



Call for Abstracts

13th International Conference of PhD Students and Young Researchers

“Predictability in Uncertainty: Legal Challenges of Navigating the Digital Industries”

14–15 May 2026

Vilnius University Faculty of Law
Vilnius, Lithuania

*The International Network of Doctoral Studies in Law continues its long-standing tradition and cordially invites PhD students and young researchers to attend the upcoming 13th International Conference **on 14-15 May 2026** in Vilnius. The Conference will be hosted by the **Vilnius University, Faculty of Law in Lithuania**.*

Dear Researchers, Dear Colleagues,

Continuing its mission to promote interdisciplinary dialogue and research excellence, the International Conference returns in 2026 with an expanded scope and a renewed ambition. The upcoming Conference will for the first time employ a new approach that strongly incorporates direct dialogue between academia and private businesses. Among the traditional academic activities, the Conference will provide a platform for representatives of tech companies and members of academia to hear and be heard by each other. The main activities of the event will include:

- **Opening plenary session:** a keynote presentation and a roundtable discussion with the members of academia and representatives of the tech industry.
- **Traditional academic conference:** presentations by the young researchers (PhD students, postdoctoral fellows) followed by an exchange of ideas with the tech industry representatives.
- **Edited volume:** publication of papers in a peer-reviewed, edited volume based on the conference presentations, in cooperation with an international academic publishing house.
- **Pre-Conference event:** a session for undergraduate and postgraduate law students providing the platform to share their research findings and receive feedback from their peers and senior colleagues.

Roundtable Participants (confirmed)

The roundtable discussion with representatives of the tech industry will feature the following participants:

- **Oxylabs.io:** *Denas Grybauskas, Chief Governance and Strategy Officer;*
- **Vinted Pay:** *Dr. Eglė Kavoliūnaitė-Ragauskienė, Head of Compliance;*
- **Nord Security:** *Justinas Kondratas, Deputy Head of Legal;*
- **European Compliance Professionals Association:** *Rūta Mrazauskaitė, Board Member, compliance & governance consultant;*
- **Vinted:** *Ema Nekrašė, Legal Counsel;*
- **Revolut:** *Kęstutis Platūkis, Legal Counsel.*

TOPIC OF THE CONFERENCE

The digital industry is heavily burdened with uncertainty, as disruptive technologies innovate in unexplored territory from both commercial and legal perspectives. Many economic schools of thought analyse decision-making based on uncertainty – that is, making decisions with limited data. Occasionally, such decisions must be made on matters of law. Legal predictability is one of the most important pursuits of modern legal systems, yet it is not easy to secure in the tech field. Moreover, new technologies require flexibility, and the advantages of predictability can subtly turn sour, resulting in rigid application of law.

Economic studies have found that occasionally irrational behaviour patterns of economic actors can be predictable. By analogy, a certain degree of legal predictability may also be found under uncertain conditions in the business environment. Joining forces between the digital industry business and academia is one way to pursue this goal while simultaneously upholding the traditional legal values such as respect for human rights, fairness, equality, and others. The Conference is designed to include discussions on legal predictability in general, the protection of legitimate interests, and ways of securing predictability across various fields of law, including international law, constitutional law, as well as different branches of public and private law.

PRELIMINARY PANELS

The Conference will consist of the following panels. Based on the abstracts that will be received, additional panels might be included or the preliminary panels adapted.

► Legal Risk Management: Compliance, Market Regulation and Competition in Digital Ecosystems

Digital markets are becoming more concentrated, platform-based, and data-driven, making traditional competition law tools less reliable for ensuring predictability. At the same time, companies must manage a complex compliance environment shaped by overlapping regimes in competition, data protection, consumer law, and other regulation. This panel explores how competition enforcement and corporate compliance interact and evolve in rapidly evolving markets.

► Law, Economics, and Behavioural Insights: Predictability in Uncertain Environments

Combining insights from economics, behavioural science, and legal theory, this session investigates how legal systems can account for irrational decision-making and bounded rationality. Contributors will consider how laws can remain principled yet flexible, enabling predictable outcomes in complex and unpredictable environments. Ethical design and constitutional values will frame the discussion on regulatory innovation.

► **EU Law and Digital Governance**

With the EU introducing landmark regulations like the GDPR, DSA, and DMA, navigating the digital regulatory landscape has become increasingly complex. This panel evaluates how legal harmonisation efforts aim to enhance certainty while preserving flexibility for innovation. A central question will be how EU law can uphold core values without hindering technological growth.

► **Private Law in the Digital Era**

Technological disruption is reshaping core areas of private law, from contracts to property and torts. Legal systems must adapt to tools like smart contracts and digital assets while maintaining stability and clarity. Presenters will examine how traditional doctrines can evolve to support innovation without sacrificing legal certainty.

► **Law, Ethics, and Legal Theory in a Technologically Altered Landscape**

Emerging technologies challenge foundational legal concepts such as personhood, responsibility, legal rights, and others. Drawing from legal philosophy and ethics, speakers will consider how normative theory can guide regulation in ways that uphold justice, dignity, and the rule of law. The session also addresses shifting notions of legality in an increasingly algorithmic world.

