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10th Swiss Summer School in Democracy Studies Democratic Backsliding

KEYNOTE LECTURE
09 Sept. 2024

Democracy under Threat: How Education Can Save It

14.30h University of Zurich Room KOL E 18

Prof. Anja Neundorf U. of Glasgow
moderated by Prof. Natasha Wunsch U. of Fribourg

Which role does education play in strengthening democratic attitudes among ordinary citizens?

This keynote lecture draws on two recent studies exploring how education may help shape citizens' support for democracy. First, it shows that democratic education has a lasting positive impact on citizens' support for democracy, while education content in autocracies affects citizens' democratic values less. Second, it addresses the role of adult civic education via an online experiment conducted in 33 countries worldwide. The results show that short videos promoting the virtues of democracy positively affect support for democracy and that effects can still be detected after two weeks. Interestingly, civic education works in a more universal way than previously assumed, across very different countries and individuals, with the results suggesting that online civic education interventions can be generally effective in promoting democratic citizenship.

