

VIENNA, 5 MAY 2022

# HOW DO DEMOCRACIES DIE?

THE 6TH NAVIGATING KNOWLEDGE  
LANDSCAPES' ANNUAL CONFERENCE



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## The 6th Navigating Knowledge Landscapes' Annual Conference

# How do democracies die?

In the last decades, countless books, articles, and reports have speculated, or even diagnosed, deep crises of democracies throughout the world. Although it could be argued that the Covid-19 pandemic has fuelled a crisis of government, rather than a crisis of democracy, in most places, it has doubtlessly increased political polarisation and exacerbated inequalities across and within societies. How democracies die, and what roles digital practices and technologies play in this process, stands in the centre of this one-day multidisciplinary conference.

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-  Thursday, 5 May 2022
-  09:00-19:00 CET
-  **Alois-Wagner Saal**  
C3 Centre for International Development  
Sensengasse 3, 1090 Vienna, Austria
-  2G & FFP2 Mask
-  For registration and further information, please contact [natalia.kancelova@univie.ac.at](mailto:natalia.kancelova@univie.ac.at)
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## Programme

**09.00** Coffee

### Part I: The problem

**09.30 Keynote**

**Gerda Falkner**, Centre for European Integration Research, Vienna

### ***Digital Dangers to Democracy: A Downward Cycle?***

Democracy is a fragile multi-level process whose essential components are all affected by digitalisation. The platform economy (co-)shapes the media landscape that (co-)shapes the behaviour of individuals that (co-)shape governments that may, or may not, effectively regulate the platform economy and digital capitalism more broadly. There is a cycle of either mutual reinforcement or mutual weakening. Considering the specifics of how the 'digital revolution' has proceeded, to date, it seems likely that we see a downward spiral where the components of the political system (at large) drive each other further in the direction of a less democratic system, over and over again. Can ongoing regulatory initiatives and debates, most importantly at EU level, help to turn things around?

## Part II: The analysis

### 10.30 Panel I. (Chair: **Anna Lydia Svalastog**)

**Mareike Fenja Bauer**, European New School for Digital Studies, Frankfurt/Oder, DE: *“Anti-feminism in the Context of Corona Conspiracy Theories in Germany”*

**Vanja Kopilaš**, University of Zagreb Faculty of Croatian Studies, Zagreb, HR, and **Srećko Gajović**, University of Zagreb School of Medicine, Croatian Institute for Brain Research, Zagreb, HR: *“Digital well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic”*

**Barbara Prainsack**, Department of Political Science, University of Vienna, AT, and **Hendrik Wagenaar**, Institute of Advanced Studies (IHS), Vienna, AT: *“The pandemic within: how the 'old normal' got us into trouble”*

### 12.45-14.15 Lunch at **VinziRast "mittendrin"**

Address: Währinger Straße 19, 1090 Vienna

### 14.30 Panel II. (Chair: **Ulf Carmesund**)

**Gülşen Doğan**, Department of International Relations and Political Science, Koç University Istanbul, TR: *“The consolidation of populist-authoritarian rule in the Global South: a comparative study on the online content control in Turkey and Brazil”*

**Ivana Damnjanović**, Faculty of Political Science, University of Belgrade, RS: *“Death of the public sphere?”*

### **15.45 Panel III. (Chair: Maruška Nardoni)**

**Ulf Carmesund**, Centre for Research Ethics & Bioethics, Uppsala University, SE, and **Anna Lydia Svalastog**, Faculty of Health and Welfare, Østfold University College, NO, and Centre for Research Ethics & Bioethics, Uppsala University, SE: *“When democracies die – how may ethics assist?”*

**Srećko Gajović**, University of Zagreb School of Medicine, Croatian Institute for Brain Research, Zagreb, HR, and **Vanja Kopilaš**, University of Zagreb Faculty of Croatian Studies, Zagreb, HR): *“Patient integrity – can patients be involved in the bioethical aspects of health care?”*

## **Part III: Hope?**

### **17.00 Roundtable (Chair: Srećko Gajović)**

#### ***How do democracies live? Connecting knowledge and sustainability***

With short inputs from:

- **Joachim Allgaier**, Communication and Digital Society, Fulda University of Applied Sciences, DE
- **Ulf Carmesund**, Centre for Research Ethics & Bioethics, Uppsala University, SE
- **Leila Hadj-Abdou**, Department of Political Science, University of Vienna, AT, and Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, EUI, IT
- **Anna-Lydia Svalastog**, Faculty of Health and Welfare, Østfold University College, NO, and Centre for Research Ethics & Bioethics, Uppsala University, SE
- **Zoran Todorovic**, School of Medicine, University of Belgrade, RS

### **19.00 Wine & cheese**