

# EPD Conference 2022

## What now? Supporting democracy and improving coordination in a new era

Martin's EU Hotel, Boulevard Charlemagne 80, Brussels 1000

**21 JUNE 2022**

hosted by the  
European Partnership for Democracy



**EUROPEAN  
PARTNERSHIP FOR  
DEMOCRACY**



# Programme

Tuesday, 21 June

- 09h00 **Registration and welcome**  
Venue: Martin's EU Hotel, Boulevard Charlemagne 80, Brussels 1000
- 09h45 **The war in Ukraine and the impact on democracy worldwide**
- 11h00 **Coffee break**
- 11h15 **State of Democracy in Europe and looking ahead to the 2024 elections**
- 12h30 **Lunch**
- 14h00 **Breakout groups – session 1**  
*Breakout group 1: How to unrig an election: electoral support in hybrid regimes*  
*Breakout group 2: Supporting democracy on a dying planet*  
*Breakout group 3: Kick off: The Team Europe Democracy Network*
- 15h15 **Breakout groups – session 2**  
*Breakout group 4: Disinfo vs democracy: will the DSA save us?*  
*Breakout group 5: Democracy support in repressive environments*  
*Breakout group 6: Not too young to run: Youth and political participation*
- 16h30 **Coffee break**
- 16h45 **Enhancing cooperation: Making Team Europe Democracy work**
- 18h00 **Closing remarks: looking ahead to the Czech Presidency of the Council of the EU**
- 18h15 **End of Conference**
- 18h30 **Networking drinks**  
Venue: Kamilou bar, 36 Rue Joseph II, Brussels 1000



# What Now for Democracy Conference 2022

## Welcome

**Ken Godfrey** is the Executive Director of the European Partnership for Democracy (EPD) and has led the organisation since 2015. Prior to joining EPD, he worked as an Electoral Advisor for the UN Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste. He has also worked for the European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan, at the European Parliament and as an external consultant for the European Commission. He holds a Master's degree from the London School of Economics in Comparative Democratisation. Ken has also worked in Argentina, Canada, China, Senegal and the United Kingdom.

## Panel 1

### The war in Ukraine and the impact on democracy worldwide

The ongoing war of Russian aggression in Ukraine is a critical juncture for democracy in the world. As Ukraine defends its right to self-determination and freedom, it has become a symbol of the fight between democracy and dictatorship and has renewed the importance of democracy as a priority of EU foreign policy. At the same time, other policy priorities have also risen in importance such as the increase of energy prices, migration and food shortages. So what is the impact of the war on EU and the foreign policy of its allies? And what should the EU be doing to support Ukraine and other democracies worldwide?

#### *Speakers*

**Kelly Adams-Smith** is the Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Mission to the European Union since 2021. She is a career diplomat in the U.S. Senior Foreign Service and previously served as Senior Coordinator for National Security Affairs in the Office of Vice-President Kamala Harris. She has served in the U.S. Embassies in the Czech Republic, the United Kingdom, Bulgaria, Estonia, and Russia. She has also held multiple positions in Washington D.C. including as Deputy Executive Secretary of the White House National Security Council. In 2019-2021 she was a faculty member of the National War College.

**Anthony Smith** is Chief Executive at the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD). He is a member of the Foreign Secretary's Advisory Group on Human Rights and the Board of EPD. Prior to joining WFD, Smith served the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, where he



worked on a range of European policy issues including the Balkans, trade policy and Common Foreign and Security Policy, and later the Department for International Development, where he was International Relations Director, responsible for policy on EU, UN and Commonwealth development issues, engagement with the G20 and G8, and relations with development partners.

**Iryna Yefremova** has been Deputy Head of Mission of Ukraine to the European Union since 2019. She previously served as the Third Secretary in the Secretariat of the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, MFA of Ukraine. She worked in Ireland first as Second secretary at the Ukrainian Embassy in Dublin and then as Chargé d 'Affairs a.i. of Ukraine to Ireland. She then moved to the Netherlands and was appointed Counselor, Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy of Ukraine to the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

*Moderator*

**Thijs Berman** is the Executive Director of the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD). Having begun his career as a correspondent in Paris and Moscow for the Dutch weekly *De Groene Amsterdammer*, he was also previously a Member of the European Parliament (Party of European Socialists), where he was a member of the Committees on Agriculture, Regional Development, Budget, Development and Humanitarian Affairs, and the Subcommittee on Human Rights. Prior to joining NIMD, he served as Principal Adviser to the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, and was EU Chief Observer to elections in Ethiopia, Senegal, and Afghanistan.

