



## CALL FOR PAPERS

Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) and the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies (IALS) of the University of London are calling for papers for a digital conference titled:

### **Are emergency measures in response to COVID-19 a threat to democracy? Fact and Fiction.**

In response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, over 100 countries have passed emergency laws or declared states of emergency. The restrictive measures have been accompanied by a worrying narrative about the negative impact of these measures on democratic processes. This narrative focuses the decision-making processes as well as the emergency measures themselves and, therefore, does not limit itself to human rights but extends to the notion of democracy. Is this an accurate reflection of the situation, or does it stretch the imagination? And if the narrative paints an accurate picture, what could be done about it and what safeguards for human rights and democratic practices should be put in place?

The Institute of Advanced Legal Studies (IALS) and Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) are co-organizing a digital conference concentrating on the nature of emergency legislation adopted in various countries in response to the coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic. The digital conference will be based on the presentation of research findings, and we welcome papers on national measures (emergency legislation) with a view to establishing, discussing and testing different sets of criteria of democracy and its processes. The aim is to amass enough information so that we can begin to tackle this narrative on the basis of factual information rather than assumptions.

Papers may focus on one or more of the following topics (indicative):

- Procedures for the adoption of emergency measures by parliaments and executives
- Fast-tracking of legislation by parliaments and executives
- Content, timespan and proportionality of emergency measures
- Drafting aspects of emergency legislation or legislation used for emergency situations
- Areas of expansion of authority of the executive and what safeguards are put in place
- Impact of the national emergency legislation on the rule of law, human rights, privacy rights and others
- Monitoring and evaluation of impact (post-legislative scrutiny) of emergency legislation or legislation used for emergency situations
- Sectoral, national or comparative case studies
- Mechanisms to review, amend, limit, or reverse emergency legislation and emergency powers, including review and sunset clauses.

Paper abstracts (between 300 and 400 words, in English) and accompanying documents can be submitted to [Daly.Sarcos@sas.ac.uk](mailto:Daly.Sarcos@sas.ac.uk) before 30 June 2020.

The abstract should specify and explain the rationale of the specific research question, describe the methodological approach, and give an indication of the findings. Submission of the abstract should be accompanied by a cover letter describing the author's research interests, a CV and list of publications.

We welcome paper abstracts by academics, researchers, parliamentarians, parliamentary staff, legislative specialists, legislative drafters, think tanks and parliamentary development practitioners. We will prioritise submissions coming from WFD programme countries, though other submissions globally are welcome as well.

Authors of accepted paper abstracts will be invited to prepare a full paper (6,000 words, in English) for presentation at the conference. Upon peer-review, the full papers will be considered for publication in a Special Issue of the *European Journal on Law Reform* (EJLR).

The full papers should ideally specify (i) the importance of the core topic and questions to be addressed, (ii) the theory and propositions to be investigated, (iii) the evidence and example(s) from countries / parliament(s) researched, along with (iv) brief citations to the key literature.

The digital conference will take place on 10 September 2020 and be conducted in English. All participants who wish to attend the digital conference need to register in advance. On-line registration for participants attending the digital conference will be launched on 25 June 2020 via <https://www.wfd.org/> and <https://ials.sas.ac.uk/>

Some of the paper presentations at the digital conference might be considered for inclusion in the curriculum of the Certified Course on Emergency Legislation, taking place in the last quarter of 2020.

For further information about the programme of the digital conference, feel free to contact: [Maria.Mousmouti@sas.ac.uk](mailto:Maria.Mousmouti@sas.ac.uk), [Franklin.Devrieze@wfd.org](mailto:Franklin.Devrieze@wfd.org) or [Dina.Melhem@wfd.org](mailto:Dina.Melhem@wfd.org)

### **Timeline:**

Call for papers issued	26 May 2020
Opening of on-line registration for participants	25 June 2020
Deadline for submission of paper abstracts	30 June 2020
Feedback to authors on selected paper abstracts	7 July 2020
Deadline for submission of full papers	27 August 2020
Date of the digital conference and presentation of papers	10 September 2020
Deadline for submission of draft articles for the EJLR	10 October 2020
Publication of the Special Issue of the EJLR	10 December 2020