European Commission

RESEARCH & INNOVATION

RESHAPING DEMOCRACIES

Projects from the **2022** call for proposals

CLUSTER 2

"Culture, Creativity & inclusive society"

Research and Innovation

Horizon Europe: Research & innovation reshaping democracies

European Commission
Directorate-General for Research and Innovation
Directorate D — People
Unit D4 — Democracy & European values

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Horizon Europe

Research & innovation
RESHAPING DEMOCRACIES

2023

Directorate-General for Research and Innovation
Horizon Europe

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INTRODUCTION

The trust in democratic processes around the world is decreasing as the world is facing multiple challenges causing political and economic instability. The inflation and an impending recession, together with the ongoing threat of climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine have contributed to a decline in democracy around the world. The number of people who believe that democracy is the answer to these issues is declining[1].

Therefore, research on the past and present challenges and tensions in democracy can help to better understand and strengthen democracy, its resilience and stability. It will foster democracy's further development with a view to enhancing representation, participation, openness, pluralism, tolerance, the effectiveness of public policy, non-discrimination, civic engagement, the protection of fundamental rights and the rule of law. These reflect the European Union's values as defined in Article 2 of the EU Treaty[2].

This booklet gives an overview of the projects that were selected for funding under the Horizon Europe 2022 call **"Reshaping democracies"** (HORIZON-CL2-2022-DEMOCRACY-01 and 02).[3]

For more information about Horizon-funded projects on democracy and governance, you can visit the R&I funding for democracy & governance website.

For any further information, please contact:
RTD-DEMOCRACY-AND-EU-VALUES@EC.EUROPA.EU

1. Global State of Democracy Report 2022: Forging Social Contracts in a Time of Discontent | The Global State of Democracy. (n.d.-b). https://idea.int/democracytracker/gsod-report-2022
2. Consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union, Title 1 "Common Provisions", Article 2: "The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail".
3. Please note that some projects are still in granting phase and are thus not listed here. In addition, at the time of publication, not all projects have set up their own website: therefore, only those live online at the time of writing have been linked to this brochure.

Topic 2022-01-01

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, BIG DATA AND DEMOCRACY

The projects selected under this call are expected to give guidance on how to protect fundamental rights and European values from possible threats stemming from unregulated use of artificial intelligence (AI) and big data applications, explore the potential of AI and big data to reinforce fundamental rights and European values, as well as to design innovative uses of AI and big data to enhance citizen engagement and democracy.

KT4D

KNOWLEDGE TECHNOLOGIES FOR DEMOCRACY

AI and big data are fundamentally interwoven into our societies, culture and indeed into our expectations and conceptions of democratic governance and exchange. They can also, however, contribute to an environment for citizens that is distinctly anti-democratic.

KT4D will harness the benefits of an understanding of these as knowledge technologies to foster more inclusive civic participation in democracy. To achieve this, we will develop and validate tools, guidelines and a Digital Democracy Lab demonstrators platform.

These results will be validated across three user needs scenarios:

1. building capacity for citizens and citizen-facing Civil Society Organisations (CSOs);
2. creating regulatory tools and services for Policy and CSOs;
3. improving awareness of how to design ethically and mindfully for democracy principles in academic and industrial software development.

Our work is underpinned by the understanding that to fully address the social and fundamental rights costs of AI and big data, we need more than just technological fixes, we need more than just technological fixes, we need to address the underlying cultural influences and barriers. Most importantly, we understand the threats to democracy of AI and big data not only through the nature of what they do, but via the cultural disruptions they create with power dynamics they shift, their tendency toward opacity, and the speed at which they change. KT4D's ambitious and disruptive results will drive transformation in how democracy and civic participation are facilitated in the face of rapidly changing knowledge technologies, enabling actors across society to capitalise on the many benefits these technologies can bring in terms of community empowerment, social integration, individual agency, and trust in both institutions and technological instruments, while confidently mitigating potential ethical, legal and cultural risks.

https://kt4democracy.eu/

Cordis: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101094302

Project n°:
101094302

Start date:
01/02/2023

Duration:
36 months

Keywords:
knowledge technologies, participatory democracy, participatory AI, critical digital literacy

Consortium:

The Provost, Fellows, Foundation Scholars & the other members of Board, of the College of the Holy & Undivided Trinity of Queen Elizabeth near Dublin | **IE**

Beyond the Horizon International Strategic Studies Group | **BE**

Demos Research Institute Oy | **FI**

Fundacion Cibervoluntarios | **ES**

Hybrid Core | **BE**

ICT Legal Consulting - Studio Legale Associato Balboni, Bolognini & Partners | **IT**

Instytut Rozwoju Miast i Regionow | **PL**

Strane Innovation | **FR**

The Democratic Society AISBL | **BE**

Trust-IT srl | **IT**

COMMpla srl | **IT**

The University of Warwick | **UK**

ITHACA

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TO ENHANCE CIVIC PARTICIPATION

The project aims to better understand the complexities and controversies for applying AI into the field of civic participation and stimulate new and responsible practices of research and innovation that anchor AI technologies design in human rights, values and principles, and moral and ethical reflection.

The vision is to contribute to the maximisation of the possible positive impact of AI on the functioning of democratic institutions and processes by developing and testing of a human centric Artificially Intelligent and Ethics by Design online discussion platform for civic participation in local governance, which incorporates human and social interpretations into the design process to ensure that AI decision-making processes are explainable, transparent and fair. ITHACA will pay particular attention to the needs and voices of citizens from vulnerable groups, with a view to ensuring that human rights impacts stemming from the design, development and ongoing deployment of algorithmic systems are comprehensively monitored, debated and addressed.

Through its pilot activities in two different EU countries, ITHACA plans to assess the ability of AI to enhance citizens participation in the local governance while preventing or minimizing possible adverse effects stemming from unregulated use of AI and empowering citizens with knowledge about the AI model involved. ITHACA will also provide scalable tools for the identification of security risks and threats and for conformity with the Fairness principle and Privacy principle in AI-based systems and big data for civic engagement applications. Based on its implementation experiences, the project will define a data governance framework with relevant ethical principles and practices to be implemented in the design, development, deployment process for AI civic engagement platforms as well as policy recommendations on philosophical, legal and ethical values that should be embedded in the development of such platforms.

Cordis: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101094364

Project n°:
101094364

Start date:
01/01/2023

Duration:
36 months

Keywords:
fundamental rights,
European values,
philosophical, legal and ethical values,
data governance,
citizen engagement

Consortium:

Konnektable Technologies Ltd. | **IE**

Agenția Metropolitană pentru Dezvoltare Durabilă Brașov | **RO**

ETHNIKO KENTRO EREVNAS KAI TECHNOLOGIKIS ANAPTYXIS | **EL**

Mesto Martin | **SK**

MNLT Innovations IKE | **EL**

Panepistimio Patron | **EL**

PEDAL Consulting SRO | **SK**

Raising the Floor | **BE**

Software Imagination & Vision SRL | **RO**

Stamadianos Kai Synetairoi Dikigoriki Etaireia | **EL**

Universitaet Graz | **AT**

AI4GOV

TRUSTED AI FOR TRANSPARENT PUBLIC GOVERNANCE FOSTERING DEMOCRATIC VALUES

AI4Gov is a joint effort of policy makers, public institutions / organizations, legal, Social Science and Humanities and Big Data/AI experts to unveil the potentials of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Big Data technologies for developing evidence-based innovations, policies, and policy recommendations to harness the public sphere, political power, and economic power for democratic purposes.

The project will also uphold fundamental rights and values standards of individuals when using AI and Big Data technologies. Hence, it aims to contribute to the promising research landscape that seeks to address ethical, trust, discrimination, and bias issues by providing an in-depth analysis and solutions addressing the challenges that various stakeholders in modern democracies are faced with when attempts are made to mitigate the negative implications of Big Data and AI. In this direction, the project will introduce solutions and frameworks towards a two-fold sense, to facilitate policymakers on the development of automated, educated and evidence-based decisions and to increase the trust of citizens in the democratic processes and institutions.

Moreover, the project will leverage the capabilities of state-of-the-art tools for providing un-bias, discrimination-free, fair, and trusted AI. These tools will be validated in terms of their ability to provide technical and/or organisational measures, causal models for bias and discrimination, and standardized methodologies for achieving fairness in AI.

https://ai4gov-project.eu/

Cordis: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/10109490

Project n°:
101094905

Start date:
01/01/2023

Duration:
36 months

Keywords:
AI Regulation,
AI Act, Democratic AI,
Explainable AI,
Machine Learning,
AI Fairness,
Bias Mitigation,
Trusted AI,
Responsible AI,
Ethical AI

Consortium:

Maggioli SpA | **IT**
Aristotelio Panepistimio Thessalonikis | **EL**
Comune di Genova | **IT**
Dimos Varis - Voulas - Vouliagmenis | **EL**
IBM Israel Science and Technology Ltd | **IL**
Institut "Jožef Stefan" | **SI**
Ministry of Tourism | **EL**
Siemens SRL | **RO**
Ubitech Limited | **CY**
University of Piraeus Research Centre | **EL**
ViLabs (CY) Ltd | **CY**
White Label Consultancy ApS | **DK**

Topic 2022-01-02

THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION

The projects are expected to improve the articulation between deliberative processes and representative institutions in liberal democracies, including through experimental approaches.

