The UK Network on Minority Groups and Human Rights was established in 2009 by scholars primarily based in the UK. The Network aims to organise conferences and roundtables on topical issues surrounding minority rights. The interests of members are diverse and the network welcomes the addition of new members.

One of the aims of the Network is to maintain a regular newsletter, updating colleagues on publications and events relating to minority groups and human rights, as well as disseminating the work of the network across the UK and internationally.

**Associates**

Dr Gaetano Pentassuglia, General Editor  
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Senior Lecturer in International Law, Director, International Human Rights and Group Diversity Programme, Dep. Director of LLM, University of Liverpool; Fernand Braudel Senior Fellow and Visiting Professor, Department of Law, European University Institute, Florence, Italy; Visiting Professor, University of Toronto Faculty of Law (2009)

**Interests**  
International human/minority rights law; minority/indigenous protection, especially practical and conceptual perspectives on international and comparative jurisprudence within global and regional human rights systems; interplay between minority protection and general international (human rights) law.

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Minority rights in European and international law, especially in EU law; minority rights in Asia; minority protection and legal and political theory

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International Minority Rights, ECHR, Minority Rights in Turkey, Ottoman pluralism

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International public law, Minority rights and human rights in International law, state building and protection of minority rights in Balkans, good governance, international territorial administrations, multiculturalism.

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Interests
‘New’ Minorities, Religious Minorities, Muslims in Europe, Intersectionalities

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Interests
Development and application of European minority rights law; language rights; compliance issues; employment monitoring; liberal culturalism, constitutionalism and difference; the Northern Ireland Bill of Rights process

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National Minorities, post-imperial minorities, migrants and minorities.

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Minority rights; European Human Rights Law; Fundamental Rights in the European Union; Anti-Discrimination Law

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Interests
Religious minorities, minority children

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Interests
Minority protection civil society actors; Transnational social mobilisation by minority and indigenous groups; Norm evolution in minority and indigenous rights; International minority and indigenous protection and monitoring mechanisms; Afro-descendants in Latin America; Dalits and caste-based discrimination; minority and indigenous rights in Asia and Africa

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Interests
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**Interests**
Transnational peoples and activism; media self representation; journalism education; right to culture and cultural practice as a form of advocacy, human rights education. Romani media and activism; transnational people’s activism in other areas including the Saami people and Networks/INGOs working with and for transnational people.

Sarah Sargent
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Indigenous rights in international law, indigenous children’s rights, American Indian legal issues in the United States, and transnational legal theory

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Religion and law, ethnic minorities and diasporas in law, immigration, refugee and nationality law, and comparative law with special reference to South Asians.

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**Editor-in-Chief**
Religion & Human Rights Journal

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Freedom of religion or belief, freedom of expression & extreme speech (particularly religious Freedom of religion or belief, freedom of expression & extreme speech (particularly religion or belief)

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Human rights; indigenous peoples’ rights

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**Interests**
Indigenous Rights; Minority rights in European and international law; multiculturalism

**Recent and Forthcoming Events**
Minority and Indigenous Rights: Emerging Themes and Challenges’, second workshop of the UK Network on Human Rights and Minority Groups, 18-19 November 2010, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London. Associates of the network presenting included the following:

Keynote – Dr. Alexandra Xanthaki – Do International Law Standards Encourage Multicultural
Policies
David McGrogan, ‘Minority Rights and Securitization: A Systems Theory Perspective’
Federica Prina, ‘Power, politics and participation: the right to identity in the Russian Federation’
Gulara Guliyeva, ‘Towards an EU definition of ‘minority’: are ‘new’ minorities in or out?’
Stephanie Berry, ‘Bringing Muslims within the Scope of ICERD - Square Peg in a Round Hole?’
Fiona Batt, ‘Ancient Indigenous Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) and Intellectual Property Rights’
Dr. Marco Odello, ‘The Legal Recognition of Indigenous Peoples’ Right to Cultural Identity’
Enzamaria Tromantana, ‘NGOs, IPOs and Indigenous Rights: Lessons learned, Current Challenges and Future Perspectives’
Dr. David Galbreath, ‘Explaining the Effectiveness of the European Minority Rights Regime’
Dr. Sarah Sargent, ‘Changing Norms and International Organisation

Structural Change: The Future of Indigenous Rights, Minority Rights and International Law’
Gjylbehare Bella Murati, ‘When minority turns into majority – The Kosovo case’
Ali Chouseinoglou, ‘The role of regional and transnational actors for internationalization of minority rights after 1990s: The case of Greece’
Shayna Plaut, ‘“Cooperation is the Story” – Best practices of transnational Indigenous activism in the North’
Dr. Corinne Lennox and Anna-Maria Biro, ‘The Influence of Civil Society Actors on the International Protection Regime for Minorities’
Discussants included Dr Tawhida Ahmed, Dr Elizabeth Craig and Dr. Jeroen Temperman

International Law Association (ILA) British Branch, Spring Conference 2011, 27 and 28 April 2011. The theme is: “States, peoples and minorities: whither the nation in international law?”