## Panel 2

### State of Democracy in Europe and looking ahead to the 2024 elections

Democracy in the European Union is in a state of flux in the run-up to the 2024 European Parliament elections. The recently concluded Conference on the Future of Europe has reinvigorated calls for treaty changes to introduce EU-wide electoral lists and more elected offices to the EU, while the launch of Article 7 sanctions procedure against Hungary for its violations of the rule of law represents the start of a new chapter for democracy in the EU. Will these developments bring meaningful change to European democracy, and where will the future of democracy in the EU lead next? EU policymakers and democracy practitioners within the EU will come together to explore these questions in this session.



### *Speakers*

**Věra Jourová** is Vice-President for Values and Transparency in the European Commission, where she leads the Commission's work on the rule of law, transparency, and protection from external interference, including through the coordination of the EU Democracy Action Plan and the European Citizens' Initiative. She previously served as the European Commissioner for Justice, Consumers, and Gender Equality, where she managed the Commission's work on gender equality, judicial cooperation within the EU, and privacy rights, including the landmark General Data Protection Regulation. Before joining the European Commission, Jourová was Minister for Regional Development in the Czech Republic.

**Heidi Hautala** is Vice-President of the European Parliament (Greens/European Free Alliance). Having been elected five times to the European Parliament, she has previously served as leader of the Greens group in the EP and has chaired its Committee on Women's Rights and the Subcommittee on Human Rights. Also a member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on International Trade in the European Parliament, Hautala was previously Finnish Minister of International Development and State Ownership Steering, and was also a Member of Parliament in Finland, where she chaired the Green parliamentary group.

**Antonella Valmorbida** is Secretary-General of the European Association for Local Democracy (ALDA) and President of EPD. She has a senior experience in promoting local democracy, empowerment and participation of civil society, and good governance in Europe, in the Balkans, in Eastern Europe, and in the Mediterranean area. She is a European senior consultant on local development with a focus on the implementation of participatory processes for urban regeneration. As Secretary-General of ALDA, she manages a network of 350 members mainly composed of local authorities and civil society groups in over 40 countries in Europe and beyond.

### *Moderator*

**Michael Meyer-Resende** is the Executive Director of Democracy Reporting International (DRI). A trained lawyer (LL.M. Bruges), he started his career at the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the OSCE, in charge of rule of law issues and later the Office's work in the Western Balkans. After an engagement at the BBC's Radio 4, he worked in the Human Rights Unit of the European Commission's External Relations Department, where he negotiated the deployment of EU election observers with many governments around the world. In 2006 he co-founded DRI, which is headquartered in Germany and has offices in the MENA region, Eastern Europe and Asia.



## Breakout session 1

### How to unrig an election? Electoral support in hybrid regimes

Hybrid regimes represent a challenge for democracy support for multiple reasons: controlled and manipulated elections; restrictions to freedom of organisation and expression; and the slow weakening of political opposition. These challenges are not confined to any geographical region. In the EU, recent elections in Hungary have shown that elections are not simply rigged on the day of the vote, but may be manipulated over many months and years to favour certain political parties and interests.

Supporting electoral integrity under such circumstances provides challenges for democracy practitioners and civil society. What are the responses that democracy supporters can take to support democratic elections? How can we better observe elections in hybrid regimes? What lessons are there from recent Election Observation Missions of the EU and others which provide insights on how to update the pro-democracy toolkit that can be used inside the EU and as part of external action?

This session aims to tackle the following topics:

- How to better monitor the conduct of elections in hybrid regimes;
- How to more effectively push elections in such contexts in a more pro-democratic direction;
- Explore ideas for how to bridge internal and external work on elections to ensure electoral integrity within the EU based on lessons from electoral support elsewhere.

#### *Programme*

Presenter: **Holly Ruthrauff**, lead expert, EODS

Moderator: **Patrick Costello**, Head of Division, European External Action Service

## Breakout session 2

### Supporting democracy on a dying planet

If you have attended any climate marches over the past years, you will have certainly heard the chant, “this is what democracy looks like!” This is both a call for strengthening democracy and a critique of the way democracy fails to tackle the climate and ecological crisis we are facing. Without democracy we cannot develop inclusive and just environmental and climate policies,



but democracy has thus far failed to produce the rapid results needed to avoid critical tipping points.