INCITE-DEM

INCLUSIVE CITIZENSHIP IN A WORLD IN TRANSFORMATION: CO-DESIGNING FOR DEMOCRACY

The project aims to enhance inclusive participation and civic engagement while expanding democratic innovation and dynamic feedback mechanisms between citizens and institutional actors in representative democracies.

Currently, “wicked problems” relating to ecological crises but also media developments and digital divides create unprecedented pressures on democracies. Next to related socio-economic challenges, we are witnessing a decline in political trust and the formation of new societal cleavages.

INCITE-DEM will offer a unique contribution to the future of democracy in Europe by harnessing historical and quantitative and qualitative social science research, agent-based modelling, design thinking, and advanced analytical methods for the purpose of expanding inclusive participation and engagement and fuelling democratic innovation.

Furthermore, we will implement Democracy Labs (DLabs) in six countries, where citizens, representatives of democratic innovation initiatives, policymakers, and other stakeholders come together to co-create imaginaries of inclusive democratic innovations. The new solutions and democratic futures envisioned are the objects of design fiction products. All innovations co-created in the DLabs are then validated through a choice experiment survey with citizens and interactive fora with policymakers, to check their feasibility and the potential for implementation.

Lastly, a set of policy roadmaps for a sustainable, inclusive, and innovative democracy in a world facing deep societal, technological and ecological transformations are produced and presented to a broad range of stakeholders at multiple levels of governance in Europe.

Cordis: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101094258

Project n°:
101094258

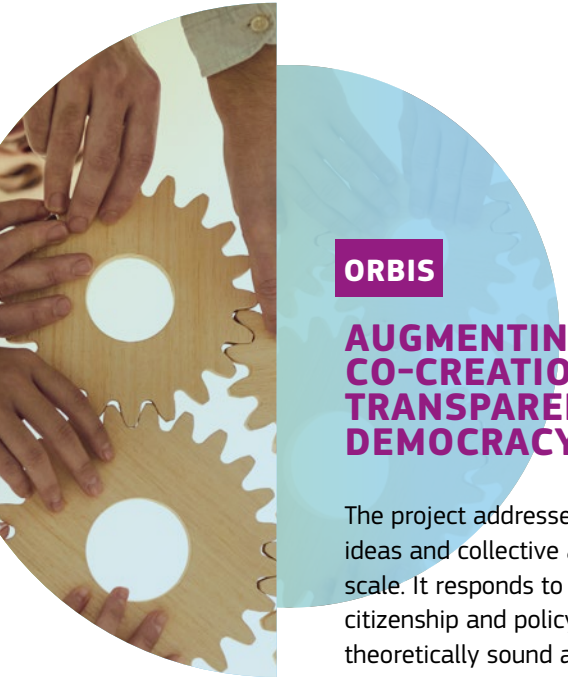
Start date:
01/03/2023

Duration:
36 months

Keywords:
inclusivity, digitalisation, sustainability, historical review, democratic innovations, case studies, democracy labs, design fiction, choice experiment, interactive fora, policy pathways

Consortium:

FCiências.ID - Associação para a Investigação e Desenvolvimento de Ciências | **PT**
Asociación Eco-union | **ES**
Focus - društvo za sonaraven razvoj | **SI**
Helsingin yliopisto | **FI**
Instituto de Ciências Sociais | **PT**
Kyoto Club | **IT**
Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet | **NO**
Rijksuniversiteit Groningen | **NL**
Tallinn University | **EE**
Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster | **DE**



ORBIS

AUGMENTING PARTICIPATION, CO-CREATION, TRUST AND TRANSPARENCY IN DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY AT ALL SCALES

The project addresses the disconnects between ambitious ideas and collective actions at a large socio-technical scale. It responds to the profound lack of dialogue between citizenship and policy making institutions by providing a theoretically sound and highly pragmatic socio-technical solution to enable the transition to a more inclusive, transparent and trustful Deliberative Democracy in Europe. The project shapes and supports new democratic models that are developed through deliberative democracy processes; it follows a socio-constructive approach in which deliberative democracy is not a theory which prescribes new democratic practices and models, but rather the process through which we can collectively imagine and realize them.

ORBIS provides new ways to understand and facilitate the emergence of new participatory democracy models, together with the mechanisms to scale them up and consolidate them at institutional level.

It delivers:

1. a sound methodology for deliberative participation and co-creation at scale;
2. novel AI-enhanced tools for deliberative participation across diverse settings;
3. a novel socio-technical approach that augments the articulation between deliberative processes and representative institutions in liberal democracies;
4. new evidence-based democratic models that emerge from the application of citizen deliberation processes;
5. demonstrated measurable impact of such innovations in real-world settings.

The project builds on cutting-edge AI tools and technologies to develop a sustainable digital solution, and bridges theories and technological solutions from the fields of political and social science, social innovation, Artificial Intelligence, argumentation and digital democracy. The achievement of the project's goal is validated through six use cases addressing contemporary issues at different scales and settings, experimenting with different civic participation and deliberation models, and involving diverse types of stakeholders.

Cordis: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101094765

Project n°:
101094765

Start date:
01/02/2023

Duration:
36 months

Keywords:
large-scale deliberation,
socio-technical approach,
open innovation,
argumentation mining,
conflict mediation,
knowledge graphs,
decision-making

Consortium:

Politecnico di Milano | **IT**
ATHINAIKI AGORA DIMOKRATIAS KAI POLITISMOU ASTIKI MI KERDOSKOPIKI ETAIREIA | **EL**
Centre for European Policy studies | **BE**
Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS) | **FR**
Copernicani | **IT**
Center for Social Innovation (CSI) LTD | **CY**
D.TSAKALIDIS-G.DOMALIS OE | **EL**
PERIFEREIA DYTIKI ELLADA | **EL**
Re-Imagine Europa | **BE**
Rob de Matt | **IT**
UniSystems Luxembourg Sàrl | **LU**
Université Côte d'Azur | **FR**
The Open University | **UK**
Universita della Svizzera italiana | **CH**

DUST

DEMOCRATISING JUST SUSTAINABILITY TRANSITIONS

The project will develop and operationalise novel participatory instruments for proactive and strategic citizen engagement in sustainability transitions. It will combine design-led territorial tools with digital tools for citizen deliberation at scale.

The project addresses a defining societal and democratic challenge for Europe, which is to hear the voices of least engaged communities, especially in structurally weak regions dependent on energy-intensive industries, which will be most affected by transitions towards a more sustainable future. Building on the concept of 'active subsidiarity', the project will employ an innovative mix of research methods, and experimental citizen participation, to understand the determinants of participation in decision-making on sustainability transitions at different levels of government, and to develop effective policy recommendations for inclusive engagement of civil society.

Cordis: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101094869

Project n°:
101094869

Start date:
01/02/2023

Duration:
36 months

Keywords:
Sustainability transition, deliberative governance, place-based policy, spatial planning, active subsidiarity, least engaged communities, e-democracy, futures literacy, foresight, regional design

Consortium:

Technische Universiteit Delft | **NL**

Agentsiya za Regionalno Ikonomichesko Razvitie | **BG**

Brandenburgische Technische Universität Cottbus-Senftenberg | **DE**

Center for the Study of Democracy | **BG**

Hela Sverige ska leva Norrbotten | **SE**

Nordregio | **SE**

Porozumienie Związków Zawodowych Kadra | **PL**

Stichting ISOCARP Institute Center of Urban Excellence | **NL**

Stiftung Wohlfahrtspflege Brandenburg | **DE**

Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny w Katowicach | **PL**

Universität Zürich | **CH**

University of Strathclyde | **UK**

RESPONSIVE

INCREASING RESPONSIVENESS TO CITIZEN VOICE IN SOCIAL SERVICES ACROSS EUROPE

The project aims to enhance the responsiveness of Europe's social services to input from diverse citizens. It wants to increase the impact of citizen's voice on the approaches, organisation and delivery of three types of social service: disability and mental health, child protection and services for youth at risk.

The project will help social services and EU policy structures to better understand, utilise and innovate with the knowledge, experiences and ideas of citizens through six core objectives:

1. Analyse the normative, legal, policy and practice contexts at local, national and EU level shaping how social services respond to the perspectives of diverse citizens
2. Assess the range, inclusivity, operation and impact of official channels of citizen input in social services (advisory groups, consultations, complaints, evaluation mechanisms)
3. Analyse the range, goals, content and approaches of public actions by citizens to change social services (protests, campaigns, social media, social enterprise, artistic production)
4. Identify the factors shaping changes by social services in response to the input of diverse citizens who use social services
5. Co-design and test tailored innovations for citizens, civil society groups, social services and policymakers to significantly expand the utilisation of different sources of citizen knowledge by social services at different levels
6. Promote uptake of innovations through dissemination of project results

This qualitative research project will be conducted in Austria, Denmark, France, Poland, Portugal and Romania by an interdisciplinary and multisectoral consortium of six research organisations, three civil society organisations, two social services departments and an international network of social work practitioners.

