'REPRESENTATION IN THE AGE OF POPULISM? – IDEAS FOR GLOBAL ACTION'

BRUSSELS | JUNE 18-20, 2018

AGENDA

Objective of the conference

Leaders from politics, society, academia, democracy support, and media from across the world gather to shape a Global Agenda for the Renewal of Representation, a guide aimed at reinvigorating the linkages between people and the diverse forms of representation they have. This Agenda will seek to inspire (i) social and political leaders from all regions of the globe, and (ii) the communities supporting their work.

Venue

Hemicycle of the Belgian Senate (entrance by Leuvenseweg 7 rue de Louvain, 1000 Brussels)

Organizing partners

- International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA)
- Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD)
- Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe|Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR)
- Research Center for the Study of Parties and Democracy of the University of Nottingham and the University of Birmingham (REPRESENT)
- Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD)

Motivation

The conference takes place against a backdrop of new questions on the fitness of the traditional linchpins of democratic representation, political parties and legislatures, to adequately represent people. In both established and developing democracies alike, irrespective of regions, the appeal of these institutions declines as new forms of political action and agendas grow in relevance. Among all, *populism* adopts different organizational forms, agendas and styles as it travels across regions. Distinct varieties of populism feature a range of disruptive ways of connecting, either through rhetoric or action, people and their grievances on the one hand, to the establishment on the other.

Does populism bear the potential demise or renewal of representative democracy? Our understanding of the specifics has been limited by the fact that populism cuts across both geographic, cultural and developmental boundaries. The implications of populism may vary across time and place; depending on whether democracies are old or young, consolidated or not, and on whether economies are affluent or developing.

Populism's disruptions to representative systems are wide ranging and include: the re-politicization of long-held consensus on areas such as welfare, economic management, or regional integration, or the reignition of longstanding grievances such as women's equality, thus redrawing lines of political contestation; the growth of participation outside party membership, as people search and try out alternative organizational vehicles for political influence, such as movements, protest and other new

forms of political organizing; the challenges of polarization to compromise and coalition formation within legislatures; cultural and value changes in societies; the realignment of political allegiances within electorates, volatility and renewal of party systems; the transformation of public debates, as news coverage pushes new frontiers and meets ever-evolving forms of social media on digital platforms; the reshaping of the traditional deliberation and oversight roles by legislatures, and other democratic accountability measures; among others.

All these disruptions are difficult to navigate for social and political leaders, as much as they are for different communities of practice from the social sciences, democracy assistance, or the media. Part of the complexity to deal with populism is because of 'feedback' mechanisms at play: populism is in part a product of these changes, but it also reinforces them and drives them further. Conference participants will engage in a dialogue to reflect on past and current opportunities and challenges to representation, as they draw lessons to inspire future action for its renewal.

Contribution to the renewal of representation

The conference offers an opportunity for a frank dialogue and knowledge sharing across disciplines, political creeds and geographical regions. We invite participants to propose elements for a Global Agenda for the Renewal of Representation. The agenda shall serve as guidance to leaders from politics and society, and the communities working to support them to reactivate the linkages between people on the one hand, and both old and new representation forms on the other. The agenda's focus is on tackling the changing nature of political representation through the identification of innovative actions.

A wide range of relevant voices from both traditional and new political parties and social movements from all sides, as well as media, research, and democracy assistance organizations. will propose actionable answers to pressing questions that include: Has the public become disconnected from traditional parties and legislatures, or are people simply connecting to them in different ways? Is this the end of parties? What are the implications for established democracies and those countries on the brink of or early moments of democratic transition? How can organizations that advance democracy by assisting political parties respond to the challenges of populism and new modes of political participation? What role has technology and social media played in fostering populism, and what role might they play in the renewal of representation?

Conference participants are invited to inspire new thinking to embrace the opportunities created by populism and confront its challenges. By facilitating greater convergence between populism research and action, we hope to affect the lives of millions of citizens around the world. These benefits will flow to the citizens of both old and new democracies, including – but not limited to – those who are direct beneficiaries of the EUR 8bn spent on democracy assistance each year.

Structure of the conference

The conference follows a progressive sequence starting from reflections on the past and present of representation, to forward-looking discussions on actions to renew representation. The conference is thus organized into **three clusters**. The first cluster intends to build an understanding of populism, its drivers and the opportunities and challenges it poses. The second cluster deals with the implications of these challenges for the future of the two traditional linchpins of representation: political parties and

legislatures. The final cluster is forward-looking, as it is geared towards developing an agenda to inspire the action of current and future leaders in politics and society, and the organizations who work in their support.

Each cluster consists of two **lightning talks,** one **panel discussion** -both held in plenaries- and a minimum of four parallel **working sessions**. Lightning talks shall present a position on the proposed theme and set the stage for the ensuing panel discussions and working sessions. Panel discussions will provide space for debate and general reflection on the overarching cluster topics. The working sessions will allow for more focused discussions on four thematic workstreams: (i) forms of participation and representation; (ii) drivers of populism; (iii) the future of political parties and legislatures; and (iv) media and information. Thus, participants shall be able to focus on up to three workstreams throughout the conference.