► **Consumer Protection in the Digital Age**

Digital markets have introduced new risks for consumers – ranging from dark patterns to algorithmic decision-making. This discussion will assess how legal frameworks can be updated to protect users effectively while supporting innovation. Ongoing reforms, including the EU's Digital Fairness Act, will be highlighted as part of the evolving consumer law landscape.

► **Digital Finance and Tax Law**

The rapid development of technology and the emergence of new digital business models pose significant challenges to tax and financial law systems worldwide. Legal uncertainty in these areas affects market stability and investor confidence, while ensuring fair and effective taxation in the digital age requires a rethinking of traditional tax frameworks. This panel will examine legal efforts to establish clear rules for the taxation and governance of digital financial instruments, while safeguarding fairness, effectiveness, and legal certainty.

► **Legal Reasoning and Digitalization of Justice**

Digital tools are reshaping legal reasoning and decision-making that results in new possibilities for improving the quality and foreseeability of legal decisions. At the same time, these developments require that legal reasoning be examined within a broader, interdisciplinary context, while also addressing the risks, perspectives, and methodological tensions introduced by technological tools. This panel explores how courts and legal actors can balance legal predictability, adaptability, and legitimacy in the digital age.

► **Social Protection and Labour Market: The Digital Transformation**

The digital economy impacts social policies and labour markets. This panel will examine the legal tension between innovation-driven flexibility and the need for stable and predictable labour standards. The legal discussions will address challenges related to local and cross-border employment, legal tools to prevent social exclusion in the digital economy, and approaches to bridging gaps between technology, law, and social protection. The panel will also explore the impact of automation and algorithmic management on employees' rights, fairness, and equality.

► **AI Law**

The expanding use of artificial intelligence raises complex challenges across both private and public law, including civil and product liability, copyright and authorship, data protection, regulatory supervision, transparency and documentation obligations, as well as criminal-law concerns related to fraud, manipulation, and cybercrime. This AI Law panel will examine how

these and other emerging legal questions can be addressed while ensuring proper respect for legal certainty and other fundamental legal values.

► **Intellectual Property Law in the Digital Era**

In the face of technological developments, legal rules that govern ownership, innovation, and expression are being severely tested. This panel explores how intellectual property law is evolving in the digital era – from online infringement and platform liability to intellectual property protection in the Metaverse. Participants will discuss emerging issues, practical implications, and the future of IP protection in a rapidly shifting digital landscape.

► **Criminal Law of the Digital Age**

Technological innovation has generated new forms of criminal activity, ranging from cyberattacks and identity theft to the use of artificial intelligence for criminal purposes. At the same time, criminal law faces growing practical challenges in collecting and assessing digital evidence, attributing responsibility, and safeguarding fundamental rights. Traditional concepts and doctrines of criminal law therefore require re-examination if legal institutions are to keep pace with rapid technological change.

► **Human Rights and Digital Services**

As digital services increasingly mediate communication, commerce, and access to information, safeguarding fundamental rights in online environments has become a pressing challenge. This panel explores how legal frameworks can ensure predictability in the protection of rights such as privacy, equality, freedom of expression and due process amid rapid technological change. A central question of the panel will be how human rights standards can provide a predictable legal environment and remain effective without stifling innovation or imposing rigid constraints on digital service providers.

PARTICIPATION

The invitation to participate in the Conference is open to PhD Students as well as young researchers who have recently obtained their doctoral degrees. Participants are invited after a selection procedure conducted by the Scientific Committee based on the abstracts that are provided.

SUBMISSION OF ABSTRACTS

Please consider the following guidelines for the abstract submission:

Where: the abstract should be submitted to phdconference@tf.vu.lt

Abstract Length: up to 1000 words

Language of the abstract: English

Submission Deadline: 9th of March 2026.

All abstracts will be evaluated and selected by the Scientific Committee of the Conference. The criteria of the selection are based on: (1) how well abstracts reflect the core idea of the Conference and one of the preliminary sections of the Conference; (2) the relevance and originality.

FEES & EXPENSES

There will be no participation fee. Participants must cover their travel and accommodation expenses. However, accommodation costs will be covered by the organizers for the selected researchers from the International Network of Doctoral Studies in Law partner universities. The Conference will be held in person.

OTHER INFORMATION

The Conference will be held in English.

Conference venue - Vilnius University (Saulėtekio ave. 5, Vilnius, Lithuania).

Conference papers will be published as a special electronic edition.

Should you require any further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact us:

phdconference@tf.vu.lt

The International Network of Doctoral Studies in Law, which was founded by Vilnius University Faculty of Law, Frankfurt am Main J.W. Goethe University Faculty of Law, Paris Nanterre University Faculty of Law, and Lodz University Faculty of Law and Administration in 2014, provides an international platform to concentrate, develop academic and scientific activities, enhance the quality of doctoral studies in law, help to interchange information, and stimulate discussions and exchanges among PhD Students. More information <http://lawphd.net/>