Cordis: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101095200

Project n°:
101095200

Start date:
01/03/2023

Duration:
36 months

Keywords:
Social services, dialogue, interaction

Consortium:

Universität Innsbruck | **AT**

Aalborg Universitet | **DK**

A.RETIS : Association, Recherche, Education, Territoires, Interventions, Sociabilites | **FR**

Asociatia Centrul de formare și evaluare în asistența socială | **RO**

Le département des Yvelines | **FR**

Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas | **PT**

International Federation of Social Workers European Region e.V. | **DE**

Municipio da Amadora | **PT**

Stowarzyszenie Centrum Wspierania Aktywności Lokalnej CAL | **PL**

Tiroler Interessenverband für psychosoziale Inklusion | **AT**

Université Paris Nanterre | **FR**

Uniwersytet Warszawski | **PL**

Topic 2022-03

THE IMPACT OF INEQUALITIES ON DEMOCRACY

Proposals are expected take stock of long-term trends in and types of inequalities, to identify the sources of these inequalities and the way they intersect. Proposals should model the relation between inequalities and levels of political trust in European societies and the emergence of protest movements and populist discourses, including in their national, transnational and spatial dimensions.

INVOLVE

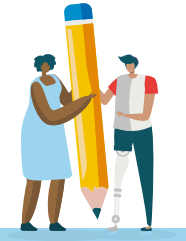
FOR TRUSTFUL, PARTICIPATORY AND INCLUSIVE PUBLIC POLICIES

Across Europe there is evidence of the existing distrust in political institutions and the increased stratification of political involvement across Europe, with more vulnerable citizens having less access and influence in the decision-making process. The COVID 19 pandemic has exposed and reinforced these trends. These shifts pose a great challenge to the democratic welfare state.

INVOLVE's main objective is to help design scalable and generalizable strategies to reduce social, economic, and political inequalities. The project builds on systematic quantitative research into the trends, causes and complex relationships between democracy and inequalities. The project also focuses on how public and social services engage with vulnerable groups of citizens, especially in the age of digitalization. It will involve vulnerable groups in 8 European countries as co-researchers to complement and refine the results. In a series of concrete pilots of action-research, their aspirational capacity and their power of voice are strengthened to bring about concrete change in public services and social policies.

INVOLVE will not only involve vulnerable citizens facing multiple inequalities, but also political and public decision-makers, NGOs representing vulnerable groups and experts to develop viable political strategies in order to achieve more trust-based governance in public services, to contribute to the development of a more participatory and socially responsible society.

The final stage of INVOLVE aims to contribute to democratic participation in social policies at local, national, transnational and European level through campaigns with viable policy recommendations. INVOLVE also aims to enrich future research with an encompassing and innovative perspective on inequality and democracy, based on an 'alliance of knowledge'.



https://involve-democracy.eu/

Cordis: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101094560

Project n°:
101094560

Start date:
01/01/2023

Duration:
48 months

Keywords:
Democracy, Inequalities, Political trust, Vulnerable groups, Public services, Social policies, Cross Talk, Receiver, doer, judge, Participatory Action Research, Intersectionality, Alliance of knowledge

Consortium:

Beweging | **BE**

Centrum Organizowania Związków Zawodowych | **PL**

Coordinamento Nazionale Comunità di Accoglienza | **IT**

École des hautes études en sciences sociales | **FR**

Focus Ireland Company Limited By Guarantee | **IE**

Groupe de recherche et de réalisations pour le développement rural | **FR**

Katholieke Universiteit Leuven | **BE**

National University of Ireland Maynooth | **IE**

REDE DLBC LISBOA - Associação para o Desenvolvimento Local de Base Comunitária de Lisboa | **PT**

Soziologische Forschungsinstitut Göttingen (SOFI) e.V. | **DE**

Université de Genève | **CH**

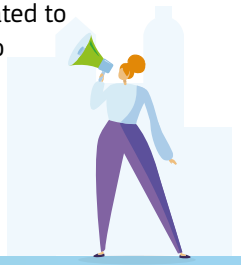
FAIRVILLE

FACING INEQUALITIES AND DEMOCRATIC CHALLENGES THROUGH CO-PRODUCTION IN CITIES

If the link between inequalities and declining levels of trust in the political institutions of democracy in Europe has already been shown, the various ways in which both citizens and institutions are trying to face these inequalities and (re)build a sustainable common future remain somewhat under-documented. Indeed, this lacuna becomes even more pronounced when one considers those attempts that go beyond conventional forms of state-led participation.

Responding to this gap, the aim of Fairville is to both document and propose pilot models of urban intervention that engage local academics, authorities, community based organisations, residents and users in the collective improvement of deprived urban neighbourhoods via a deepening of resident and user participation in new and existing democratic processes. The idea that urban policies should not be made "for" populations but rather "with" them is a potentially profound engine of social transformation and empowerment. However, the realisation of such co-production processes is often marked by epistemic inequalities and unequal power relations.

Cognisant of this issue, the Fairville pilot cases all place an emphasis on exploring the ways in which academic researchers, local communities and local authority representatives can work together to reduce the power and information asymmetries that exist between them. Clustered around three major themes - environmental inequalities, inequalities related to housing and urban planning and inequalities related to climate risks – and ranging from co-diagnosis to co-planning and intervention, the pilots will be carried out as action research and include the implementation of observation, capitalisation and co-evaluation mechanisms. The results of these pilot cases will be widely disseminated to the institutions and citizens concerned and we will work collectively to encourage policy transfer and outreach.



https://www.fairville-eu.org/

Cordis: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101094991

Project n°:
101094991

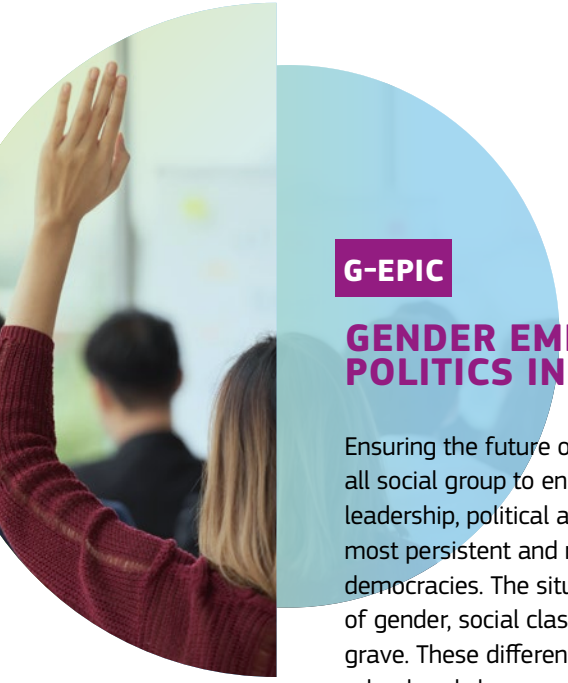
Start date:
01/01/2023

Duration:
48 months

Keywords:
Environmental inequalities, Risks-Housing and Planning inequalities, Urban Regeneration, Community-driven planning, Participatory democracy, Co-production, Urban Studies

Consortium:

Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS) | **FR**
Commune d'Ixelles | **BE**
Perifereia Attikis | **EL**
Un Centre Ville pour Tous | **FR**
APPUII, Alternative Pour des Projets Urbains Ici et à l'International | **FR**
Asociatia Frontal | **RO**
conoscenza E Innovazione Societa' A Responsabilita' Limitata Semplificata | **IT**
Etats Généraux de l'Eau à Bruxelles | **BE**
ICLEI European Secretariat GmbH (ICLEI Europasekretariat GMBH) | **DE**
North South Consultants Exchange LLC | **EG**
Synetairismos Ergazomenon Commonspace - Architektoniki, Astikos Schediasmos, Chorikes Stratigikes Kai Symmetochikos Schediasmos | **EL**
Universität Regensburg | **DE**
Université d'Aix-Marseille | **FR**
Université libre de Bruxelles | **BE**
Urba Sénégal UrbaSEN | **SN**
Université Paris 8 (Vincennes Saint-Denis) | **FR**
University College London | **UK**
Just Space | **UK**



G-EPIC

GENDER EMPOWERMENT THROUGH POLITICS IN CLASSROOMS

Ensuring the future of democracy requires empowering all social group to engage, yet the gender gap in political leadership, political ambition and political self-efficacy is the most persistent and most difficult to tackle across Western democracies. The situation when looking across the intersect of gender, social class and ethnicity becomes even more grave. These differences have been shown to begin in the school and classroom dynamics has been cited as the likely socialisation process that leads to these different outcomes.

G-EPIC, a multinational consortium of universities and civil society organisations, has been brought together with the aim of fostering social innovation and testing interventions to reduce gender inequality in politics. The 7 partners in 6 countries (Belgium, Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Spain and United Kingdom) will begin by establishing the state of play through classroom observations and reanalysis of existing quantitative data to understand how inequalities in attitudes and dispositions towards political engagement are learnt. G-EPIC will then create experiments in schools and pilot design-based interventions co-developed with civil-society, teachers and students. These experiments and interventions will be rigorously evaluated in comparisons with control groups and will lead to the development of the Gender Empowerment in Classroom intervention that will be disseminated and delivered in schools across Europe creating the possibility for real change and the reduction of the gender gap in political leadership.

