International Lawyers Assisting Workers (ILAW) Network

NYU Law Winter Pro Bono Intensive Research Project Description, 2026-27

The International Lawyers Assisting Workers (ILAW) Network is a global community of union and worker-rights lawyers united by a common commitment to advancing workers' rights through law. Founded in 2019, ILAW has grown to encompass over 1,500 lawyers and legal practitioners in more than 100 countries, making it the only genuinely global network of lawyers dedicated exclusively to the defence and promotion of workers' rights. The Network's work is conducted in close partnership with unions and the wider labour movement, and its activities are directed entirely at strengthening the ability of workers and their organizations to vindicate their rights under national law and regional and international labour standards.

Our work is driven by an explicit intersectional approach that incorporates three areas of legal work: advocacy, technical assistance and research; cross-movement building; and strategic litigation. The ILAW Network counts on highly qualified staff in its US headquarters as well as in Colombia, India, Kenya and the Republic of Georgia, and a global advisory board of leading labour lawyers.

At any given time ILAW is engaged in a number of worker rights-related comparative research projects. In past years, ILAW has been able to invite LLM law students to participate in a range of such projects, including ones dealing with the impact of technology in the workplace; climate change and just transition; gender parity and employment discrimination; migrant worker rights; workers' rights to vote and other participate in the political process; international dispute resolution procedures; and the right to strike, among others. Frequently we are able to assign students research work that focuses on their home countries or regions.

In upcoming months, we anticipate research opportunities that may include one or more of the following, ongoing projects:

1 workers' participation in elections and other democratic institutions

2 comparative case study research for litigation involving domestic workers and unpaid care workers

3 shadow reports for UN treaty bodies like CERD, CEDAW, ICESCR, that address labour rights issues

4 research and assistance with policy guides relating to worker issues in AI and data protection.

5 research on EU enlargement and social acquis for Turkey and Ukraine, specifically looking to strengthen trade union capacity to engage with relevant EU policies, national legislation, and regulatory frameworks.

6 research on workers' rights in the creative economy

7 addressing sexual harassment in the informal economy

8 researching the legal dimensions of climate change caused by critical mineral extraction, focusing on their implications for workers' rights