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## A ‘Brussels Effect’ for EU Digital Governance? Legal, political, and economic considerations

### Call for Papers

Academic Workshop  
Brussels, 27–28 April 2023

**Keynote speaker: Anu Bradford (Columbia Law School)**

Over the last years, EU legislation on digital governance has drawn the attention of different social sciences not only because of its broad impact but also because its effects extend beyond the EU borders. Key examples are the proposed Artificial Intelligence Act (AIA) and the proposed Data Act (DA) as well as the already adopted Digital Services Act (DSA), the Digital Markets Act (DMA), the Copyright Directive, the Data Governance Act, and the European Chips Act. This conference focuses on the externalization of EU fundamental values through legislation on digital governance (“the Brussels Effect”) and a broader impact of EU legislation on innovation policy.

The aim of this conference is to invite early-career scholars from law, economics, management, information systems, political science, and digital humanities who are conducting research on digital governance to submit original and cutting-edge paper proposals. Selected papers will be discussed by senior scholars. We particularly welcome abstracts on the following topics (but other topics are possible as well):

- Regulation of digital platforms by the EU
- Standard-setting and access to data
- Regulation of AI in the public sector
- Transparency & IP
- Innovation & policy lifecycle
- Platform ecosystems
- Politics of datafication
- Digital rights
- Digital transformation and information systems
- Regional dimensions (including views from the outside on ‘Brussels Effect’ of EU digital governance)
- Sectorial dimensions of the EU’s regulatory power (health, public administration, etc.)
- (De)colonization of datafication processes.

### **Eligibility:**

For the purpose of this conference, early-career scholars are defined as Ph.D. candidates close to completion, post-docs, and junior faculty, meaning tenure-track faculty who obtained their Ph.D. less than seven years ago.

### **Format of the conference:**

The conference will be structured around four thematic interdisciplinary panels with three to four papers each. Depending on the number of submissions, we may consider additional sessions. Senior scholars invited to the conference will discuss papers written by junior scholars, followed by a response from the junior scholar.

### **Deadline for submission:**

Extended abstracts (300–500 words) and a one-page CV should be submitted by 15 November 2022 to [y.kaspiarovich@rug.nl](mailto:y.kaspiarovich@rug.nl).

Acceptance letters will be sent by 1 December 2022.

Full papers are expected by 31 March 2023.

### **Background information and Literature:**

Since the beginning of European integration, EU institutions have attempted to create a common market place to insure a level-playing field for all economic actors within the EU. The EU's comparatively strong regulatory approach has been contested due to its possible negative effect on innovation. However, in recent years, with the globalization of trade and the expansion of the digital economy, EU rules are crossing the borders of the old continent. For example, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the EU's key regulatory framework on data protection, has influenced data protection law and norm-setting worldwide. Anu Bradford (Columbia Law School) has argued that the EU remains an influential superpower that shapes the world in its image through a phenomenon called the *Brussels Effect*, that is, the EU's unilateral power to regulate global markets and export European values without necessarily imposing its laws on third countries.

Even though the term Brussels Effect was coined by Anu Bradford in 2012 and has been widely discussed in academic literature after the publication of her book [The Brussels Effect: How the European Union Rules the World](#) in 2019, the phenomenon as such is not new. It refers to the European Union's power to regulate global markets through cross-sectoral norm-setting. Anu Bradford argues that the EU "wields significant, unique, and highly penetrating power to unilaterally transform global markets, including through its ability to set the standards in diverse areas such as competition regulation, data protection, online hate speech, consumer health and safety, or environmental protection." If the reach of the EU norms is global, how far can/should the EU promote its values? Is EU regulation in the digital domain promoting the right kind of innovation? How do the EU's regulatory policies compare to regulations from other regions? Does the cost-benefit analysis animating the Brussels Effect force multinational companies to promote EU values globally? Is the Brussels Effect a modern form of colonization of AI and

digital governance? Is there the risk that the global reach of EU norms will create a certain degree of polarization between Western countries and the rest of the world? What is the position of the Global South vis-à-vis the Brussels Effect? These are some of the questions we aim to discuss at the academic workshop *The Brussels Effect of Digital Governance: Legal, Political, Technological, and Economic Considerations*.

**Keynote speaker:** Prof. Anu Bradford

**Funding:** Limited funding will be available thanks to the support of our generous sponsor.

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