In addition, G-EPIC will also carry out a holistic evaluation of the national context and the local and European policy framework to design strategies, regulations and policies that are conducive to a more equitable gender political involvement, particularly of girls with a disadvantaged background.

https://www.g-epic.eu/

Cordis: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101095000

Project n°:
101095000

Start date:
01/02/2023

Duration:
36 months

Keywords:
political inequality, disadvantaged groups, gender empowerment, school interventions, intersectionality

Consortium:

Vrije Universiteit Brussel | **BE**
Aarhus Universitet | **DK**
Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen | **DE**
The Gender Five Plus | **BE**
Universidad Carlos III De Madrid | **ES**
Univerzita Karlova | **CZ**
Roehampton University LBG | **UK**

Topic 2022-04

EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY

Proposals are expected to show how educational material and innovative pedagogical practices in different settings can mediate or inform current debates about European identity, as well as key issues such as sustainable development, migration, tolerance, polarisation etc. They should examine how education can be mobilised in terms of producing informed historical and cultural consciousness. Research should highlight the competences needed by students to boost their capacity to actively engage in democratic politics and hone their critical view of the world.

AECED

TRANSFORMING EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY THROUGH AESTHETIC AND EMBODIED LEARNING, RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGIES AND DEMOCRACY-AS-BECOMING

Democracy is a lived experience. To flourish, democracy needs healthy roots in people's engaged feelings, awareness and sensibilities as embodied beings connected with each other and their localities, communities and the natural world. Democracy cannot be understood and enacted simply through cognitive learning or technical interactive skills. Yet, education for democracy gives little attention to nurturing those aesthetic, affective and embodied roots of democracy. This is because the learning theory on which most education for democracy is based omits a fundamental dimension of learning – that is, the aesthetic and embodied nature of learning. The ambition of this project is to remedy this omission.

The project will:

- design an innovative, evidence-based aesthetic and embodied pedagogical framework which has an impact on the practice of education for democracy through associated guides to practice (toolkits) that support responsive, participatory pedagogies
- test, through participatory action research, a prototype of the framework and guides in differing phases of education and national contexts
- refine the framework and guides
- disseminate and activate exploitation of the pedagogical framework and guides by 'trailblazer users'

The project's scientific impact will be achieved through ground-breaking, transdisciplinary research that shows how aesthetic and embodied learning and responsive pedagogies for democracy facilitate new ways of 'seeing' and exploring self and others, enabling truly democratic relations and nurturing predispositions and capabilities for active democratic citizenship and deepening democracy.

Societal impact will be achieved through new pedagogical approaches that engage learners' and educators' hearts as well as minds, increase capacity for democratic citizenship that connects and evolves locally, and strengthen affective predispositions for challenging social injustices, engaging with conflict and seeking mutual understanding.

Cordis: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101094052

Project n°:
101094052

Start date:
01/04/2023

Duration:
36 months

Keywords:
pedagogical innovation, participation, transformative learning

Consortium:

Lapin yliopisto | **FI**
Philipps-Universität Marburg | **DE**
Rīgas Tehniskā universitāte | **LV**
Učiteljski fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu | **HR**
Universidade Aberta | **PT**
The University of Hertfordshire Higher Education Corporation | **UK**

CRITICAL CHANGELAB

DEMOCRACY MEETS ARTS: CRITICAL CHANGE LABS FOR BUILDING DEMOCRATIC CULTURES THROUGH CREATIVE AND NARRATIVE PRACTICES

The project aims to reinvigorate the relationship between youth and democracy and consequently the future of 21st Century European democracy. This is achieved by spearheading the reach and impact of Critical ChangeLab Model of Democratic Pedagogy, fostering youth's active democratic citizenship at a time when polarisation, deep political divisions and declining trust in democracy are spreading across Europe.

The Critical ChangeLab Model for Democratic Pedagogy fosters learners' transformative agency and strengthens democratic processes in education through collaborations across formal and non-formal education and local actors around global/local challenges relevant for youth.

The Model promotes creative and narrative practices to explore the historical roots of local and EU-wide challenges, understanding the value-systems and worldviews underlying distinct types of relations (human-human, human-nature, human-technology). At the Critical ChangeLabs, young people are introduced to approaches such as theatre of the oppressed, transmedia storytelling, as well as speculative and critical design to rethink European democracy and envision justice-oriented democracy futures. Throughout the lifespan of the project, Critical ChangeLab aims to examine the current state of democracy within education institutions identifying youth's perspectives on everyday democracy; design a scalable and tailorable model of democratic pedagogy in formal and non-formal learning environments; co-create and implement the model with youth and stakeholders, evaluate the model generating recommendations for policy and practice, and develop strategies to sustain the model and its outcomes overtime. Through various research actions combining quantitative and qualitative approaches, Critical ChangeLab will generate a robust evidence base to support democratic curriculum development using participatory, and creative and critical approaches.

Cordis: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101094217

Project n°:
101094217

Start date:
01/04/2023

Duration:
36 months

Keywords:
democratic pedagogy,
civic pedagogy,
critical literacy,
youth participation,
youth agency,
democratic engagement,
participatory action research

Consortium:

Oulun yliopisto | **FI**

Alternatives Européennes Association | **FR**

Ars Electronica Linz GmbH & Co KG | **AT**

Institut za društvena istraživanja u Zagrebu | **HR**

LATRA Innovation Lab | **EL**

Stichting the Tactical Technology Collective (TTC) | **NL**

Stichting Waag Society | **NL**

The Provost, Fellows, Foundation Scholars, & other members of Board, of the College of the Holy and Undivided Trinity of Queen Elizabeth near Dublin | **IE**

Universitat de Barcelona | **ES**

Zavod za kulturo, umetnost in izobraževanje Kersnikova | **SI**

DEMOCRAT

EDUCATION FOR RESPONSIBLE DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP

EU-society faces four major challenges: the Anthropocene crisis, digitalisation, the pandemic and the war in Ukraine and its consequences. All these challenges put at risk the model of liberal democracy, which, of course, has faced similarly internal threats (political polarisation, right wing extremism, mistrust in scientific research and conspiratorial beliefs) and external critique (questioning whether plural democracy is the best model to affront societal challenges). Education, and especially Education for Democracy (EfD), shall contribute to the defence and enhancement of democracy. This includes the values and principles encompassed within the UN's 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals. Goal 4.7, in particular, defines that education should promote sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity.

To reinforce the resilience and sustainability of democracy, DEMOCRAT aims, through a participatory approach, to elaborate curricula for EfD based on a framework of responsible democratic competences (RDCs), to test them in open, local, innovative learning projects and to develop a toolbox to support the development of transformative EfD practices in the EU and beyond. DEMOCRAT's ambitious research and innovation programme will provide insights into the points of comparison and contrast in EfD in the EU-member states and will develop an innovative curriculum framework linking RDCs with digitalisation and sustainability. DEMOCRAT will test and analyse pedagogical practices and material considering its effectiveness for acquiring democratic competences and European identity. It will garner insights into the factors influencing the impact of EfD on public participation through the analysis of European datasets, with a particular focus on the relation between socio-economic and educational inequalities and political and social participation.

Cordis: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101095106

Project n°:
101095106

Start date:
01/03/2023

Duration:
36 months

Keywords:
Education for Democracy, Civic Education, Democracy, Political Participation, Sustainability, Digitalisation

Consortium:

Universitat de Barcelona | **ES**
Dublin City University | **IE**
European university continuing education network AISBL | **BE**
Foundation for Global Governance and Sustainability | **BE**
Helsingin yliopisto | **FI**
Hochschule Düsseldorf | **DE**
Notus | **ES**
Stichting International Parents' Alliance | **NL**
Tallinn University | **EE**
Uniwersytet Jagielloński | **PL**

Topic 2022-01-05:

EVOLUTION OF POLITICAL EXTREMISM AND ITS INFLUENCE ON CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL AND POLITICAL DIALOGUE

The projects are expected to analyse the various forms of extremist discourses and narratives, their dynamics and disruptive potential. They should provide psychological, sociological and anthropological analyses of drivers behind violent political transformations. They should also explore the tension between tackling political extremism and human rights law on freedom of speech. In addition, projects are expected to map the penetration of extremist ideology and argumentation into general media, social and political discourses. They should analyse the drivers of such discourses, including the respective roles of the media, political spheres and popular sentiment and their interplay. Finally, they should propose evidence-based strategies to counter extremist discourses, prevent the spread of political extremism and limit its short and long- term impact.

OppAttune

COUNTERING OPPOSITIONAL POLITICAL EXTREMISM THROUGH ATTUNED DIALOGUE: TRACK, ATTUNE, LIMIT

OppAttune tracks the evolution of oppositional extreme ideologies and protectionist decision-making, develops an innovative attunement model and tests a series of interventions at the national and transnational levels which limit the spread of extremism. OppAttune revitalises trust in key democratic institutions. Its actions involve an on-line I-Attune self-test interactive to build democratic capacity across diverse publics. OppAttune will create an OppAttune Summer Academy for students and researchers (2025) and an OppAttune Winter Academy for practitioners and policymakers (2026). OppAttune provides micro, meso and macro level evidence-based recommendations and strategies designed to counter the potential of extreme narratives to disrupt democratic growth. It delivers this via a multi-disciplinary consortium of 17 countries across the EU and its periphery.