Papers will fall into the following categories: statehood in international law: reassessing the Montevideo criteria; self-determination and peoples: recent developments; the power and politics of recognition post-‘Kosovo’: future directions and new challenges in international law;

minorities in international law; the concept of ‘nationhood’ in international law; federalism, territorial autonomy and other internal divisions in international law; regionalism and supranationalism – a challenge to the State?; the liberal State in international law; the failed State in international law; the contested State in international law: Taiwan and other perennial controversies

For further minority-rights related information, please contact Tawhida Ahmed (t.ahmed@sheffield.ac.uk)

‘From Norm Adoption to Norm Implementation: Minority and Human Rights Revisited’, spring 2011 (12 March) conference of the working group on human rights of the German Political Science Association, hosted by the European Centre for Minority Issues. For further information, contact malte.brosig@wits.ac.za

Berkeley Electronic Press is pleased to announce the new issue of Muslim World Journal of Human Rights<http://www.bepress.com/mwjhr>

Muslim World Journal of Human Rights<http://www.bepress.com/mwjhr> is the only peer-reviewed
journal dedicated to the pressing question of human rights in the Muslim world.

The 4th ESIL Research Forum "International Law and Power Politics: Great Powers, Peripheries and Claims to Spheres of Influence in the International Normative Order" will be held in Tallinn, Estonia, on 27-28 May 2011. Further information, see the conference website: http://www.esil2011.ut.ee

Call for Reviews and Review Essays
The International Journal on Group and Minority Rights welcomes submissions for reviews and review essays on books pertaining to minority and group issues in international human rights law and policy, e.g. religion, gender, indigenous peoples, national minorities, for publication in forthcoming volumes. If you would like to submit a proposal for a book review or review essay please contact Mauro Barelli at mauro.barelli.1@city.ac.uk or the Reviews Editor Dr. Pentassuglia at g.pentassuglia@liverpool.ac.uk.

Launch of The Journal of Islamic State Practices in International Law (JISPIL).

Editorial Correspondence, including submissions to the journal should be made electronically to the Editor: JISPIL@electronicpublications.org

Including ‘Caste’ in the UK Equality Act (2010)
Meena Varma, Executive Director of Dalit Solidarity Network UK
Wednesday, 9 February, Senate House, University of London
Section 9 of the UK Equality Act 2010 enables the Government to amend the Act to add “caste” to the current definition of “race”. Meena Varma will discuss the process and challenges of securing this provision and the government deliberations on whether to make prohibition of caste-based discrimination fully part of the Equality Act 2010.


Berry, S ‘The Protection of Muslims within the Council of Europe Rights Regime’, UACES Conference

‘Exchanging Ideas on Europe: Europe at a Crossroads’ in Bruges, 6-8th September 2010.

Plaut S, ‘Using Each other with your eyes open: journalism, NGOs and the politics of influence,’ Peace and Justice Studies Association, Winnipeg, MB, October 2010

Plaut S, ‘NGOs, Journalism and Transparent Agendas,’ guest lecture at “Investigative International Journalism” at the UBC School of Journalism. October 2010

Plaut S, ‘Using Each other with your Eyes Open: Journalism, NGOs and the Politics of Influence,” guest lecture at “Investigative International Journalism” at the UBC School of Journalism, March 2010

Plaut S, Lead organizer for “Language, Culture and Politics: Identities in Transition” at the University of Chicago in April 2011.

Sargent S, Socio-Legal Studies Association Annual Conference, Spring 2011, Stream Convenor on Indigenous and Minority Rights
Shah P and D Bayir, ‘Socio-legal adaptation of British immigrants in Turkey: A theoretical puzzle’, the International Conference on Transnationalism and Migration (TRANSMIG) at CEIFO, University of Stockholm, 4-5 November 2010.