The Global Agenda for the Renewal of Representation

The organizers will nominate twelve rapporteurs to take on the formulation of the Global Agenda for the Renewal of Representation. Their work will be strictly based on the conference proceedings, reflecting the diversity of political views, disciplines and fields of work rather than their own. At the conference, the rapporteurs shall present (i) a synthesis of the most relevant debates taking place in the conference; (ii) the most relevant conclusions; and (iii) the most relevant ideas for action. A plenary debate will follow.

The Global Agenda for the Renewal of Representation in full shall be circulated among participants willing to consider their endorsements within 30 days after the conference. Following a period for endorsements, the Global Agenda will be published online and in print. The online version will remain open for further endorsements by interested organizations and individuals.

Conference and working session rapporteurs will elaborate two complementary products:

- A report of the conference proceedings, which will be offered for publication to relevant academic or media outlets.
- A short synthesis of the Global Agenda in the form of an op-ed will be offered for publication to a pool of leading news media outlets in different languages and from all participating regions.

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AGENDA OVERVIEW

CLUSTER 1: Global and Historical Perspectives on Populism
Venue: Hemicycle

Lightning talks: Understanding populism and its drivers
Panel discussion: Is Populism a Threat or an Opportunity? Regional visions

Parallel Working Sessions:

Session 1.1	Session 1.2	Session 1.3	Session 1.4
Threats and opportunities posed by varieties of populism across regions since the 1980s. Convener: Westminster Foundation for Democracy	Deepening divisions and democracy's discontents. The cultural origins of populism Convener:Westminster Foundation for Democracy	Lessons from research for parties, legislatures and democracy support on strategies to 'conquer' populism Convener: REPRESENT	Media matter: The role of information and media integrity in the rise of populism Convener: National Democratic Institute
Venue: Room D	Venue: Room K	Venue: Room E	Venue: Room M

CLUSTER 2: The evolving nature of representation
Venue: Hemicycle

Lightning talks: Global Perspectives on Populism and Evolving Nature of Representation
Panel discussion: The Changing Face of Representation. Regional Visions

Parallel Working Sessions:

Session 2.1	Session 2.2	Session 2.3	session 2.4
The power and limits of protest: lessons from the women's movement Convener: OSCE ODIHR	More than elections: politicians' ongoing accountability to citizens Convener: Transparency International	Re-engaging with the people: How parties outside the EU deal with populist competitors Convener: Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy	Parties, movements and tech: Bridging the gap Convener: International Republic Institute
Venue: Room D	Venue: Room K	Venue: Room E	Venue: Room M

CLUSTER 3: The future of political representation
Venue: Hemicycle

Lightning talks: Global Perspectives on the Influence of New Modes of Interest Representation
Panel discussion: Action for the Renewal of Political Representation. Regional Visions

Parallel Working Sessions:

Session 3.1	Session 3.2	Session 3.3	Session 3.4
Innovation and representation: including alternative forms of citizen engagement in politics Convener: International IDEA	The future of populism: is 'fixing' populism by changing the rules the answer? Convener: OSCE ODIHR	EU Democracy Assistance as a countermeasure for populism Convener: European Partnership for Democracy	Saving democracy from tech, or saving democracy with tech? Conveners: National Democratic Institute and International IDEA
Venue: Room D	Venue: Room K	Venue: Room E	Venue: Room M

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DETAILED AGENDA

Day 1 (18 June 2018)

16:30-17:00	**Arrival and registration of participants**
17:00-18:15	**Opening session: The rise of populism and the future of democracy**

Venue: Hemicycle

Keynote speakers:

Christine Defraigne, Chair of the Belgian Senate

Enrico Letta, former Prime Minister of Italy

Rafael Correa, former President of Ecuador

18:15-19:30   **Reception**

Day 2 (19 June 2018)

08.30 – 09.00   **Arrival and registration of participants**

09.00 – 09:15   **Welcome and introduction**

Venue: Hemicycle

Christine Defraigne, Chair of the Belgian Senate

09:15 – 09:45   **Towards the Global Agenda for Action for the Renewal of Representation**

Venue: Hemicycle

The Global Agenda for Action for the Renewal of Representation

Yves Leterme, Secretary-General, International IDEA and former Prime Minister of Belgium

Workstream 1: Forms of Popular Representation and Participation– Introduction

Simone Filippini, Executive Director, Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy

Workstream 2: Drivers of Populism –Introduction

Katarzyna Gardapkhadze, First Deputy Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

Workstream 3: The Future of Political Parties and Legislatures –Introduction

Emilie-Louise Purdie, Westminster Foundation for Democracy

Workstream 4: Media, Technology and Representation - Introduction

Nic Cheeseman, Co-Director REPRESENT: Research Centre for the Study of Parties and Democracy

Plenary 1: Global and Historical Perspectives on Populism

Venue: Hemicycle

09:45 – 10:25	**Lightning talks: Understanding Populism and its Drivers**

This introductory session sets the stage for discussions. It provides an overview of different understandings of populism today, and the variety of forms it has adopted at different historical periods and regions.