Democracies and the European project are under threat by extremism and lack of political and social dialogue. Existential insecurities arising out of economic and refugee-related crises have been exacerbated by Covid-19 to create re-bordering e.g., xenophobic-nationalism and re-shoring e.g., the localisation of production. Oppositional worldviews, narratives and dissensus within public debate are all vital to a functioning democracy. However destructive polarisation of oppositional us/them logic is at the core of the rise of extremist narratives. Disruptive actors polarise oppositional logic using disinformation, emotions, hot cognitions, conspiracy theories and mistrust to create new forms of direct action. This direct action is understood to many as direct democracy. This direct action cultivates unlikely coalitions creating attractive alternative on-line/off-line worlds which spread extreme narratives into the mainstream via deep rooted sociological and historical pathways. OppAttune will track, attune and limit extreme narratives to foreground EU transnational freedoms and multilateralism.

Cordis: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101095170

Project n°:
101095170

Start date:
01/04/2023

Duration:
36 months

Keywords:
Political Dialogue, Extreme Narratives, Democracy, Human Rights, Discursive Governance, Social Dialogue

Consortium:

Panteio Panepistimio Koinonikon Kaipolitikon Epistimon | **EL**
Cultures Interactive e.V. - Verein zur interkulturellen Bildung und Gewaltprävention | **DE**
Fondacija Centar za međunarodne i bezbednosne poslove | **RS**
Hammurabi Human Rights Organization | **IQ**
Institut Jožef Stefan | **SI**
İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi | **TR**
Kosovar Centre for Security Studies | **XK**
Malmö Universitet | **SE**
Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften | **AT**
Özyeğin Üniversitesi | **TR**
The American University of Paris | **FR**
PRONI Centar za omladinski razvoj | **BA**
Universidade De Coimbra | **PT**
Università ta' Malta | **MT**
University of Cyprus | **CY**
Glasgow Caledonian University | **UK**
The Open University | **UK**

SMIDGE

SOCIAL MEDIA NARRATIVES: ADDRESSING EXTREMISM IN MIDDLE AGE

Conspiracy theories, misinformation and extremism online is a growing concern to governments. Extreme political narratives have been rising across Europe and these narratives influence mainstream political discourses and policies. This is having a direct impact on perceptions of democratic institutions, trust in science, and leads to calls for direct action (Jan 6th incursion in USA) to overthrow or disrupt democratically elected governments.

Those in middle age (45-65) may be both susceptible to extremist narratives and also influential as decision-makers. This group is under-researched, but the impact of them being drawn into extremist content may have significant consequences on political discourse, democratic processes and institutions. SMIDGE will analyse the various forms of extremist discourses and narratives across Europe through social network analysis, textual and content analysis of extremist discourse, and will consider national and demographic specifics through survey, focus groups and interviews in 6 countries (UK, Italy, Belgium, Denmark, Kosovo, Cyprus). From this in-depth examination of the current state of the art, SMIDGE will produce counter-narratives, education and training resources aimed at promoting reflexivity, alongside multi-level policy recommendations and evidence-based tools and training for journalists and security professionals. The counter-content will be created through collaboration with stakeholders during co-creation exercises in the focus groups. SMIDGE takes the theory of responsible research and innovation (RRI) as its core conceptual approach to ensure that the project adheres to the highest ethical and quality standards. The outputs from SMIDGE will provide evidence-based content, tools and resources that will directly help to counter extremist narratives from multiple perspectives, thereby providing greater understanding of the specificities and characteristics of those in middle-age and their vulnerability to extremism online.

Cordis: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101095290

Project n°:
101095290

Start date:
01/03/2023

Duration:
36 months

Keywords:
Social media, conspiracy theories, misinformation, extremism

Consortium:

- Københavns Universitet | **DK**
- FAS-Research Sozialwissenschaftliche Forschungsgesellschaft mbH | **AT**
- Fondazione Hallgarten - FranchettiCentro Studi Villa Montesca | **IT**
- Inclusive Europe | **BE**
- Kosovar Centre for Security Studies | **XK**
- UCLan Cyprus Limited | **CY**
- Università degli Studi di Milano | **IT**
- De Montfort University | **UK**

ARENAS

ANALYSIS OF AND RESPONSES TO EXTREMIST NARRATIVES

Social protest movements, the Covid-19 crisis and the war in Ukraine have triggered increased polarization of debates. They have challenged European democracies and thus fostered extreme narratives, with strong and numerous consequences for citizens, politics, and the democratic exercise.

The ARENAS consortium focuses on the narratives as crucial nexuses, because "the battle of stories, not the debate on issues" can determine the way that citizens react to political events. A strong antagonism is constructed between extremist and mainstream narratives, which is evident if we compare the narratives on the on-going war in Ukraine. Extremist narratives always reflect the complex intersection of spatial and temporal context where the narratives are constructed, circulated, consumed, and reproduced. They are characterized by their reliance on pathos and emotions, as well as the importance of violence in them: they tend to proliferate in historical periods characterized by social turmoil, and construct an alternative reality and promote negative emotions and behavioural patterns that run against mainstream and official narratives. In social media and through the connections between social and "traditional" media, extremist narratives are naturalized and have an impact on mainstream narratives.

ARENAS will provide concrete responses to the consequences of these extremist narratives by:

1. measuring and mapping the spread of extremist narratives;
2. defining remediation actions for individuals and groups affected by extremist narratives;
3. providing educational and institutional propositions to anticipate future challenges in terms of the construction and circulation of extremist narratives;
4. identifying multi-level policy recommendations to help counter extremist narratives, both at the institutional and political level, and at the level of associations and citizens.

Cordis: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101094731

Project n°:
101094731

Start date:
01/05/2023

Duration:
48 months

Keywords:
extremist narratives, discourse, polarisation, disinformation, counter narratives, historical roots, mediatization of extremist narratives, fake news, circulation, spread of extremist narratives

Consortium:

CY Cergy Paris Université | **FR**
Asociación Jóvenes Solidarios Arenas de San Pedro | **ES**
European Center for Human Rights | **FR**
Fundació Oxfam Intermón | **ES**
Suomen Setlementtiliitto ry | **FI**
Università degli Studi di Trento | **IT**
Centre national de la recherche scientifique | **FR**
Heinrich-Heine-Universitaet Duesseldorf | **DE**
Helsingin yliopisto | **FI**
Inštitut za novejšo zgodovino | **SI**
Momentum Marketing Services Limited | **IE**
Radošās Idejas | **LV**
Università degli Studi di Genova | **IT**
Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona | **ES**
University of Cyprus | **CY**
Wom Societa' A Responsabilita' Limitata | **IT**
Consorci Institut de Ciències Polítiques i Socials | **ES**

Topic 2022-01-06

MEDIA FOR DEMOCRACY – DEMOCRATIC MEDIA

Proposals are expected to examine under what conditions traditional and new media organizations and journalism operate in modern European societies. Research should analyse whether and how they serve the public interest, and how this could be improved. Proposals should bring together, in a holistic manner, academic research, practitioners' reflection, and citizens' views on the relationship between media and democracy. They should analyse how recent transformations in journalism and media technology have affected individuals and communities concerning participation and democratic discourses and, conversely, how a shifting political landscape, with increased polarisation as a major trait, have affected the media. Research should propose digital media design improvements that effectively increase transparency and accountability of media and contribute to reinvigorating democracy.

ReMeD

RESILIENT MEDIA FOR DEMOCRACY IN THE DIGITAL AGE

The project will tackle existing challenges to a healthy relationship between media and democracy, by taking a bold approach to improve relations between citizens, media and digital technologies.

With an interdisciplinary approach and an innovative methodology that combines qualitative and quantitative methods, ReMeD will gather, analyse, compare and contrast data on professional journalists, alternative media content producers and citizens operating in technologically mediated configurations, and on the media organizations, market structures and national and international regulations that underpin media production, circulation and consumption in the contemporary media landscape.

ReMeD will work closely with all parties involved in order to co-produce high-impact knowledge and solutions that will contribute to the creation of resilient democratic media that reinvigorate, strengthen and uphold democracy, the rule of law and fundamental human rights. The project is particularly timely as ReMeD's results and policy recommendations will feed directly into the contemporary debates around the design and implementation of the Digital Services Act and Digital Markets Act.

Cordis: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101094742

Project n°:
101094742

Start date:
01/03/2023

Duration:
36 months

Keywords:
Democracy, resilience, new Media consumption, transparency, hybrid media system

Consortium:

Universidad de Navarra | **ES**
Dublin City University | **IE**
Fédération européenne des journalistes | **BE**
Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München | **DE**
Paris Lodron Universität Salzburg | **AT**
Universitetet i Agder | **NO**
Univerzita Karlova | **CZ**
Vrije Universiteit Brussel | **BE**
The Chancellor Masters and Scholars of the University of Oxford | **UK**

DIACOMET

FOSTERING CAPACITY BUILDING FOR CIVIC RESILIENCE AND PARTICIPATION: DIALOGIC COMMUNICATION ETHICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Digital communication enormously expands the number of ways people can interact and engage, but also challenges European societies by spread of conflict instigation, hate speech, and increasing amount of disinformation. The many initiators of destructive communication acts are various actors with diverse interests, who are not bound by either professional or ethical rules or obligations to distribute truthful information or stand for its reliability. The existing framework of public communication does not empower citizens to influence the ways the media institutions and actors operate in European democracies.

