UNIVERSITÉ DE GENÈVE
GLOBAL STUDIES INSTITUTE

CALL FOR PAPERS

The EU and the Crisis of the International Liberal Order: A Systemic Crisis?

Academic Workshop at the Global Studies Institute of the University of Geneva

Geneva Transformative Governance Lab (GTGLab)

4-5 April 2019

Aim:

The workshop aims to analyze the ongoing multi-dimensional crisis of the international liberal order (ILO) and overlapping crises in the EU as a systemic crisis. The major themes to be covered with respect to both the crisis of the ILO and the EU "overlapping crises" include trade wars, environmental challenges (and global warming), migration, and rise of populism, Brexit and the decreasing legitimacy of international institutions. Selected papers' publication is planned in *GSI Working Papers* and a Special Issue of *Global Affairs* Journal.

Eligibility: PhD Candidates and Post-Doctoral Researchers from various backgrounds (e.g., International Relations, International Law, European Studies, EU Law, Economics, Development Studies).

Deadline for papers proposals: Please send your paper proposal (no more than **500 words**) to gtglab@unige.ch by **10 December 2018**. The final paper will be due by **15 March 2019**.

Funding: on-site costs will be covered by the University of Geneva. Travel fees are supposed to be granted by the affiliation institution but might exceptionally be reimbursed by the hosting side upon request.

Context:

Pursuant to the 2018 Munich Security Report, the signs of a "continued erosion" of the international liberal order (ILO) represent a crucial threat for global security. Such signs include the decreasing legitimacy of institutions that tend to promote peace and sustainable development at the international, European and national levels; the subsequent rise of nationalist and populist movements, and less predictable economic and security policies of key players. At the same time, the EU is also affected by "overlapping crises", such as Brexit, the financial and economic crisis, the rise of nationalism and intra-Union contestation of values (especially the positions held by Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic and Italy regarding EU integration), the rise of Eurosceptic right- and left-wing parties across EU Member States), migration crisis and trade wars with the U.S.

While studying systemic risks, scientific research tends to focus on natural disasters, though many crises, affecting human societies, stem from socio-economic issues. Hence, for the purposes of the workshop, the concept of "systemic crisis" will be used within broader socio-economic systems. A systemic crisis can thus be defined as an interconnected architecture of risks that result or cause one

another within a complex system of actors and factors. A complex system can be distinguished by a number of features, such as, *inter alia*, non-linearity and non-proportionality, as well as paradoxical, dynamic and "probalistic" characteristics. Such complex systems are also characterised by feedback cycles and by the existence of multiple and inter-connected causes and consequences involving a wide variety of factors, as well as unintended happenings, such as sudden regime shifts when a "tipping point" is crossed or networks interaction causing failure cascades or chain reactions in which local risks can become systemic. One can cite as a glaring example, the 2008 worldwide, then European, economic and financial crisis.

The aim of the workshop is to analyze the ongoing multi-dimensional crisis of the international liberal order (ILO) and overlapping crises in the EU as systemic crises. We suggest potential participants focusing on one of six key themes: trade wars, environmental challenges (and global warming), migration, rise of populism, Brexit and the decreasing legitimacy of international institutions, with respect to either the crisis of the ILO or the "overlapping crises" in the EU, or both. Those six themes are not exhaustive and papers concerning another theme may optionally be proposed. It is expected that participants will apply various conceptualizations of "systemic crisis" and "complex system" to determine whether the dynamics within the theme they focus on testifies to the systemic nature of the crisis of the ILO, EU "overlapping crises", or both the ILO and the EU.

Let's take the example of the "rise of populism", as one of the phenomena that will be discussed. We will answer the following questions: Are there two different crises; the rise of populism specific to the context of the EU and another one relevant for the ILO? Is it a more global systemic crisis? What are the characteristics of the rise of populism within the EU and in the ILO? What system is more resistant to populist tensions and what is each system's responses to this challenge? If there is, in fact, a global systemic crisis, what are its characteristics? How does each field of the crisis interact with another – for example, what are the causal links between the migration crisis, the rise of populism and the legitimacy of the EU or International institutions? What are the underlying factors, trends, and dynamics of the crisis at the ILO and/or EU level? What institutions are dealing with the crisis? What are the prospects of evolution or resolution and in what time frame? To what extent has this crisis engendered other crises? To what extent has the crisis at the EU level given rise/provoked a crisis at the global level, and vice versa? What are the implications of the conceptualisation of this particular crisis as a systemic crisis?

During the conference panels, chaired by senior scholars or distinguished policy-makers participants are expected to present their arguments in favour or against the abovementioned phenomena, representing the element of a "systemic crisis" of the ILO, the EU or both. Thus, the workshop is to create the relevant bridges between proposed themes (horizontally) and the levels of these crises within the EU or/and the ILO (vertically). The final panel will bring together the outcomes of the debate, trying to establish whether there actually is a systemic crisis of the ILO, of the EU or a cumulative crisis of both, and how they interact. A discussion of further work will follow conference panels (i.e, the publication of a special issue in the Journal *Global Affairs* and in *GSI Working Papers* series).

The **scientific committee of the workshop** will select junior researcher participants (PhD Students and Post-Doctoral Researchers). The scientific committee is composed of: Yuliya Kaspiarovich (GSI, *GTGLab*), Prof. Nicolas Levrat (GSI, *GTGLab*), Maryna Rabinovych (University of Hamburg), Flore Vanackère (GSI, *GTGLab*), Angus Wallace (GSI), Didier Wernli (GSI, *GTGLab* and The University of Hong Kong).