Cas Mudde, Associate Professor in the School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Georgia; Researcher in the Center for Research on Extremism at the University of Oslo)

Chantal Delsol, French philosopher, Le Figaro columnist, author of Populisme: Les demeurés de l'Histoire

10.25- 11.15	**Panel Discussion: Is Populism a Threat or an Opportunity?**

In light of the historical and contextual factors driving the populism, this session explores whether the increase in populism represents an opportunity or a threat to representation. The panel discussion will examine the growing relevance of populist forms of political leadership and mobilization, and how the phenomenon has unfold all over the world.

Panellist 1: TBC

Panellist 2: Paikisothy Saravanamuttu, Founder and Executive Director, Center for Policy Alternatives, Sri Lanka

Panellist 3: Delia Ferreira, Chair, Transparency International

11.15 - 11.30	**Coffee Break** *(Peristyle)*
11.30 - 13.00	**Parallel working sessions – Cluster 1**
13.00- 14.00	**Lunch**

Plenary 2: The changing face of representation

Venue: Hemicycle

14.00-14.30   **Lightning talks: Adaptation to the evolving nature of representation**

This session addresses one of the most pressing questions of our time: How had, or would, political parties and legislatures have to transform to remain relevant? How have new political movements success in adapting to the changing face of representation?

Lightning talk 1: TBC

Lightning talk 2: Dr Katalin Cseh, Momentum movement Hungary

14:30 – 15:30   **Panel Discussion: Visions from the regions. The changing face of representation**

This session will examine how politics have transformed and how changes in the political landscape are bringing new actors and methods to the table. The panellist will debate about the changing face of representation from their political experience, and answer some of the following questions: what does political leadership landscape in different parts of the world currently look like, and how will the 'face of representation' change (e.g. thanks or due to populist movements) ? Can we expect more or less female leaders/faces in politics in different regions of the world? Does populism open or rather further close doors for traditionally excluded or marginalized groups in society? How do (often) leaderless movements change the traditional notion of a chosen/elected leader? Who will be representing 'the people' in the future, and at what level?

Panellist 1: Kizza Besigye (Opposition leader, Uganda)

Panellist 2: Emilie-Louise Purdie (Assistant National Secretary, Scottish National Party, United Kingdom)

Panellist 3: Nicolas Westcott (Director, Royal African Society)

15.30-16.00   **Coffee Break** *(Peristyle)*

16.00-17.30   **Parallel working sessions – Cluster 2**

17:30 - 18:00   **Progress so far**
                      Venue: Hemicycle

Workstream 1 – Forms of Popular Participation and Representation

Workstream 2 – Drivers of populism

Workstream 3 - The Future of Political Parties and Legislatures

Workstream 4 – Media, Technology and Representation

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Day 3 (20 June 2018)

08:30 - 09:00   **Arrival**

Plenary 3: The Future of Political Representation

> **Venue: Hemicycle**

09.00 - 09.30   **Lightning talks: The future of Political Representation**

> The talks will explore the potential and limitations of new modes of political representation. The focus here will be on recommended actions for improving and innovating political representation, especially from the perspective of *inclusion and reducing inequalities.*
>
> *Lightning talk 1 - Richard Youngs, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*
>
> *Lightning talk 2: Athena Tong, Demosistō Hong Kong*

09:30-10:30   **Panel discussion : Action for the Renewal of Political Representation – Visions from the regions**

> This forward looking panel will offer visions for the renewal of the linkages between political parties, legislatures, new modes of political organizing and people, as well as their influence and their implications for democracy. Leaders representing different political actors, and forms of citizen engagement from different regions will debate whether their efforts are called to provide additional channels of political participation or to replace existing ones.
>
> *Panellist 1: John Paul Mwirigi, Member of the National Assembly, Independent, Kenya*
>
> *Panellist 2: Siegfired Muresan, Member of the European Parliament, Mișcarea Populară Party, European People's Party Group*
>
> *Panellist 3: Myroslava Gongadze, VOA Ukraine*

10:30 - 11.00   **Coffee Break** *(Pericycle)*

11.00 - 12.30   **Parallel working sessions – Cluster 3**

12: 30 – 13:30   **Lunch**

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13.30 – 15.30   **Closing plenary: A Global Agenda for the Renewal of Representation**

Venue: Hemicycle

Rapporteurs present a preliminary summary of plenary and working session proceedings, followed by a general debate.

Speaker 1: Heidi Hautala, Vice President, European Parliament

Speaker 2: Michelle Bachelet (TBC)