DIACOMET contributes to the advancement of ethical and accountable communication by fostering capacity building for civic resilience against information distortions and promoting civic accountability. Therefore, DIACOMET aims to generate a concept of dialogic communication ethics (DCE), which would provide a framework for an inclusive model of accountability mechanisms that combine media accountability (the level of organisations) with civic accountability (the level of citizens) and is guided by a Civic Code of Good Communication Conduct (CGC) (a new type of code of communication ethics).

The DIACOMET proposal explicitly addresses the aims of the Horizon Europe Culture, creativity and inclusive society Work Programme, the Topic, the Call and the European Democracy Action Plan through:

1. Analysis of the role of dialogic communication in existing ethics codes and guidelines and formulation of the CGC.
2. A novel concept of inclusive civic accountability bodies and a tested accountability mechanism.
3. An interactive 'dilemma game' and a forum for learning and discussion.

DIACOMET proposes to establish a European network of civic accountability bodies for supporting individuals, groups and organizations to implement the CGC, and to assist in managing ethical issues emerging in public communication.

Cordis: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101094816

Project n°:
101094816

Start date:
01/06/2023

Duration:
36 months

Keywords:
Dialogic communication ethics, civic accountability mechanisms, civic resilience, participation, democratic governance, Civic Code of Good Communication Conduct

Consortium:

- Vytauto Didžiojo universitetas | **LT**
- Delfi Uždaroji akcinė bendrovė | **LT**
- Magyarországi Európa Társaság | **HU**
- Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften | **AT**
- Sihtasutus Poliitikauuringute Keskus Praxis | **EE**
- Stichting Hogeschool Utrecht | **NL**
- Tampereen korkeakoulusäätiö sr | **FI**
- Tartu Ülikool | **EE**
- Univerza v Ljubljani | **SI**
- Universita della svizzera italiana | **CH**

MeDeMAP

MAPPING MEDIA FOR FUTURE DEMOCRACIES

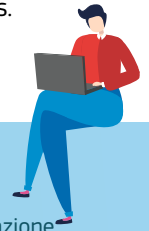
To set out future-proof pathways to strengthen democracy through improving accountability, transparency and effectiveness of media production and expanding active and inclusive citizenship, the project aims to clarify the extent to which certain media under which conditions perform which democratic functions for which audiences, thus making it apparent what is at stake for democratic media - and for democracy itself.

By applying an innovative multi-method design consisting of data science methods, large-scale quantitative analyses, in-depth qualitative approaches and participatory action research, the project will cover:

1. perspectives of both representative and participatory notions of democracy as they exist in European societies,
2. the entire range of news media, regardless of distribution channel, mandate, ownership and source of financing,
3. the legal and (self-)regulatory framework under which media houses and journalism operate and people use media,
4. the media's potential to promote and support political participation (supply side), and
5. the media use patterns, communication needs and democratic attitudes of the audiences (demand side) in all EU Member States.

Based on the research results, an interactive multi-layer map of European political information environments will be created, whose layers reflect the legal and regulatory framework and the democratically relevant features of media supply and demand. In addition, the obtained "real" map is to be confronted with a map of how European citizens envision the future media landscapes. By comparing these maps, conclusions can be drawn from congruencies and discrepancies between them, good practice examples can be identified and guidelines can be derived to support developments that promote democracy and counteract phenomena that may jeopardize democracy. These guidelines will be addressed to policymakers, regulators, self-regulation bodies, media houses, journalists, NGOs and citizens.

Cordis: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101094984



Project n°:
101094984

Start date:
01/03/2023

Duration:
36 months

Keywords:
Democracy, political information environment, regulatory framework, media accountability, media supply & demand, media production, political participation, inclusion, audiences, citizens, EU media map

Consortium:

Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften | **AT**

COFAC - Cooperativa de Formação e Animação Cultural, C.R.L. | **PT**

COMMIT - Community Medien Institut für Weiterbildung, Forschung und Beratung | **AT**

IMT - Institut Mines-Télécom | **FR**

Libera università di lingue e comunicazione IULM | **IT**

Mary Immaculate College | **IE**

Mirovni inštitut | **SI**

Tallinn University | **EE**

Univerzita Karlova | **CZ**

Uniwersytet Jagielloński | **PL**

Topic 2022-01-07

POLITICS AND THE IMPACT OF ONLINE SOCIAL NETWORKS AND NEW MEDIA

The projects are expected to build Europe-wide evidence on the extent to which political opportunities and information offered by platforms and new media – and resulting impacts, such as the "echo-chambers" effect – affects political attitudes in European states and at the level of the EU and its neighbourhood. Whether and how new media functions as a new level of news selection and study the resulting perception biases with citizens should be assessed. Research should examine the extent to which platforms and new media actually help democratise political systems and offer avenues of active engagement, or hinder participation for some. The effects of the replacement of media consumption with content consumption should also be examined. Proposals should investigate how audiences of different ages, different genders and different socio-economic and ethnolinguistic groups receive and assess information on digital platforms, and how political actors use these platforms to shape political behaviour. They should propose and design regulatory innovations in response to the covert use of social platforms for political goals.

SOLARIS

STRENGTHENING DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT THROUGH VALUE-BASED GENERATIVE ADVERSARIAL NETWORKS

Generative adversarial networks (GANs) are a class of AI models able to create media contents – audio and video – resembling reality. Although there are different promising areas of application of GANs – audio-graphic productions, human-computer interactions, satire, artistic creative expression – their current and foreseen misleading uses are just as numerous and worrying. The main concern is related to the so-called "deepfakes", fake images or videos simulating real events with extreme precision. If trained on a face, GANs can make it move and speak in a hyper-realistic way. This technology poses an urgent political threat since GANs could be – and have already been – used to spread fake news and disinformation.

This raises an urgent challenge to democratic governance and regulation: to improve GANs accountability, transparency, and trustworthiness. Nevertheless, GANs also constitute an opportunity to enhance democratic awareness and expand active and inclusive citizenship.

SOLARIS reacts to these challenges in two ways. On the one hand, we analyse political risks associated with these technologies, to prevent negative implications for EU democracies. As a result, SOLARIS will establish regulatory innovations to detect and mitigate deepfake risks. On the other hand, we assess the opportunities raised by GANs for reinvigorating the democratic engagement of citizens. We will co-create, involving citizen science, value-based GANs contents to enhance democratic engagement. SOLARIS involves three use cases: the first aims at understanding the psychological aspects of GANs perceived trustworthiness. The second simulates the circulation of threatening GANs contents on social media, to detect risks and design mitigation strategies. The third co-creates value-based GANs contents to boost awareness on key global democratic topics (climate change, gender dimension, human migration), to ultimately enhance active and inclusive digital citizenship.

https://projects.illc.uva.nl/solaris/

Cordis: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101094665

Project n°:
101094665

Start date:
01/02/2023

Duration:
36 months

Keywords:
Generative Adversarial Network (GAN), Digital Democracy, Deepfake risk mitigation, Citizen science, Value-sensitive design of technology, Regulatory innovation strategies and best policy options

Consortium:

Universiteit van Amsterdam | **NL**

Agenzia ANSA - Agenzia Nazionale Stampa Associata - Società Cooperativa | **IT**

Brand Media Bulgaria EOOD | **BG**

CINI - Consorzio Interuniversitario Nazionale per l'informatica | **IT**

DEXAI - Etica Artificiale | **IT**

Instituti i Studimeve Ndërkombëtare | **AL**

Libera Università Maria Santissima Assunta | **IT**

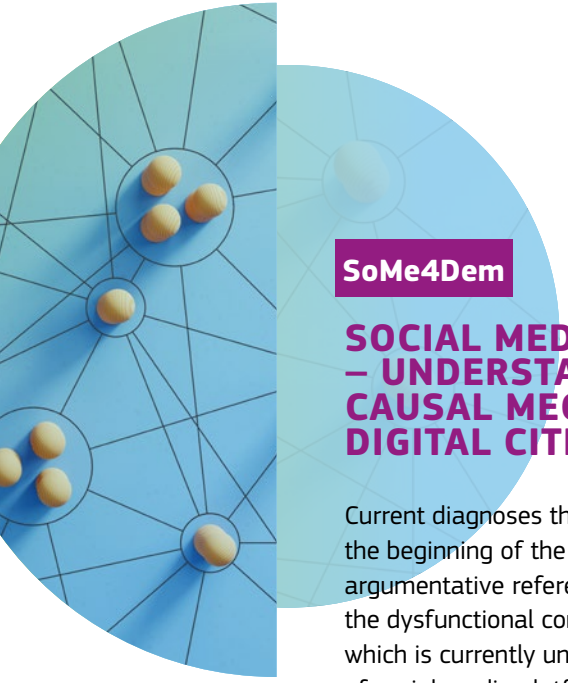
Ministry of Internal Affairs | **AL**

Universidad Carlos III de Madrid | **ES**

Univerza v Mariboru | **SI**

Verein der Europäischen Bürgerwissenschaften – ECSA e.V. | **DE**

The University of Exeter | **UK**



SoMe4Dem

SOCIAL MEDIA FOR DEMOCRACY – UNDERSTANDING THE CAUSAL MECHANISMS OF DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

Current diagnoses that democracy is in crisis at the beginning of the 21st century share a common argumentative reference point: the (implicit) reference to the dysfunctional constitution of the political public sphere which is currently undergoing structural change. The rise of social media platforms is considered as one of its main constituents. While social media make the public arena more open and thus more responsive, these platforms also lead to new mechanisms of fragmentation and exclusion, an erosion of norms in public debate and a loss of trust in traditional institutions.