This session aims to bring together practitioners and policy-makers from both the democracy support community and the climate and environmental communities to better understand how to adapt our policies and programmes to better respond to autocratisation and the climate and ecological crisis.

The session aims to answer three key questions:

- As a democracy support community, how can we mainstream environmental protection and climate action in our support programmes? What does that look like?
- Conversely, how can we embed democratic practice and environmental democracy principles in our foreign policy and ODA and multilateral investments on climate and environment programming?
- What do we need from donors and policy-makers to facilitate such an integration of democracy support and climate and environmental cooperation, in terms of policy and funding?

#### *Programme*

Presenter: **Shannon O'Connell** (Westminster Foundation for Democracy)

Moderator: **Maria Giovanna Maniera**, Rights and Democracy Team Leader, Greens/EFA in the European Parliament

## Breakout session 3

### **Kick off: The Team Europe Democracy Network**

This breakout session will take place under the framework of [Team Europe Democracy \(TED\)](#) initiative, formally launched by the EU in November 2021. One of the components of TED is the “TED Network”, which will facilitate exchange of information as well as knowledge production and sharing between European democracy support practitioners (EU Member States, CSOs, international organisations, EU institutions staff, etc).

The TED Network will be a space for debate on democracy support strategies, approaches, actions, and programmes. This will be done in coordination with the research outputs produced by the action Supporting Team Europe Democracy implemented by International IDEA and partners. This session will provide a ‘taster’ of such TED network meetings

- Introduction: What is Team Europe Democracy?
- Team Europe Democracy Network



- Opportunities for CSOs and stakeholders to participate in the Team Europe Democracy Network
- Q&A

#### *Programme*

Presenter: **Laura Bretea**, Policy Officer, European Commission, DG INTPA

Moderator: **Thomas Millar**, Head of Section, Democratic Governance, DG INTPA

## Breakout session 4

### Disinfo vs democracy: will the DSA save us?

The Digital Services Act (DSA) has been repeatedly touted as a key tool to fight disinformation. Upon the reach of a preliminary political agreement on April 23 on the DSA, various questions emerge on the impact that the DSA will have on disinformation as a threat to democracy that will be discussed in this event.

- How will the DSA deliver and not deliver to fight disinformation as a threat to democracy?
- Do any articles of the DSA oriented towards combating disinformation pose threats to fundamental rights? How should in general a regulation of online services balance the need to tackle disinformation and to preserve fundamental rights? What lessons have been learnt from the debate on disinformation around the DSA?
- What do we need in other EU initiatives such as the Code of Practice on Disinformation, the Regulation on Political Advertising, the European Media Freedom Act or a future recast of the GDPR to best tackle disinformation?
- How should civil society organisations prepare to make the best out of the DSA and which DSA instruments are more promising for civil society willing to engage in tackling disinformation? (Risk assessments, risk mitigation, independent audits, ad repositories, data access and scrutiny, codes of conduct...?)

#### *Programme*

Presenter: **Rita Jonusaite**, EU Disinfo Lab

Moderator: **Sébastien Brack**, Kofi Annan Foundation



## Breakout session 5

### Democracy support in repressive environments

In today's global political landscape, autocrats are increasingly emboldened in their attacks on the exercise of civil and political rights, posing particular challenges to democracy support. In fully hostile environments, democracy activists and human rights defenders are cut off from external sources of funding and face repression on a number of levels, from negative stereotypes and media narratives to targeted intimidation, coercion, legal persecution, or violence.

This breakout group will be an exchange between democracy support practitioners with experiences of undertaking democracy support work in repressive environments to share their experiences and knowledge of how to navigate state and societal hostility. The session will feature Nicolas Bouchet (German Marshall Fund of the United States), who will present recent research on democracy support in hostile environments and discuss challenges and recommendations in this area. The session will explore how to get 'back to politics' and incorporate lessons learned from innovation strategies to work more effectively in hostile environments.

