Call for Papers: Decolonial Comparative Law & the Informal/Formal Economy - Cameroon 2027

By:

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February 2, 2026

In May 2027, the DeCoLa programme will host the fourth edition of its Decolonial Comparative Law Workshop series in Cameroon. The programme will comprise two events in Douala: a workshop on 5–6 May 2027, followed by an Epupa school on 10–12 May 2027.

Organised in partnership with the Fondation Afric'Avenir, this edition seeks to rethink the divide between the formal and informal economy through a decolonial comparative legal approach. It also aims to contribute to the consolidation of a decolonial comparative law community across the African continent and beyond.

The overarching theme of the 2027 edition is **decolonial comparative law and the informal/formal economy**. The workshop takes the informal economy seriously as a site of legality in its own right, examined through a decolonial and comparative lens attentive to legal pluralism and situated practices.

Workshop Conference: Douala, 5–6 May 2027

The workshop will take place at the Fondation Afric'Avenir in Douala and will foster dialogue between legal scholars and researchers from other disciplines. In line with the programme's commitment to pluriversality, participants and members of the scientific advisory board will come from a wide range of regions across all inhabitable continents. Based on the call for papers, contributions addressing themes such as microlending, alternative modes of value creation, labour rights in informal work, and Indigenous and customary economies will be selected for discussion. Papers will be collectively discussed and critically engaged with by peers as well as by anthropologists, historians, economists, and performance artists. Live translation will be provided to enable participants to present and discuss their work in their preferred language.

Applications remain open until **1 September 2026**.

Two online information sessions will be held on 18 March 2026, one at 10:00 GMT and one at 16:00 GMT.

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Epupa School

Douala, 10–12 May 2027

The *Epupa school* ('*rainy season*' in the Douala language) will take place from 10–12 May 2027 at the Fondation Afric'Avenir in Douala. It aims to bring together legal and non-legal scholars, alongside local actors, to engage with specific questions in decolonial comparative law, with particular attention to economic life and practice. How can we improve the way we document how Cameroonians and other human societies practise the ‚economy'? Participation

is open to scholars, activists, and students interested in deepening their understanding of decolonial comparative approaches to the formal and informal economy. There is no participation fee.

Who in Cameroon?

This fourth workshop and the Epupa school are both co-organised by the DeCoLa Project and the Africa Centre of Expertise at the Max Planck Institute for Comparative and International Private Law (MPIPriv) in Hamburg, and the Fondation Afric'Avenir in Douala. The Hamburg team is composed of Ralf Michaels, who is the director of the Institute, Passainte Ragab, and Kwamou Eva Feukeu, who is also head of the Africa Centre of Expertise. The Fondation Afric'Avenir was founded by Prince Kum'a Ndumbe III. He and his team will be thematically supported by an organising committee composed of Alfred Ngando (Laboratoire d'histoire du droit et des coutumes du Cameroun – Yaoundé University-Soa II) and Isidore Léopold Miendjiem (University of Dschang).

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