



Call for Papers

2nd Ars Iuris Legal Potentials Conference: Law and Politics in a Polarized World

September 30th, 2024 | Federal Ministry of Justice | Vienna, Austria

In 2024, more than half of the world's population will live in countries holding nationwide elections, making it the biggest global election year in history.¹ Around these electoral processes, lines of social conflict come to light with particular clarity. The public narrative paints a picture of an irreconcilable and fractious society, in which communication between increasingly fragmented sub-publics comes to a standstill and some groups abandon the common democratic project altogether. The latest sociological research offers a contrasting perspective by suggesting a trend towards greater unity, with only isolated “trigger points” (i.e., specific issues where emotions run high, such as migration and climate policy).² Nevertheless, questions still arise as to the relationship between law and politics in a conflict-ridden world: To what extent is the legal system dependent on social consensus? Is the law itself a driving factor of social polarization? Can – or should – law mediate between conflicting interests and counteract polarizing tendencies? We look forward to discussing these questions in the 2nd Ars Iuris Legal Potentials Conference. The conference takes place on **September 30th, 2024** and will be hosted at the **Federal Ministry of Justice in Vienna**.

We cordially invite young legal researchers (e.g., PhD candidates, postdoctoral fellows, research fellows) to share their ideas concerning “**Law and Politics in a Polarized World**” at this intradisciplinary conference. To amplify the impact of their contributions, our speakers will be provided with the opportunity to publish a written version of their presentation in the *University of Vienna Law Review (VLR)*, a peer-reviewed, open-access journal.

We welcome contributions that deal with the function, tasks and limits of the law in a polarized world, in particular with regards to the question of whether and how law can and should mediate between conflicting interests and positions. We also welcome contributions that address the question of how a legal system is affected by eroding social cohesion and whether the law itself contributes to polarization. We specifically, but not exclusively, encourage submissions concerning the following subjects:

¹ Sorkin, ‘The biggest election year in history’ (*The New Yorker*, 7 January 2024) <<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2024/01/15/the-biggest-election-year-in-history>> accessed 26 February 2024.

² Mau/Lux/Westheuser, *Triggerpunkte. Konsens und Konflikt in der Gegenwartsgesellschaft* (Berlin, 2023).

- Pillars of a legal system: Reliance on social acceptance and respect
- The law as a driving factor of polarization: Critical, historical and comparative reflections on the law
- Regulation of the public sphere: AI and its impact on political polarization, social networks as a source of political (mis-)information, hate speech and current challenges of media law
- National and international methods of legal conflict resolution: Organizations, treaties, courts of justice and alternative dispute resolution
- Democratic frameworks put to the test: Need and perspectives for reform
- Strengthening trust in social institutions: State, politics and science under pressure
 - (Citizen) participation in legislative and other decision-making processes
 - Perspectives on administrative communication and judicial public relations work
 - Scientific dialogue and (legal) science communication in a polarized world

If you are interested in applying to participate as **both a conference-speaker and an author**, please send an **anonymized abstract (500 words maximum, PDF file format)** as well as your **academic CV (one page maximum, PDF file format)** and, if available, a sample of academic writing (e.g., a recent **publication**) to ars.iuris@univie.ac.at by **April 28th, 2024**. Notifications of acceptance will be communicated by the end of May 2024.

Your **presentation** should be **20-30 minutes**; your corresponding **paper** should contain **30.000-50.000 characters**. The 2nd Ars Iuris Legal Potentials Conference will be held in **English**, which is also the VLR's language of publication.

Your **finished paper**, which will have the chance to be featured in a special edition of the VLR, has to be handed in by **September 2nd, 2024** via email (ars.iuris@univie.ac.at).

You will be able to make **modifications** to your paper until **October 14th, 2024**, if the discussion at the conference inspires you to do so.

If necessary, speakers' travelling costs as well as residence expenses will be covered by the Ars Iuris Vienna. To find out more about the Ars Iuris Vienna (<https://arsiuris.univie.ac.at/en/about-us/>) and the University of Vienna Law Review (<https://viennalawreview.com/index.php/vlr/about>), feel free to browse our websites.

We are looking forward to receiving your abstracts and welcoming you at the 2nd Ars Iuris Legal Potentials Conference!

*Donat Binder, Lisa Rösler, Mary Barrett,
Maximilian Blaßnig and Rosa-Maria Mayerl
for the Ars Iuris Vienna*