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Meeting-ID: 976 4762 3260  
Kenncode: 427574



CONFERENCE  
**Democracy and Human Rights during  
the Corona Crisis. Austria in Comparison**  
March 5 2021, 9.00 – 13.00, *online*



SIGMUND FREUD  
UNIVERSITY  
LAW

## CONFERENCE

# Democracy and Human Rights during the Corona Crisis. Austria in Comparison

March 5 2021, 9.00 – 13.00, *online*

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UNIVERSITY  
VIENNA



The covid-19 pandemic may represent one of the most serious challenges to global democracy. Not only have long known authoritarian regimes or illiberal governments used the crisis as cover to rule by decree, postpone elections, arrest critics and heighten censorship. Even non-authoritarians won praise for limiting democratic freedoms „in ways that would have drawn condemnation in ordinary times“ (cf. Journal of Democracy, special issue on Covid vs. Democracy). We cannot know the ultimate impact of the pandemic on democracy yet but we can contribute to the risk analysis of the coronavirus measures from a democracy and human rights perspective. Our goal is to identify and warn when leaders engage in „executive overreach“ (cf. Diebel 2019) or – what can also constitute a threat to democracy and human rights – „executive underreach“ (Scheppele & Pozen 2020) and when democratic institutions come under stress.

Our conference will contribute to an analysis of the Austrian crisis management strategy in relation to democracy and human rights. Therefore, we invite international and national experts to engage in a comparative assessment and to formulate recommendations for dealing with democracy and human rights in times of crisis.

hosted by the *Sigmund Freud University Vienna* supported by the *Zukunftsfonds of the Republic of Austria* and the *Plattform Demokratie und Recht*

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## SCHEDULE

### 09.00 *Welcome and introduction*

**Konrad Lachmayer, Tamara Ehs**

### 09.15 *Part 1, presentations by*

**Birgit Van Hout** *Regional Representative for Europe, UN Human Rights Office (OHCHR)*

**Katarzyna Gardapkhadze** *First Deputy Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights*

**Sam van der Staak**

*Head of International IDEA's Europe Programme*

### 10.15 *Part 2, presentations by*

**Annemarie Schlack**

*Director, Amnesty International Austria*

**Barbara Trionfi** *Executive Director, International Press Institute (IPI)*

**Thomas Lohninger** *Executive Director, epicenter.works – for digital rights*

### 11.30 *Panel discussion with*

**Maria Berger** *Plattform Demokratie und Recht*

**Konrad Lachmayer** *SFU*

**Angelika Watzl** *Austrian League of Human Rights*

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**Zukunftsfonds**  
der Republik Österreich



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