



UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM
Institute for Information Law

IVIR LECTURE SERIES

From Autonomy to Ambiguity: Rethinking Law for Imperfect Humans

Dr. Bart van der Sloot (Tilburg University)

13
November
REC A5.24
15:30 - 16:45



www.ivir.nl/events

Modern law is built around a flattering idea of the human being: we are rational, autonomous individuals who know what we want, understand what is in our interests and should therefore be given ever more information, transparency and choice. But what if that picture is fundamentally wrong? We procrastinate, contradict ourselves and pursue incompatible desires. We want privacy and publicity, freedom and guidance, novelty and familiarity. We forget, misremember, reinvent ourselves and sometimes prefer a comforting fiction to an inconvenient truth. Artificial intelligence and other data-driven technologies do not simply threaten our autonomy. They magnify these contradictions: they help us understand and control ourselves while simultaneously exploiting our weaknesses, confronting us with our past and predicting futures we may never wish to know. Yet law responds by doubling down on the very ideal that technology destabilises. Faced with complexity, it gives us more information. Faced with manipulation, more consent. Faced with uncertainty, more transparency and accuracy.

This lecture asks whether the problem lies not only with technology, but with law's image of the human being. What would regulation look like if it took our ambiguity seriously? Should there be a right to friction in a world obsessed with seamlessness? A right to fiction and forgetting in a world of perfect memory? Could paternalism sometimes protect autonomy better than consent? And should we occasionally be protected not only from others, but from our own choices? The answers are uncomfortable. That is precisely the point.



Speaker

Dr. Bart van der Sloot specializes in questions revolving around law and technology, Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights. Bart studied both philosophy (BA; MA) and law (BA; MA) in the Netherlands and Italy, also successfully completing the Honours Research Programme. He is associate professor at the Tilburg Institute for Law, Technology, and Society of the University of Tilburg, the Netherlands.

Practical details

Date: 13 November 2026

Time: 15:30 - 16:45

Place: REC A5.24, Nieuwe Achtergracht 166, 1018 WV Amsterdam & online via Zoom.

Please visit our website to register for this lecture.