Shah P, ‘Muslim women and marriage in trans-jurisdictional contexts’. Lecture at the Joint Seminar Series organised by the SOAS Centre for Migration and Diaspora Studies, Department of Anthropology and Sociology, and Department of Development Studies, SOAS, University of London, 20 October 2010.


Shah P, Organiser of workshop on Legal Practice and Accommodation in Multicultural Europe (with Prof. Marie-Claire Foblets, Catholic University Leuven) at the International Institute for the Sociology of Law (IISL), Onati, Basque Country, Spain: [http://www.iisj.es](http://www.iisj.es), funded by the British Academy, the IMISCOE Network and the IISL.


Murati G, ‘The Ombudsperson Institution vs. UNMIK’ in Accountability for Human Rights Violations by International Organisations (Intersentia, 2010)


**Recent and Forthcoming Publications**

Ahmed T, The Impact of EU Law on Minority Rights (Hart, 2011)

Allen S and Xanthaki A (eds.), Reflections on the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Hart, 2011)


Sargent S, Indigenous Children’s Rights - International Law, Self-Determination and Intercounty Adoption in Guatemala (2010) 10 (1) Contemporary Issues in Law 1


Recent Developments

THE EU TAKES STEPS TOWARDS THE ADOPTION OF AN EU ROMA STRATEGY

Galina Kostadinova, (DPhil Candidate, Faculty of Law, University of Oxford)

The unfortunate mass expulsions of Bulgarian and Romanian Roma by France in the summer of 2010 created momentum for EU policy on this most marginalised European minority group. On 29 September 2010 the European Commission made a commitment to pave the way towards an EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies early in 2011. This idea was taken on by Hungary who is currently holding the Presidency of the Council of the EU.

On 31 January 2011 Hungary presented a draft schedule for the adoption of the Roma
framework strategy which was backed up by the EU Ministers for European and Foreign Affairs. The European Commission is expected to table a proposal in April 2011. The final version needs to be endorsed by the European Council at the end of the Hungarian Presidency in June 2011.

A common Roma framework strategy is necessary to ensure EU coordination of governments’ efforts to ensure equal opportunities and social inclusion for Roma citizens. According to the European Roma Policy Coalition, a network of high-profile NGOs, it is important that the policy document provides for benchmarking of EU structural funds to promote Roma integration systematically and in all related policy areas.

What has not been made clear so far is how Roma participation will be ensured in the design of the framework strategy. On 15 February 2011 a network of European and Hungarian human rights NGOs sent a letter to the Hungarian government and the Commission requesting that the vast civil society expertise on Roma issues is fully utilised in the drafting of the new policy document.

Roma needs to be key participants along this process. They are entitled by virtue of international human rights law to participate in all decisions which affect them. The next months will show whether and how the EU institutions will live up to their human rights commitments towards the Roma.


Fiona Batt (University of Bristol)

The commodification and exploitation of indigenous peoples’ Traditional Knowledge and genetic resources has been the focus of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). In particular the WIPO Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge (TK) and Folklore (IGC) has spent some time exploring the interplay between intellectual property, TK and genetic resources with the purpose of either developing a new international instrument or accommodating control and protection in the present intellectual property system. In October 2009 the IGC was requested to submit to the September 2011 WIPO General Assembly the text (or texts) of an international legal instrument (or instruments). A group of African states known as the African Group have been active participants in the process. A recent Protocol from the African Region Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO) the Swakopmund Protocol on the Protection of Traditional Knowledge and Expressions of Folklore adopted on the 9 August 2010 may reflect in part the final WIPO instrument on TK.

Unlike the discussions in the IGC (2009) on a new international instrument which have referred to the term indigenous, the Protocol refers to ‘local and traditional’ communities (section 6). The preamble expresses concern at the gradual disappearance, unlawful exploitation and misappropriation of TK and folklore (preamble). Section 4 states that protection under the Protocol should be extended to TK that is (i) generated, preserved and transmitted in a traditional and intergenerational context; (ii) distinctively associated with a local or traditional community; and (iii) integral to the cultural identity of a local or traditional community that is recognized as holding the knowledge through a form of custodianship, guardianship or collective and cultural ownership or responsibility. Such a relationship may be established formally or informally by customary practices, laws or protocols. Section 4 (iii) is particularly refreshing as it acknowledges the complex nature of custodianship in communities. Section 5
states that TK will not be subject to any formality but recognises the need for some record keeping using registers subject to the ‘aspirations’ of the TK holders. However Section 5 does not use the word ‘consent’ of the TK holders in relation the registration of TK. The WIPO has set up databases and registries for TK in a similar fashion. Section 6 recognises local and traditional communities and individuals as the holders of TK (section 6). Section 7 contains both positive and defensive protection. Authorizing TK holders the exclusive right to exploit their TK or prevent exploitation. Section 9 includes the principle of equitable benefit sharing. Section 10 requires non TK holders using TK to acknowledge the holders and respect the cultural values of the holders. Section 14.3 also recognises trans-boundary custodianship that TK may be held by a number of custodians across state boundaries. Section 12 permits a contracting state to grant a compulsory licence in the interest of public security, health or national need which removes the control of some TK way from the custodians.

