

International Day of Democracy 2018

EU Leadership for Democracy

18 September 2018

#EU4Democracy #DemocracyDay

Programme

Interpretation will be provided in EN/FR/IT/ES (morning sessions only)

10:00 – 10:10

Video message

Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Statement on EU Democracy support

10:10 – 10:30

Keynote address

Stavros Lambrinidis, European Union Special Representative for Human Rights

*Followed by a short Q&A session moderated by **Andrea Bonanni**, Correspondent, “La Repubblica”*

10:30 – 11:30 Session I: EU Leadership for Democracy – Internal and external dimensions

On the one hand, the EU is an important supporter of democracy worldwide. In view of recent geopolitical shifts, new alliances emerge and foreign and trade policies move towards isolationism. In this changing context, Europe needs to step up on the world stage about supporting democracy and human rights. Can the EU become a world leader in democracy? And how can a leadership based on values become more effective?

On the other hand, the EU is facing a number of democratic deficits within its own borders. Indeed some EU member states have recently introduced laws designed to restrict the rule of law and undermine civil society. This has been accompanied by public vilification of individuals and organisations that are critical of government policies. When journalists are murdered, free speech hampered, and the space for debate on European territory has shrunk, action is necessary.

Speakers:

Edward McMillan-Scott, Former Vice-President of the European Parliament

Veronika Móra, Director, Hungarian Environmental Partnership Foundation

Salam Kawakibi, Director, Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies

Moderator:

Andrea Bonanni, Correspondent, *La Repubblica*

11:30 - 11:45 | Coffee break

11:45 – 13:00 *Session II: Advancing democracy through inclusion*

The rise of new movements in Europe, of populist discourse and the increase in the number of protests around the world are often attributed to the fact that citizens feel that they are not represented by their political system. This may be the case in a democracy or in an authoritarian state where exclusion from decision making or the lack of meaningful alternatives leads to political dissatisfaction. Leadership should make it possible for all citizens to participate. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with *Leaving no one behind* as one of its core objectives, calls on leadership to enable inclusion for sustainable development. This panel will therefore examine the challenges to the effective representation of all citizens both within Europe and externally.

Speakers:

Veronique de Keyser, Former Member of the European Parliament

Mehdi Yehya, Founder, Peace of Art (Lebanon)

Apolmida Haruna Tsammani, Founder, Haly Hope Foundation / Disability and Human Rights Advocate (Nigeria)

Moderator

Shada Islam, Director of Europe and Geopolitics, Friends of Europe

13:00 – 14:00 | Lunch break (a light lunch will be served)

14:00 – 15:00

Workshop 1: Technology and the changing public sphere

Changes in both speed and access to communication have fundamentally altered our public space in recent years, for better and for worse. Social media, now used by over 2 billion people worldwide, has played a key role in this change to public space – initially seen as a vehicle for democratic change it is now facing a crisis of legitimacy and credibility due to the misuse of platforms for hate speech, trolling and political manipulation. Yet, social media continues to be

used as a means to improve democratic participation at the same time as being a vehicle for social cleavage and increased polarisation.

This workshop will look at what can be done to a) improve the positive role social media can play for participation and accountability and b) what can be done to minimise the harmful effects of social media on our democracies.

Speakers:

Sean Evins, Team leader, Politics and Government Outreach in Europe, Middle East & Africa, Facebook

Matt Stempeck, Former Director of Civic Technology at Microsoft, Digital Mobilization Team Leader at Hillary for America

Moderator:

Anu Juvonen, Executive Director, Demo Finland (Political Parties of Finland for Democracy)

Rapporteur:

Rebecca Wagner, Director of External Relations, AEGEE Election Observation

Workshop 2: Political leadership for engagement

With globalisation and increasing inequality, decision-making has gradually shifted away from citizens. When people feel powerless and alienated from politics, voting becomes meaningless to them. The deficit in popular trust in political parties and the political elite has reached alarming levels in many countries worldwide. Leadership needs to become more pro-active to address this growth in distrust. More inclusion, credibility and accountability are needed to counter this trend. Political integrity, fully transparent public funding and adherence to effective codes of conduct could be some ways to achieve this objective.

The objective of this workshop is to identify legal measures, means of political renewal and other tools that can be put in place to improve political engagement and citizens' trust. In view of the 2019 European Parliament elections, this workshop also aims at taking stock of the trends of voter alienation and to discuss ways to re-engage citizens in politics.

Speaker:

Alberto Alemanno, Director, The Good Lobby

Moderator:

Aline Muylaert, Co-Founder and Head of Sales, CitizenLab

Rapporteur:

Kristen Aigro, Board Member, European Youth Forum

15:15 – 16:15

Workshop 3: Advancing democracy through female leadership

Advancing gender equality and women's empowerment at the highest levels of EU decision-making and in business is crucial to end gender inequality. Personal attitudes of women and men and biased perception of leadership qualities still hamper the chances for women to break through the glass ceiling. Supporting networks and structures should be promoted to support the effectiveness of political measures. In the global context, the implementation of these proposals is crucial for the achievement of inclusive democracy and sustainable development.

The study *Dancing Backwards in High Heels* by Virginia García Beaudoux offers a unique glimpse into what it can mean to be an ambitious woman in an environment still dominated by males and shows that, even in countries that have made great progress towards gender equality, there is still a long way to go. This workshop aims at formulating practical solutions to promote sustainable women leadership for democracy.

Speaker:

Virginia García Beaudoux, author of *Dancing Backwards in High Heels*

Moderator:

Corinna Hörst, co-author of the book *Women leading the way in Brussels* and Deputy Director of The German Marshall Fund's Brussels office

Rapporteur:

Cristiana-Luiza Niță, Vice President, Young European Leadership

Workshop 4: State and Future of Democracy

Several voices from politics and academia have recently noted a tendency of autocratisation and a decline of democracy in several countries around the world, particularly in countries that already are democracies. Based on the world's largest dataset on democracy (V-Dem), Anna Lührmann will give an overview of the strengths and weaknesses of democracy today. As democracy and democracy support are increasingly questioned, there is a need to think of ways to react to these changes. This workshop session aims at discussing the possible role of European actors – including in democracy support - and the types of activities that are most adequate to

tackle backsliding of democratic standards, taking into account both academic evidence and practitioners' experience.

Speaker:

Anna Lührmann, Deputy Head of V-Dem Institute, Gothenburg

Moderator:

Sarantis Michalopoulos, Journalist, Euractiv

Rapporteur:

Sonja Afanasjeva, Policy Officer, Young European Federalists

16:15 – 17:00

Closing Plenary

Panel discussion between **Veronique de Keyser & Edward McMillan-Scott**, Former Members of the European Parliament, and workshop rapporteurs **Rebecca Wagner** (AEGEE), **Kristen Aigro** (EYF), **Cristiana-Luiza Niță** (YEL) and **Sonja Afanasjeva** (YEF).

17:30 - 19:30

European Partnership for Democracy (EPD)'s 10th anniversary drinks

Celebrating International Day of Democracy and EPD's 10th anniversary with drinks and snacks at Enò Atelier (Rue de Dublin 42, Brussels), next to Place de Londres.