The rise of algorithmic governance : what consequences for fundamental rights?

Professor: **Raphaële Xenidis**
Session: **Friday 10 July 2026**
Language of instruction: **English**
Number of hours of class: **2.5h**

Objective of the Course

This masterclass explores major contemporary issues linked to the risks and the regulation of new technologies, artificial intelligence and big data. The learning objectives include:

1. Understand what algorithms and artificial intelligence are, how and where they are used to make decisions,
2. Explore, through concrete case studies, how algorithmic decision-making can threaten our fundamental rights, particularly through exacerbating discrimination and inequality;
3. Assess how European law addresses these risks while avoiding stifling innovation.

Summary

New technologies are used increasingly in many areas of life both in the private and in the public sector: to support medical diagnoses and enhance healthcare; to predict systemic risks such as earthquakes, fires and climatic events; to help human resource services to hire job candidates; to assist banks and financial institutions when they provide credits and insurance policies; to generate hyper-realistic text and images or even art; to predict crime and shape policing strategies or to make recommendations to judges about sentences, etc. The emergence of digital societies and the role of algorithms (often powered by data analytics, machine learning and artificial intelligence) in governing processes that order people, organisations and society has been called ‘algorithmic governance’.

Combined with big data and AI, new technologies offer a lot of opportunities, for example by optimizing decision-making processes, providing new insights into

complex phenomena, making risk assessments or recommendations more reliable, automating costly or dangerous tasks, and making goods or services more accessible to consumers. However, new technologies also present numerous risks for human safety, security and fundamental rights. This masterclass delves into those risks and the regulatory challenges linked to the emergence of new technologies. Together, we will explore how the rise of algorithmic governance threatens fundamental rights as they are guaranteed by European law, in particular the right to equality, and we will ponder how technology should be regulated.

Professor's Biography

Raphaële Xenidis is an Assistant Professor in European Law at Sciences Po Law School. Raphaële's current research focuses on European discrimination and equality law. In the framework of her Ph.D. dissertation, she has worked on issues of intersectionality and intersectional discrimination. Her Marie Curie postdoctoral project explored problems of algorithmic discrimination, bias in automated decision-making systems and data-driven inequality.