



Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen
Institute for Human Sciences

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Věra Jourová, former Vice-President of the European Commission, joins the IWM as the first Karel Schwarzenberg Fellow

With a new fellowship, the Institute for Human Sciences (IWM) commemorates the work of the distinguished Czech-Austrian politician and diplomat Karel Schwarzenberg and honors his lifelong commitment to freedom and human rights. In February, we welcome the former EU Commissioner Věra Jourová, who has had a lasting impact on European policy through her advocacy for data protection rights and the regulation of digital platforms, as the inaugural fellow.



The Schwarzenberg Fellowship is awarded at the invitation of the IWM Collegium and is intended for individuals whose thinking and work have significantly shaped public debate—particularly with regard to topics that were important to Karel Schwarzenberg: the history and future of Europe, the idea of Central Europe, the strengthening of civil society, diplomacy, philanthropy, and the promotion of human rights.

“Karel Schwarzenberg was not only a great supporter and loyal friend of the Institute for Human Sciences. He was also one of the most energetic promoters of the true interests of Central Europe and Czechia in particular. As the first Schwarzenberg Fellow, it is an honour for us to welcome Vera Jourova, former EU Commissioner, to the IWM,” says Misha Glenny, Rector of the IWM.

The Fellowship will be inaugurated at a [joint event by the Embassy of the Czech Republic in Vienna and the IWM on 19 February](#). Věra Jourová will give a short lecture titled “Democracies under Stress: What to Do?”. Anna Durnova, professor of sociology at the University of Vienna, will moderate a discussion between Ms. Jourová and IWM Rector Misha Glenny. The event will be hosted by the Ambassador of the Czech Republic in Vienna, Jiří Šitler.

One week earlier, on February 12, [Jourová will speak at the Federal Ministry for Innovation, Mobility and Infrastructure \(BMIMI\) about the impact of digital platforms and artificial intelligence on democracy and public discourse](#). Places are limited; registration is requested by **February 5**.

Karel Schwarzenberg (1937–2023) was a Czech-Austrian politician and highly respected statesman. During the communist era, he was a staunch supporter of dissenting voices. From

1984 to 1991, Schwarzenberg was the chairman of the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights. After 1990, he became chancellor under the newly elected Czechoslovak president Václav Havel, and later served as the Czech minister of foreign affairs from 2007 to 2009 and from 2010 to 2013. Schwarzenberg was a longstanding friend of the Institute and, for many years, chaired the IWM's Board of Patrons.

Věra Jourová is a Czech politician and lawyer who served as the European Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality from 2014 to 2019 and as Vice-President of the European Commission for Values and Transparency from 2019 to 2024. She was a Member of the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Republic between 2013 and 2014 and the Czech Minister for Regional Development in 2014. In 2019, Time Magazine ranked Jourová on its list of the 100 most influential people of the year, citing her role in the adoption of the General Data Protection Regulation and new privacy rights as European Commissioner.

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