

## Vienna Lecture on the European Union

# How and why international organizations develop mechanisms for the protection of human rights

23 March 2015, 17:00  
Aula, Campus of the University,  
Hof 1.11, Spitalgasse 2-4, 1090 Vienna

**Lecture:** **Michael Zürn** (Berlin Social Science Center)

**Content:** The policies of European and international institutions today directly impact the lives of individuals ever more often. In doing so, these institutions occasionally violate human rights and thus fail to do justice to standards of legitimacy with which they are expected to conform. We show in this contribution that international und European organizations, in order to (re-)legitimize themselves, establish provisions which should guarantee they do not violate human rights and which should provide affected individuals avenues for complaint.

However, the development of human rights protection provisions does not follow the logic of normative functionalism. Rather, different international institutions develop provisions of different quality.

Moreover, the evolution of these provisions can be traced back to different causal mechanisms, in which the parliaments of the dominant member states of the international organization, the international courts, a coalition of putative weak, i.e. like-minded actors, or forward-looking actors within the organization provide decisive input. Of these four causal mechanisms, the court driven one seems to produce the best protection of individual rights.

**Comments:** **Ulrich Brand** (Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Vienna)

**Monika Mayrhofer** (Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights)

**Moderator:** **Gerda Falkner** (Institute and Platform for European Integration Research, University of Vienna)

This lecture will be held in English, comments in German are also appreciated.

Registered and unregistered participants are welcome; we kindly ask for your registration at [eif@univie.ac.at](mailto:eif@univie.ac.at) or +43 1 4277 22401.