Themes under discussion will include:

- Indirect support, including support to cultural and social activism
- Delocalised support through diaspora communities and actors in exile
- Discreet support and alternatives to financial support
- Lessons learned from strategies of innovation in the face of repression

#### *Programme*

Presenter: **Nicolas Bouchet**, visiting fellow, German Marshall Fund of the United States

Moderator: **Peter Sondergaard**, European Endowment for Democracy

## Breakout session 6

### Not too young to run: Youth and political participation

Today, young people increasingly demand more meaningful participation in the public space to shape their future and their societies. However, despite the fact that in many countries young people make up more than half of the population, there is ample evidence that the participation of young people in formal and institutional political processes is relatively low compared to older citizens worldwide. The young generation faces many obstacles, ranging from discrimination, marginalisation and lack of access to opportunities and voice in decision-making processes. To meet the needs of young people and ensure the recognition and enforcement of their rights,



their active and meaningful participation is crucial. Young people must be adequately represented in institutions, political processes and decision-making. They must be provided not only with the knowledge and capacities necessary to participate meaningfully but also with the opportunities and benefits of an enabling environment.

- The session aims to answer the key questions:
- How can young people be supported to build more accountable political institutions?
- What are the main barriers limiting the participation of young people in different parts of the world?
- What can young people do to help counter democratic backsliding?
- As a democracy support community, how can we secure political participation of youth in our work?

### *Programme*

Presentation (virtual) : **Carolyn Logan**, Afrobarometer  
Moderator: **Judit Lantai** (JEF-Europe)

## Panel 3

### **Enhancing cooperation: Making Team Europe Democracy work**

The Team Europe Democracy initiative was recently launched as a part of the Team Europe approach for cooperation between the EU institutions and EU Member-States. This initiative promises to advance the development of common approaches to supporting democratisation globally and to open up possibilities for closer collaboration and new forms of multi-country partnerships on projects on larger scales – both geographically and thematically. This session will explore the opportunities and challenges of cooperation under Team Europe Democracy for building stronger partnerships to improve accountability, political participation, and media freedom across the world.

### *Speakers*

**Chiara Adamo** is Acting Director for Human development, Migration, Governance and Peace in the Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA) at the European Commission. She has extensive experience working on human rights, democracy, and home affairs policies with a pan-EU and global scope within the European Commission. Notably, she played a key role in developing the JHA Scoreboard and the Hague Programme and Action Plan as head of sector in charge of inter-institutional relations within the Directorate-General for Justice and



Home Affairs (DG JAI). Before joining the European Commission, Adamo worked in the development sector for civil society organisations and local administrations.

**Christian Leffler** was Deputy Secretary-General at the European External Action Service (EEAS) until his retirement in 2020. He has also served as Managing Director for the Americas at the EEAS, Director-in-Charge of the Middle East and South Mediterranean in the European Commission's Directorate General for External Relations, and Deputy Director-General at the Commission's Directorate-General for Development. Previously, he had a career in the Swedish Foreign Service with postings in Cairo, Paris, and the Swedish Mission to the EU in Brussels, where he played a key role in Sweden's accession to the European Union.

**Gary Klaukka** is the Acting Executive Director of Demo Finland. He has extensive career experience in democracy and political party work, having worked as Programmes Officer at International IDEA, as the Head of Public Outreach and Acting Head of Parliamentary Development at the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) and as Senior Programme Manager for Myanmar at the National Democratic Institute (NDI). Prior to joining the field of international democracy support, he was a political adviser to the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Lords, political assistant to the Leader of Brighton and Hove City Council, and as parliamentary assistant to other Members of Parliament and peers.

*Moderator*

**Richard Youngs** is Senior Fellow at Carnegie Europe in the Democracy, Conflict and Governance programme. He is also Professor of International Relations at the University of Warwick. Prior to joining Carnegie, he was director of the European think tank FRIDE. Youngs has held positions in the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office and as an EU Marie Curie fellow, and is the author of several books including *Rebuilding European Democracy: Resistance and Renewal in an Illiberal Age*, *The European Union and Global Politics*, *Civic Activism Unleashed: New Hope or False Dawn for Democracy?* and *Europe's Eastern Crisis: The Geopolitics of Asymmetry*.

## Closing remarks

### Looking ahead to the Czech Presidency of the Council of the European Union

**Jitka Látal Znamenáčková** has been the Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic in the Political and Security Committee of the European Union since September 2019. She is a graduate of the University of Economics in Prague and previously completed a fellowship program with the US government focusing on EU-US economic and trade relations in 2013. Her career has long focused on trade and European Union issues. She has held multiple positions at



the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Industry and Trade. She also previously served as a Head of the EU and NATO Unit in the Office of the President of the Czech Republic.