

## Call for Papers

### *Reconceptualizing the **State of Exception** and its Challenges to **Democracy** and **Rights** in Europe*

7–8 June 2021

University of Jyväskylä and CECH, University of Coimbra  
Online Workshop

The Workshop *Reconceptualizing the State of Exception and its Challenges to Democracy and Rights in Europe* is the third of a series of three workshops organized by Working Group 3: Concepts of COST Action CA 16211 Reappraising Intellectual Debates on Civic Rights and Democracy in Europe (RECAST). This workshop focuses on the challenges to democracy and rights that have recently been put forward by the multiplication of ‘states of exception’, or emergency rule, in many countries, following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

First theorized by Carl Schmitt and further developed by Giorgio Agamben and other authors, the state of exception poses a plethora of conceptual, normative, legal, ethical, political and social challenges. As the legal justification of temporary restrictions of rights and freedoms comes into force, with freedom of movement being a notable – but not the only – example, worries of the long-term effects of such measures resurface. With the shadow of authoritarianism resurfacing in so-called ‘illiberal’ democracies, many authors point to the risk of democracies faltering when the exception somehow turns into the rule. As such, discussions about the state of exception also have implications for re-conceptualizing rights and democracy. The analysis of this topic is of the utmost importance and urgency in Europe, calling for the participation not only of academics, but also policy-makers, as well as political and civil society actors.

While state of exception, democracy and rights are all politically contested concepts, with different histories, meanings and usages, we are particularly interested in examining the political, legal, institutional layouts and relations of these concepts and the understandings they can imply. The workshop thus invites conceptual investigations and theoretical (and or practical) explorations on these questions. The state of exception is considered as a locus for conceptual debates and thus, for unravelling the tensions between claims, norms, policies and practices related to democracy and rights. It is also relevant to ask whether today the state of exception still assumes the same meaning as in the past, or if it is being significantly reconceptualized.

Against this backdrop the Working Group 3: Concepts sets out to analyze the topic of the state of exception, in its connection with rights and democracy. We invite contributions from different disciplines, including political, philosophical, historical, legal, sociological and public policy perspectives. The submissions should focus on the European framework, and they might explore (but are not limited to) the following topics:

- The concept and implications of the state of exception, including its history, legal and normative justifications as well as the critiques that can be addressed to it;
- The challenges to rights and democracy in the context of states of exception enforced during the COVID-19 pandemic;
- State of exception and parliamentary politics;
- State of exception, border control and the rights of migrants;
- State of exception, privacy and surveillance;
- State of exception and populism;
- State of exception, political agency and social protest.

Due to travel restrictions, this workshop will take place online in the form of a publication-oriented seminar. Chosen participants will be asked to circulate extended abstracts (ca. 2000 words) of their papers before the workshop so that the event is focused on discussion and feedback. After the workshop a number of the papers presented will be selected to prepare a proposal for a special issue of a journal.

Please submit a short abstract of ca. 300 words with a brief CV (up to 150 words) and contact details (name, position, affiliation, e-mail address) no later than **10 May 2021** to: [goncalomarcelo@gmail.com](mailto:goncalomarcelo@gmail.com) and [hanna-mari.kivisto@jyu.fi](mailto:hanna-mari.kivisto@jyu.fi)

## Timeline

**May 10:** Abstract submission

**May 20:** Notification of acceptance

**June 1:** Extended abstract submission

**June 7–8:** Workshop

## Organizers

This event is jointly organized by COST Action CA 16211 Reappraising Intellectual Debates on Civic Rights and Democracy in Europe (RECAST), the University of Jyväskylä and the Center for Classical and Humanistic Studies (CECH), University of Coimbra.

## Conveners

Gonçalo Marcelo, CECH, University of Coimbra & Católica Porto Business School, Leader of Working Group 3: Concepts

Hanna-Mari Kivistö, University of Jyväskylä, Vice-Leader of Working Group 3: Concepts