The Swakopmund Protocol is an important document and has been incorporated into the African Position Document submitted to the IGC. It reflects a number of the General Guiding Principles and Substantive Principles referred to in the IGC Protection of Traditional Knowledge: Revised Objectives and Principles Document which have underpinned the discussions in the IGC in relation to TK. A concern is that any new WIPO TK instrument would be unequivocally entrenched in a philosophy of intellectual property law however the ARIPO Protocol may be an indicator that a more flexible holistic document will emerge. The Swakopmund Protocol has been heralded as a potential preventer of misappropriation of TK in Africa.


The second annual MRN event was held at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London, on 18th and 19th November 2010. The ‘Minority Rights and Indigenous Rights Law: Emerging Trends, Developments and Challenges’ Conference was organised by Ms Stephanie Berry and Dr Elizabeth Craig on behalf of MRN in conjunction with Dr Corinne Lennox and Dr Damian Short from the Institute of Commonwealth Studies. It was funded by the Human Rights Consortium, Brunel Law School and Minority Rights Group International.

The Conference started at 12:30pm on 18th November and ran until 5pm on 19th November. The programme included a Keynote Address, two Plenary Sessions, six Parallel Sessions on Minority and Indigenous Rights, a Closing Address and a Network Meeting. Papers presented related to the following themes: the internationalisation and securitisation of minority and indigenous rights; religious and new minorities; the impact of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; legal institutions and indigenous claims and the role of civil society and non-state actors. The final programme included 28 speakers and 10 Chairs and Discussants. A total of 77 participants attended the Conference over the course of the two days.

The majority of panels were made up of established, early stage and PhD researchers from more than one discipline. However, this was not always possible, and there were significantly more law papers than other disciplines. In addition to increasing the number of academic institutions involved in the activities of the Network, the Conference also engaged participants from IGOs and NGOs, including the UN, the Council of Europe, Minority Rights Group International, the Equal
Rights Trust and Amnesty International.

A selection of the indigenous rights papers presented at the Conference will be published by the International Journal of Human Rights, edited by Corinne Lennox, Damien Short and Paul Havemann. It is hoped that a selection of the minority rights papers will also be published in a human rights journal, edited by Elizabeth Craig and Stephanie Berry. The majority of conference contributors were interested in being involved in a follow-up publication provided a suitable publication outlet can be found.

Follow-up events were discussed at the Network meeting held at the end of the conference. A follow-up seminar is planned for summer 2011 at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies as a follow-up to the Conference. The possibility of holding the next Conference at Aberystwyth University in 2012 was discussed and Marco Odello, one of the founding network members, is exploring this possibility. We are in discussions with the Human Rights Consortium about the possibility of the continuation of their support in relation to a Network webpage.

Further UK Links

University of Liverpool
International Human Rights and Group Diversity, Human Rights and International Law Unit, Liverpool University
http://www.liv.ac.uk/law/ielu/index.htm

University of Sheffield
Debates relevant to minority protection can be found within 3 research groups.
Sheffield Centre for European and International Law http://www.shef.ac.uk/law/clic
Sheffield, Centre for Law in Society (CLIS) http://www.shef.ac.uk/law/clis
The Jurisprudence Reading Group, University of Sheffield
http://www.shef.ac.uk/law/clis

University of Sussex
Centre for Responsibilities, Rights and the Law at the University of Sussex
http://www.sussex.ac.uk/law/1-4-11

For further info and future events, please email Elizabeth Craig on emc22@sussex.ac.uk

Websites
http://www.liv.ac.uk/law/ielu/index.htm
http://www.shef.ac.uk/law/research/clusters/sciel

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