



Workshop

Secrecy and the European Union: A Democratic Perspective

Organized by [the Amsterdam Centre for European Law and Governance](#)

Aim & Description

Secrecy is universally appealing. And understandably so: it conceals what individuals and organizations are determined to protect: “the dangerous, the shameful, the source of power”. Yet, serious study of secrecy in democratic contexts requires us to go beyond its protective function.

This workshop aims to *clarify* the concept of secrecy and the academic approach suited to its study, and to *explore* the issues that arise when secrecy meets democracy. The central question is why secrecy arises in different areas of European governance, focusing particularly on administration and security, traditionally the main fields where some degree of executive discretion is argued to be inevitable. Insights from these two fields are then regarded in the light of the normative issue of how secrecy can be reconciled with democracy. The emphasis on the European Union provides an opportunity to expand the debate beyond its usual focal point of state secrecy, and to provide a distinctive perspective on the dynamics of secrecy in the postnational context.

The workshop initiates a more systematic approach towards secrecy research in the EU with the aim of developing it further and fostering joint collaboration in future. It brings together researchers from various academic backgrounds and with a wide array of specialties in the field of secrecy in order to identify cross-cutting issues and establish a common conceptual language. Attendance at the workshop is by invitation only.

Date & Venue

Thursday 20 June 2013, University of Amsterdam, Oudemanhuispoort, room A0.09.

Programme

09:00 – 09:30 Arrival and coffee

09:30 – 09:45 Word of welcome and objective of the workshop
Deirdre Curtin, Amsterdam Centre for European Law and Governance

09:45 – 10:45 **Keynote Lecture: Postsecrecy**
Clare Birchall, King's College London

10:45 – 11:10 *Coffee break*

11:10 – 12:40 **Session 1: Bureaucratic Secrecy: a necessity ?**
Chair: Joana Mendes, Amsterdam Centre for European Law and Governance

The seen and the unseen in legislative politics: Explaining censorship in the Council of the European Union

James Cross, ETH Zürich

Secrecy and the European Union: Debunking some myths

Bart Driessen, Legal Service of the Council

Bureaucratic decision-making and legislative transparency in the Council of the European Union

Frank Häge, University of Limerick

12:40 – 14:00 *Lunch*

14:00 – 15:30 **Session 2: Security and Secrecy: intrinsically linked ?**
Chair: Christina Eckes, Amsterdam Centre for European Law and Governance

Lifting the veil of law enforcement intelligence in Europe: Critical issues

Monica den Boer, VU University Amsterdam

Secret evidence, sanctions cases and the European Court

Maya Lester, Brick Court Chambers

The EU's information-sharing networks: Secrecy, accountability, or both?

Claudia Hillebrand, Aberystwyth University

15:30 – 15:55 *Coffee break*

15:55 – 17:30 **Panel and discussion: European Democracy: what place for secrecy?**

1: *Daniel Naurin (University of Gothenburg)*

2: *Nicolas Levrat (University of Geneva)*

3: *Deirdre Curtin (Amsterdam Centre for European Law and Governance)*

After 17:30 *Drinks*