

Public Lecture

The “Crisification” of Migration and its Rule of Law Impacts

**Professor Violeta Moreno-Lax, Hertie School
and Queen Mary University of London**

**Discussant: Francesco Maiani, University of
Lausanne, nccr – on the move**

**26 May 2026
18:00 – 19:30
University of Lausanne**

The lecture will be held at the University of Lausanne, [Internef Building](#),
1015 Chavannes-près-Renens (Room 231), followed by an apéritif, and on
Microsoft Teams ([link](#)).

Please register [here](#) by 15 May 2026.



Abstract

Migration has long been framed and administered as a ‘crisis’. In the European Union context, the ‘crisis’ framing allows for the characterisation of (unwanted) migration as an anomaly calling for the adoption of ‘exceptional’, typically restrictive, measures that eventually consolidate into standard policy. The resulting ‘crisification’ of the field allows for a form of selective exceptionalism, mobilising the resources of the state of emergency in a focused way, specifically targeting non-nationals. Against this background, this lecture will unpack how ‘crisification’ (as both a process and a strategy) has permeated the EU migration domain becoming a system of governance in its own right. The ‘crisis’ narrative and its conceptualisation as an ‘exception’ facilitate deterrence and coercion to become entrenched as structural and ‘necessary’ features, allowing for legalised expansions of power and for contractions of pre-existing legal safeguards that lead to the re-configuration of the EU *acquis* in this field. The lecture will show how ‘crisification’ enables the normalisation of legal and policy developments at odds with basic Rule of Law principles, which fundamentally transform the legal order.

For a full-length working-paper version of the argument, see [SSRN](#).

Short Biography

Professor Violeta Moreno-Lax holds the Wübben Foundation Chair of International Law and is the Director of the Hertie School Centre for Fundamental Rights (Berlin). She is also Professor of Law at Queen Mary University of London (on leave) and founding Director of the (B)OrderS Centre for the Legal Study of Borders, Migration, and Displacement. She has published extensively on border violence, migration and security, and human rights, areas on which she regularly advises UN agencies, EU institutions, national governments, and NGOs. Her work has been cited by leading courts, including the Court of Justice of the European Union and the Belgian Conseil d’État. She is also a Visiting Professor of the College of Europe and a legal adviser and founding member of the de:border / / migration justice collective, focusing on strategic litigation. She sits in the Editorial Boards of the *European Journal of Migration and Law* and the *International Journal of Refugee Law*.

Location

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For further questions you may contact Maja Łysienia: maja.lysienia@unil.ch.