

The internal conference “**Framing the Muslim headscarf: Policy debates and regulations in Europe**” presents research results of the 6 FP project Values, Equality and Differences in Liberal Democracies: Debates about Muslim Headscarves in Europe (VEIL). Papers are given by the VEIL consortium and invited keynote speakers. International well-known scientists comment on the project findings and add further perspectives on the issue of veiling.

The VEIL project focuses on the debates, conflicts and regulations concerning head- and body coverings of Muslim women in the public sphere, particularly in public institutions such as schools, universities and the courts. As a highly visible symbol of religious difference and conflicting values the Muslim headscarf has been the subject of heated debates across Europe and subjected to legal regulations in some European countries.

One of the project's assumptions is that in debates about the headscarf fundamental values and norms of liberal democracies are not only re-negotiated but collective identities re-constructed within the European integration process. Moreover, the issue reveals the gendered nature of values and norms that widely prevail in liberal democracies in Europe.

VEIL compares policy and media debates in eight European countries and the European Union. The aims of the project are: first, to map out and compare the fundamental values and political principles of the main actors in the headscarf debates and second, to explain the differences and similarities in the conflicting values as expressed in the policies on Muslim headscarves.

Project co-ordinator of the project:  
Department of Political Science, *University of Vienna, Austria*

International Partners:  
Department of History, International and Social Studies, *Aalborg University, Denmark*; Department of Political Science, *University of Paris 8, France*; Department of Political Science, *Free University Berlin, Germany*; Department of Social Anthropology, *Panteio University of Social and Political Sciences, Athens, Greece* ; Department of Social Cultural Sciences, Research School for Ethics, Research School of Women's Studies, *Free University of Amsterdam, Netherlands*; Department of Sociology/Gender and Women's Studies Graduate Program, *Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey*; Department of Religious Studies in the Faculty of Social Sciences, *Lancaster University*

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**veil** Values Equality & Differences  
In Liberal Democracies



**universität  
wien**

Department of Political Science

## FRAMING THE MUSLIM HEADSCARF

### Policy Debates and Regulations in Europe

International Conference  
November 20-21, 2008

**International Conference**

Venue:  
*Ministry of Science and Research  
Freyung 3, 2nd Floor  
1010 Vienna*

## THURSDAY NOVEMBER 20, 2008

- 2.00- 2.30 p.m. Welcome
- Introductory remarks by  
Carl Dolan, *VEIL EC-Project officer, (tbc)*  
Andrea Höglinger, *Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG)*
- Presentation of the VEIL-Project by the project co-ordinators  
Birgit Sauer, Sieglinde Rosenberger
- 2.30- 4.00 p.m. **Democratic Paradoxes: Rights and Values in European Headscarf Debates**  
Sabine Berghahn, Nora Gresch, Sevgi Kılıç, Petra Rostock  
Discussant: Anne Phillips, *London School of Economics*
- 4.00 - 4.30 p.m. Coffee Break
- 4.30 - 6.00 p.m. **Veiled Debates: Gender Equality as a Tool in European National Narratives**  
Rikke Andreassen, Doutje Lettinga  
Discussant: Eleonore Kofman, *Middlesex University, London*
- 6.00 - 7.00 p.m. Buffet
- 7.00 - 8.30 p.m. **Secularism and Women's Equality**  
Joan W. Scott, *School of Social Science at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton*

## FRIDAY NOVEMBER 21, 2008

- 9.30 - 11.00 a.m. **"Our choice, our freedom, our right": A Comparative Analysis of Muslim Actors' Public Defence of Veiling**  
Leila Hadj-Abdou, Ayşe Saktanber, Linda Woodhead  
Discussant: Schirin Amir-Moazami, *Europa-University Viadrina, Frankfurt/Oder*
- 11.00 - 11.30 a.m. Coffee Break
- 11.30 a.m.- 1.00 p.m. **Discussing Europe in Headscarf Debates - Europeanization or Nationalization?**  
Ilker Ataç, Athena Athanasiou, Sieglinde Rosenberger, Birgit Sauer  
Discussant: Agnès Hubert, *Bureau of European Policy Advisors, Brussels*
- 1.00 - 2.00 p.m. Coffee Break
- 2.00 - 3.30 p.m. **Reflecting on Secularism: Dominant Debates on the Muslim Veil in Europe**  
Gül Çorbacıoğlu, Maria Eleonora Sanna, Eirini Avramopoulou  
Discussant: Kristen Ghodsee, *Bowdoin College, Brunswick*
- 3.30 - 4.00 p.m. Coffee Break
- 4.00 - 5.30 p.m. **The Islamic Headscarf in Western Europe: Mirror of Identity**  
Christian Joppke, *American University of Paris*