



Transforming  
Human Rights



Workshop:  
***Absolute Rights under the ECHR at State Borders***  
**Nurnberg, November 2026**

- CALL FOR PAPERS -

**Date:** 9-10 November 2026

**Location:** FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg (Germany)

**Organizers:** [Chair for Human Rights and Migration Law](#) (Prof. Dr. [Grażyna Baranowska](#))

**Keynote Speaker:** Ass. Prof. Dr. [Vladislava Stoyanova](#) (Lund University)

The European Court of Human Rights currently examines three cases concerning pushbacks in the context of “instrumentalization of migration” at EU-Belarus borders (*R.A. and Others v. Poland*, *H.M.M. and Others v. Latvia* and *C.O.C.G. and Others v. Lithuania*). In the [hearings before the Grand Chamber](#), judges raised questions addressing consequences of the absolute character of state obligations under Article 3 of the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR) and whether absolute rights may be restricted in their procedural limb in the context of “instrumentalization of migration”. This inspired vivid debates among academics and practitioners working on pushbacks and border violence.

The workshop provides an occasion to embed these context-specific discussions in broader research of absolute rights under the ECHR. It aims at discussing the interplay of absolute rights and the protection of migrants at state borders under the ECHR, by offering a space to address both theoretical questions relating to absolute rights and contextual, practice-oriented ones relating to state borders, pushbacks, and border violence.

We welcome papers by **researchers from all career stages, including early-career researchers.**

Possible questions include:

- Do absolute rights have a definable “core”? Can the absolute character of a right be limited to its “core” aspects?
- Can procedural rights be absolute? Is procedural protection resulting from the procedural limb of an absolute right (necessarily) absolute?
- How does the distinction between positive and negative obligations interplay with the absolute character of rights under the ECHR?
- Are there any circumstances in which crisis affects absolute rights? Can “instrumentalization of migration” be regarded as a crisis?

- How do absolute rights relate to the right of states to control the entry of non-nationals into their territory?
- How do Art. 3 ECHR and Art. 4 of Protocol No. 4 ECHR interact in the light of the absolute nature of Art. 3 ECHR?
- Can Art. 4 of Protocol No. 4 ECHR be considered an absolute right?
- How does the absolute character of a right affect relative evidentiary assessments inherent in pushback cases?
- How does jurisprudence on pushbacks and border violence, their politicized context and surrounding narratives influence what it means for a right to be absolute under the ECHR?

Authors of selected papers will be invited to contribute to a **collected volume**, edited by Prof. Dr. Grażyna Baranowska and Prof. Dr. Vladislava Stoyanova. Hart Publishing has expressed interest in the project.

### **Submissions**

Please submit a summary of the paper (maximum 500 words) and the planned structure of the paper (maximum 200 words), together with a short bio (maximum 150 words), your affiliation, and e-mail address in one PDF file by **10 May 2026** via email to [workshop-absolute-rights-at-borders@fau.de](mailto:workshop-absolute-rights-at-borders@fau.de). Selected submissions will be notified by 1 June 2026. All accepted participants will be expected to submit a work-in-progress draft by 15 October 2026.

### **Fees and Funding**

There is no registration fee for the workshop. Travel grants, including accommodation, will be made available for selected participants. Please indicate in your application whether you are applying for a travel grant.

### **Organizing Committee:**

[Grażyna Baranowska](#), [Isabel Kienzle](#), [Jonathan Kiessling](#), [Melina Riemer](#)