/en>.