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Swedish
Research
Council

Invitation to a workshop in connection to the Olof Palme guest professorship at the Faculty of Law in Uppsala

Protecting, defending and recreating democracy and the rule of law. From the Weimar Constitution to the Venice Commission

When: **Wednesday 28 May 9.30 – 17.30** followed by dinner

Where: Fakultetsrummet (the Faculty Room), Faculty of Law, Uppsala, Trädgårdsgatan 1.

This one-day conference sets out to investigate threats to democracy and the rule of law and how to protect, defend and recreate it. The Weimar Constitution stands as an example of how easily democracy and the rule of law can be erased. Another historical constitutional turning point was the fall of the Berlin wall. To assist the Eastern European states in constitutional matters in the transition, the European Commission for Democracy through Law - the Venice Commission - was set up in 1990 to advise the Council of Europe and its member states. The Commission is widely respected for its independent opinions in constitutional matters. Its Rule of Law Checklist is now up for revision, and a revised version is expected in 2025. One of the assignments laid down in the Venice Commission's Statute is that the Commission shall give priority to work concerning: the constitutional, legislative and administrative principles and techniques, which serve the efficiency of democratic institutions and their strengthening, as well as the principle of the rule of law. These are the questions we hope to shed light on during the conference.

Program

Wednesday 28 May 2025

9.30 Coffee

Part I. Weimar

10.00 – 10.10. Welcome: Iain Cameron

10.10 – 10.55. Sofia Näsström: *What is the spirit of democracy?*

Strengthening democracy in an age of autocracy

Comments by Iain Cameron

11.00 – 11.45. Bastiaan Rijpkema: *Defending democracy through Parliament*

Comments by Anna Jonsson Cornell

11.45 – 12.30 Anthoula Malkopoulou: *Theories of Democratic Self-Defense*

Comments by Dag Michalsen

12.30 – 13.30. Lunch. Blå rummet, Faculty of Law, Trädgårdsgatan 1.

Part I. Weimar, continued

13.30 – 14.15. Ludvig Norman: *Weimar as a Historical Lesson*

Comments by Dag Michalsen

Part II. Venice

14.15 – 15.00. Johan Hirschfeldt: *The Swedish Government's Governance in times of crisis*

Comments by Iain Cameron

15.00 – 15.30 Coffee/tea

15.30 – 16.15. Eirik Holmøyvik: *Democratic Elections and the Rule of Law:*

A view from the Venice Commission

Comments by Bastiaan Rijpkema

16.15 – 17.00. Iain Cameron: *New challenges to the Rule of Law: reflections on the ongoing work of the Venice Commission in updating the*

Rule of Law Checklist

Comments by Aziz Huq

17.00 – 17.30. Discussion and Closing remarks

18.00 Dinner, Gula rummet, Faculty of Law, Trädgårdsgatan 20

Welcome!

RSVP 21 May to palme@uu.se. Please note in your reply if you wish to have lunch and/or dinner, and if so if you have any dietary requirements

Iain Cameron, Marianne Dahlén & Dag Michalsen