The project will reconsider the diagnoses of this crisis by:

1. providing better empirical evidence for the impact of social media on society with respect to political debates
2. understanding the main causal mechanisms of this impact
3. developing tools that improve the capacity of social media to contribute to the functioning of the public arena in a liberal democracy, i.e., deliberation, legitimation and the self-perception of the democratic subject.

Cordis: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101094752

Project n°:
101094752

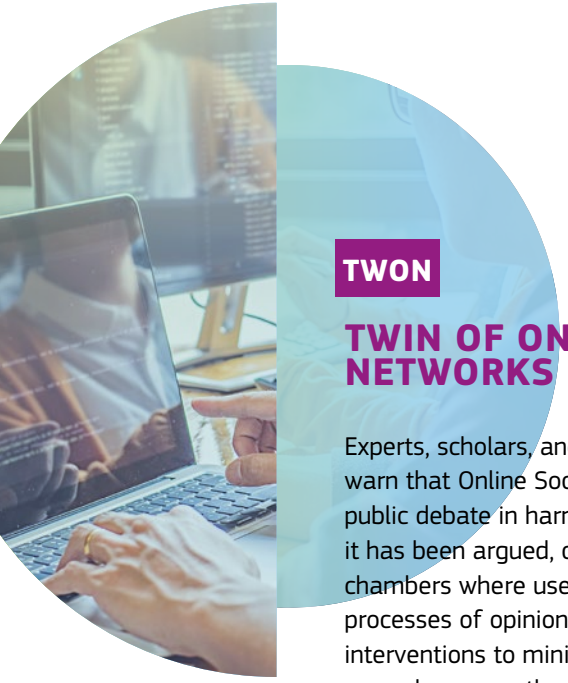
Start date:
01/03/2023

Duration:
36 months

Keywords:
Digital Citizenship, Polarization, Trust, Participation, Causal Mechanisms

Consortium:

Max-Planck-Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaften e.V. | **DE**
Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques | **FR**
KIT - Karlsruher Institut für Technologie | **DE**
Università Ca' Foscari Venezia | **IT**
Universität Leipzig | **DE**
Universität Potsdam | **DE**
Universiteit van Amsterdam | **NL**
Vrije Universiteit Brussel | **BE**
University of Bristol | **UK**



TWON

TWIN OF ONLINE SOCIAL NETWORKS

Experts, scholars, and leading political decision-makers warn that Online Social Networks (OSNs) have transformed public debate in harmful ways. Personalization algorithms, it has been argued, create so-called filter bubbles and echo chambers where users' opinions are reinforced, amplifying processes of opinion polarisation. Despite frequent calls for interventions to minimize such undesired effects, there is no agreed-upon method for estimating the effects of changing the parameters of the design of a social network service. Crucially, the complexity of such systems makes it hard to translate results of isolated experiments into an estimate of the overall effects.

The TWON project will develop a novel empirical method for systematically researching the effects of design choices of mechanisms inside OSNs, by creating digital twins of social network sites, called TWONs. The TWON can then be used to study counterfactuals, such as: How would the effects look like, had the OSN been designed differently?

In order to achieve that, the TWON project will combine empirical observations of existing OSNs, theory-informed simulations, and specific case studies. These form an iterative process, in which we will build and refine the TWON. If successful, this would be a major leap towards a better understanding of platform mechanics, both for the scientific community and for societal stakeholders. The TWON project will produce evidence-based recommendations for regulatory innovations regarding OSNs and enhance digital citizenship by participatory methods. This can reduce the detrimental effects on democratic debates when platforms are primarily optimized for economic gain. TWON enables OSN research in a controlled but naturalistic environment that would not be possible relying on for-profit OSN operators. The effectiveness of the TWON method will be demonstrated in two case studies on two ongoing debates: the conflict in Ukraine and COVID-19.

Cordis: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101095095

Project n°:
101095095

Start date:
01/04/2023

Duration:
36 months

Keywords:
simulation,
digital twin,
complex systems,
filter bubble,
echo chamber,
polarization

Consortium:

Universiteit van Amsterdam | **NL**
FZI Forschungszentrum Informatik | **DE**
Institut Jožef Stefan | **SI**
KIT - Karlsruher Institut für Technologie | **DE**
Robert Koch-Institut | **DE**
Slovenska tiskovna agencija d.o.o. | **SI**
Universität Trier | **DE**
Institut za filozofiju i društvenu teoriju Univerziteta u Beogradu | **RS**

Topic 2022-01-08

REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY IN FLUX

Projects are expected to create a robust and comprehensive knowledge base on long-term developments in terms of trust in, and trustworthiness of, the political institutions of representative democracy and their legitimacy. Research should relate changing voting attitudes at the individual level to wider political and cultural discourses, where feelings and emotions can compete and overrule facts and reasons, and to the emergence of new social movements and parties. Projects should analyse key drivers of such changes, taking into consideration socio-economic as well as cultural variables. The political cleavages that shape current political phenomena and their connection to historical legacies, as well as their foreseeable negative and positive long-term impacts on democratic systems, should be analysed.

Based on the evidence collected and analysed, proposals should develop new approaches to understand the evolution of political parties in the context of intense digitalisation (including of the public space and public institutions) and individualism. They should examine the barriers and opportunities to re-invigorating and enhancing representative democratic systems.

ActEU

TOWARDS A NEW ERA OF REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY - ACTIVATING EUROPEAN CITIZENS' TRUST IN TIMES OF CRISES AND POLARIZATION

How can we conceptualize and empirically measure political trust and legitimacy beyond the usual survey question "How much trust do you have in the parliament?"? Does the multi-level nature of European representative democracies require an identical level of citizen support at the regional, national and EU levels? How does social polarization on key policy issues of our times –immigration, climate change, and gender inequality– challenge the political trust in, and legitimacy of, democratic political systems? And what can policymakers and civil society do to master these challenges?

ActEU aims at finding answers to these questions pursuing two overarching goals:

In phase 1, we map and investigate persistent problems of declining trust, legitimacy and representation in Europe with a particular attention to the polarization of societies and the EU's multi-level structures. Providing an innovative conceptual framework on political attitudes, behavior and representation across Europe, we establish an original empirical infrastructure based on an innovative combination of methods and newly collected quantitative and qualitative empirical data (focus groups, experimental surveys, web scraping).

In phase 2, these results will flow directly into the creation of a toolbox of remedial actions to enhance political trust in and legitimacy of European representative democracies.

In cooperation with a newly created Civil Society Network, Youth Democracy Labs across 13 European cities and in exchange with political cartoonists "Cartooning for democracy", we will develop context-sensitive solutions for all polity levels and some of the most polarizing policy areas, and craft tailor-made toolkits for both policymakers and civil society and the educational sector.

Finally, we deploy a differentiated dissemination strategy to maximize ActEU's scientific, policy and societal impact in activating European citizens' trust and working towards a new era of representative democracy.

https://acteu.org/

Cordis: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101094190

Project n°:
101094190

Start date:
01/03/2023

Duration:
36 months

Keywords:
Political-trust, legitimacy, participation, representation, polarization, immigration, gender, climate change, experimental survey, web scraping, focus groups, civil society, educational sector

Consortium:

Universität Duisburg-Essen | **DE**
Åbo Akademi | **FI**
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki | **EL**
Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques | **FR**
Institut Catholique de Lille | **FR**
Paris Lodron Universität Salzburg | **AT**
SWPS Uniwersytet Humanistycznospołeczny | **PL**
Trans European Policy Studies Association | **BE**
Universidad de Oviedo | **ES**
Università degli Studi di Trento | **IT**
Universität des Saarlandes | **DE**
Ústav mezinárodních vztahů, v. v. i. | **CZ**

REDIRECT

THE REPRESENTATIVE DISCONNECT: DIAGNOSIS AND STRATEGIES FOR RECTIFICATION

The focus of REDIRECT is to study the current transformation of democratic polities in Europe, to realise whether and how their centres of gravity are shifting, and to improve our understanding of the "representative disconnect" – a multidimensional phenomenon of regression of the demos-kratos linkage involving institutional, behavioural and affective components.

REDIRECT moves from the idea to study representative democracy in a comprehensive manner, connecting several relevant dimensions of analysis, in order to extract sustainable ideas and viable instruments to cope with the current problems of "democracy in flux". These, in turn, will allow a parsimonious formulation of remedies, to be activated both at the institutional level (i.e. assuring a future to crucial "mediating bodies" of representatives democracy like parties, leaders, parliamentary institutions), and at the level of civil society.

In parallel to a critical review of the theoretical reflection on representative democracy, an interdisciplinary and multi-level approach to several empirical dimensions of the phenomenon of representative disconnect will be offered, focusing on several topics: the crisis of representation, trust in institutions and political representatives, political personalization, political individualism, mass-élite congruence, social and social-media discontent.

