



Jean Monnet  
Centre of  
Excellence



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**“European Democracy in Crisis –  
Challenges and Opportunities for International Organizations”**

Organized by UiA’s Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence

in the framework of The European Conference for Democracy and Human Rights

Kristiansand/online, 6 May 2021

Democracy has come under threat from various sides in Europe. At the same time, international organizations like the Council of Europe, the European Union and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe aim at protecting democracy on the European continent. The Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence at the University of Agder (UiA), Norway, brings together experts to discuss the current state of democracy in Europe, the tools and possibilities that international organizations have to advance the democratic development of their member states, and the challenges these organizations face in their activities.

The event will start with an opening ceremony of the Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence, which has been awarded to UiA by the European Union last year. In the subsequent keynote speech, Matjaž Gruden, Director of Democratic Participation at the Council of Europe, will focus on how the deficits identified in the *2021 Annual Report of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe on the state of Democracy, Human rights and the Rule of Law in Europe* impact on the work of the organization. Afterwards, a panel of expert scholars from various Norwegian universities will discuss the democratic challenges for and responses of European international organizations, in particular the EU, in further detail. Please see below for the programme.

## Programme

Time	Activity	Participants
11:15-11:35	<b>Opening of the Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence at the University of Agder</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Anne Pintsch</b> (Coordinator of the Jean Monnet Centre, UiA) – Welcome/Introduction</li><li>• <b>Thierry Béchet</b> (Delegation of the European Union to Norway) – Speech</li><li>• <b>Sunniva Whittaker</b> (Rector UiA) – Speech</li><li>• <b>Anne Pintsch</b> – Presentation of the Jean Monnet Centre</li></ul>

11:35-11:40		Break
11:40-12:15	<b>Democracy in Europe Keynote Speech – Eilert Sundt Lecture</b> (20 min) <b>Q&amp;A (Chat) (15 min)</b>	<b>Matjaž Gruden</b> (Council of Europe, Director of Democratic Participation)
12:15-12:20		Break
12:20-13:00	<b>Panel Discussion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pieter de Wilde</li> <li>• Stefan Gänzle</li> <li>• Marianne Riddervold</li> <li>• Jarle Trondal</li> <li>• Anne Elizabeth Stie (moderator)</li> </ul>

**The panel will focus on the following questions:**

- What are the most concerning developments regarding democracy in Europe?
- How can international organizations address democratic deficits in their member states, while at the same time coming under pressure themselves as a consequence of democratic decline?
- How have the various major crises contributed to democratic challenges in Europe and impeded democracy protection activities of international organizations?
- Is de-facto differentiation a tool for addressing these problems?
- Given that they face the same confrontation, have international organizations cooperated (more) closely in their democracy protection activities? What can European international organizations learn from each other in the face of the common challenge?

**Panel participants:**

<b>Pieter de Wilde</b>	Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Professor
<b>Stefan Gänzle</b>	University of Agder, Professor, Head of the Department of Political Science and Management
<b>Marianne Riddervold</b>	Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences, Professor/Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI), Researcher
<b>Anne Elizabeth Stie</b>	University of Agder, Associate Professor
<b>Jarle Trondal</b>	University of Agder, Professor

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