The long-term outcomes expected from the project mark the passage from the diagnosis to the strategies for rectification. Indeed, REDIRECT aims at provides a number of pragmatical recommendations to rearrange the demos-kratos relationship along a two-way street of intervention: the top-down way of institutional reforms (i.e., legislative and procedural innovation to ensure transparency and full information to citizens) and the bottom-up way of a stronger liaison between citizens and mediating bodies (i.e., remobilizing citizens via digitalization, diffusion of share values of social sustainability and civic education).

Cordis: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101095142

Project n°:
101095142

Start date:
01/02/2023

Duration:
48 months

Keywords:
Representative democracy, Responsiveness, Trust, Legitimacy, Ruling class, political elites, Democratic mediating bodies, Democratic deliberation, Affective disconnect, Political affect, Rectification

Consortium:

Università degli Studi di Siena | **IT**
Társadalomtudományi Kutatóközpont | **HU**
Università del Salento | **IT**
Universitetet i Oslo | **NO**
Uniwersytet Jagielloński | **PL**
Vrije Universiteit Brussel | **BE**
The University ff Exeter | **UK**

TRUDEM

TRUST IN EUROPEAN DEMOCRACIES

Political trust has long been regarded as an important element of regime support and factor of regime stability; it is widely associated with a number of positive outcomes in representative democracies. Political trust drives citizens' interest and engagement in politics, increases voting turnout and makes law-abiding behaviour more common. Political trust is frequently equated to diffuse regime support and thus linked to the effective functioning and stability of the political system. The proposed research effort will monitor the structural (long-term) drivers of political trust but also emphasize the strategies which can be employed by diverse actors and agencies to strengthen accurate and informed judgments of agency trustworthiness.

The objective of this ambitious project is twofold:

First, we aim to design and implement a complex research effort to collect comprehensive evidence on the judgments of trustworthiness in a range of European states.

Second, the project will develop a comprehensive and transparent toolbox of short-term and long-term policy interventions including recommendations, and methodologies for enhancing trust in political institutions, boosting transparency, and inclusiveness of representative systems in Europe.

While there is a growing concern about the crisis of democracy and democratic backsliding, this research effort will provide an innovative theoretical perspective on the sources of regime support and strategies for trust building in the public domain. The project looks at the different drivers of 'positive high trust in democracy' and 'negative high trust in autocracy'. The project will facilitate development of a new paradigm of political trust and trust-building and will inspire emergence of new insights on the multi-facet origins of political trust and multi-factor nature of trustworthiness. The project has partners in Austria, Czechia, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, and Ukraine.

http://www.truedem.eu/

Cordis: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101095237

Project n°:
101095237

Start date:
01/01/2023

Duration:
36 months

Keywords:
Trust in government, in parliament, legal system, media system, political parties, interest groups, NGOs, support for democracy, voting behaviour, political inclusion, political integration

Consortium:

Institut für Vergleichende Umfrageforschung Eurasien Barometer | **AT**
Aktiebolaget Bikupan | **SE**
Institut d'études politiques de Grenoble | **FR**
Leuphana Universität Luneburg | **DE**
Metropolitní univerzita Praha, o.p.s. | **CZ**
Università degli Studi di Salerno | **IT**
Universitatea din București | **RO**
University of Peloponnese | **EL**
Univerza v Ljubljani | **SI**
Univerzita Komenského v Bratislave | **SK**
Uniwersytet Śląski w Katowicach | **PL**
V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University | **UA**
Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS) | **FR**

Topic 2022-01-09

GLOBAL GOVERNANCE FOR A WORLD IN TRANSITION: NORMS, INSTITUTIONS, ACTORS

Taking stock of recent developments, research should propose ways of redesigning, renewing and re-invigorating global and European traditions of cooperation with a view to greater accountability, openness and legitimacy. This should include new reflections on the norms, institutions and actors that can support a more robust and effective multilateralism, as well as a stocktaking and assessment of the modalities and possibilities of multileveled participation in cross-border governance, ranging from the local to the global level. Research should also account for differences between fields and areas of governance, corresponding to diverse levels and modalities of multilateral cooperation. It should analyse whether and how such differences may hamper the governance of intersecting global challenges.

REMIT

REIGNITE MULTILATERALISM VIA TECHNOLOGY

The REMIT project aims to Reignite Multilateralism via Technology.

Multilateralism is under attack and the EU is caught between the U.S. and China. While there are many ways that the decline in multilateralism affects the EU, none is more troublesome than rivalries in technology.Firstly, because of the sector's impact on economic competitiveness and the size within economies that tech occupies. Secondly, tech is important to national security and future threats, including threats to democratic principles. Thirdly, technology is crucial to the solutions for global challenges. REMIT will create knowledge that generates policy recommendations and strategies that support the EU in reconceptualizing multilateral governance in four crucial policy areas: digital, biotechnology, security and defense, and financial technologies.

REMIT researchers create this knowledge by employing the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF) to specific subsystems. The policy subsystem is the ACF's unit of analysis. It is characterized by three components:

1. the policy problem or issue
2. the scope of actors seeking to influence that policy
3. a territorial domain or authority for policymaking

REMIT experts focus on subsystems that emerge from their expertise, analysing the tensions and debates within each as well as defining the EU's current role. Knowing the status quo makes the next step possible—to extrapolate ideas and to suggest pathways forward. In innovative scenario testing workshops with EU officials, important regional groupings (e.g., Mercosur, ASEAN, and African Union) and national officials, REMIT will develop policy recommendations that will give a remit to reignite multilateralism via technology. A reigniting that not only reacts to China's rise as a systemic technology rival or Russia's rise as a technology abuser or the dominance of large U.S.-based digital platforms, but that sets a clear vision for the future—one in which Europe plays a leading role.

https://www.remit-research.eu/

Cordis: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101094228

Project n°:
101094228

Start date:
01/03/2023

Duration:
48 months

Keywords:
multilateralism, critical technology governance, geopolitics and technology governance, economic, social and environmental aspects of technology governance

Consortium:

Universiteit Maastricht | **NL**
Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam | **NL**
Finnish Institute of International Affairs | **FI**
Katholieke Universiteit Leuven | **BE**
Luiss - Libera Università Internazionale degli Studi Sociali Guido Carli | **IT**
Tartu Ulikool | **EE**
Universität Breme | **DE**
Universitatea Babeș-Bolyai | **RO**
European Cyber Conflict Research Initiative | **UK**

NAVIGATOR

THE EU NAVIGATING MULTILATERAL COOPERATION

How should the EU navigate the increasingly complex - and conflict-laden - institutional spaces of global governance to advance a rules-based international order? And what factors should be emphasized when considering which institutions to strengthen, which to reform, and which to by-pass when revitalising multilateralism? NAVIGATOR's main objective is to answer these questions and deliver a ready-to-use "search mechanism" and associated pathways of action that the EU and its member states can use as it seeks to strengthen a rules-based international order.

To achieve this, NAVIGATOR comprises a strong, global and inter-disciplinary team of researchers who explores institutional variation on six policy issues – climate change, digitalisation, finance/tax, health, migration and security – to identify what institutional mixes that enables the EU to have optimal impact in a given policy issue. We explore variation in formality (formal to informal), accessibility (open to closed), and normativity (expressed purpose is technical to openly normative). Drawing on these data and complementing these with content analysis, social network analysis, semi-structured interviews and European and global surveys, NAVIGATOR develops a "search mechanism" that allows the EU and member states to compare strengths and weaknesses of existing multilateral organizations, determine which can be reformed and which are too costly to reform, identify and assess alternatives, and, on this basis, develop action strategies to reform multilateralism. NAVIGATOR will be very relevant to the work programme, as it will assess the effectiveness of multilateral institutions and arrangements; identify the optimal pathways of action of EU support to multilateral, minilateral, private and public-private initiatives to further global governance in a given policy domain, and provide recommendations for EU engagement strategies in the context of the war in Ukraine, threats of nationalism and anti-EU populism.

https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101094394

Project n°:
101094394

Start date:
01/03/2023

Duration:
36 months

Keywords:
actors, EU, climate change, digitalisation, finance and tax, geopolitics, global governance, health, institutions, migration, multilateral cooperation mechanisms, security, transnational democracy

Consortium:

Norsk utenrikspolitisk institutt | **NO**
Copenhagen Business School | **DK**
European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) e.V. | **DE**
Stichting VU | **NL**
Tallinna Tehnikaülikool | **EE**
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem | **IL**
Università Commerciale Luigi Bocconi | **IT**
Universiteit Maastricht | **NL**
Universite Libre de Bruxelles | **BE**
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg | **ZA**
University of Ottawa | **CA**
Waseda University | **JP**

Topic 2022-02-01

NETWORK FOR INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

The goal is to establish a network of researchers in democracy together with practitioners of civic participation and deliberation and of citizenship education across Europe, bringing together a critical mass of such actors in Europe, from Member States and Associated Countries representing the different parts of Europe with their diverse policy contexts, challenges as well as historical and cultural backgrounds. Such a network should contribute to Europe's future policy to strengthen and renew democracy in Europe, in line with the Commission's priority "A new push for European democracy" and the follow-up to the Conference on the future of Europe.

The results of the call will be published in the near future.

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This booklet gathers the projects selected for funding under the Horizon Europe Cluster 2 call HORIZON-CL2-2021-DEMOCRACY-02 “Reshaping Democracies”.

Project information

Publications Office
of the European Union