Researching Citizenship & Democracy in Europe

4th DemocracyNet Workshop
Researching Citizenship and Democracy in Europe
Friday 19th - Saturday 20th September 2014
Zurich, Switzerland

Workshop overview

Location

NCCR Democracy
Affolternstrasse 56
CH-8050 Zurich
Room: E003

Programme

Friday, 19th September 2014

12:30-13:15 Opening: getting to know DemocracyNet.eu and the workshop participants

13.15-13.45 Getting Started: Aims & Interests for Collaboration

14:00-18:00 Research Presentations: participants' research projects & research paper

20:00- Workshop Dinner

Saturday, 20th September 2014

9:00-10.30 Presentation of projects for collaboration

11:00-12:30 Working Session I: DemocracyNet.eu project mapping

14:00 – 16:00 Working Session II: DemocracyNet.eu project planning

16:30-17:00 Evaluation and end of the meeting

Contact

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Workshop Timetable

Friday, 19th September 2014

12:30 - 13:15	Opening: Getting to know DemocracyNet.eu and the workshop participants
13:15 -13:45	Getting Started: Aims & Interests for Collaboration
14:00 - 18:00	Research Presentations: participants' research projects & research paper (max 15' presentation for each paper, then discussion)

Part I: 14:15 – 15:15	Arndt Leininger & Lea Heyne	*How representative are referendums?*
	Karima Bousbah	*To Vote or to Protest?*
Part II: 15.30 – 16.30	Mónica Ferrin	*Satisfaction with democracy: An empirical asessment*
	Sarah Perry	*Democracy Monitoring Project and Beyond – Satisfaction with life in the community*
Part III: 16:45 - 17.45	Antoinette Scherz	*Political autonomy: collective self-determination or individual right?*
	Lukas Peter	*Democracy and the Commons – dissertation outline*
20:00-		Workshop Dinner

Saturday, 20th September 2014

09:00 - 10.30	Presentation of projects for collaboration	
	Rebecca Welge, Participants	Existing Ideas & projects to collaborate
11:00 - 12:30	Working Session I: DemocracyNet.eu project mapping	
	Monica Ferrin, Participants	Funding opportunities & project mapping
14:00 – 16:00	Working Session II: DemocracyNet.eu project planning	
	Participants	Project Groups & future planning
16:30 - 17:00	Evaluation and end of the meeting	

Research Presentations

Arndt Leininger (Hertie School of Governance) & Lea Heyne (University of Zurich):
How representative are referendums?

Direct democracy allows citizens to reverse decisions made by legislatures and even initiate new laws that legislatures are unwilling to pass, thereby, as its proponents argue, making representative democracy more representative. Yet, as turnout in referendums is lower than in parliamentary elections (40.8% between 1981 and 1999 as compared to 45.8% in national elections in Switzerland) and skewed towards citizens of high socio-economic status, some critics of direct democracy argue that referendum outcomes are not representative of the preferences of the population at large. Whether low and skewed turnout in referendums leads to unrepresentative outcomes is an important question regarding the normative desirability of direct democracy. As intuitive as this idea might be, it as of yet lacks empirical evidence. We test the representativeness of referendum outcomes using a compilation of post-referendum surveys encompassing 156 national referendums held in Switzerland from 1981 to 1999. Comparing opinion majorities in the representative suveys against actual referendum outcomes wend that out of the 156 referendums, the outcome of 11 (7.43%) did not match the majority opinion among allcitizens as obtained from the survey data and did not match with majority opinion among non-voters in 22 (14.86%) of referendums. We also investigate how often the above mismatches would not have occurred under a pure representative democracy by checking whether the government's position matches the sample majorities' position. Following the presentation of our initial results, we discuss ideas for further analyses.

Karima Bousbah (University of Zurich):
To Vote or to Protest? Young Citizens' Unequal Participation and Descriptive Representation

The paper focuses on the relationship between descriptive representation and young citizens' political participation repertoire. The paper investigates its role in shaping the trade-off between institutional - voting - and non-institutional - protest - forms of participation. Building on the contextual cues theory, the empowerment theory and the political protest literature, the paper argues that by tackling political alienation, descriptive representation encourages young citizens to choose institutional over non-institutional forms of political participation. Combining individual level survey data (ESS) with an original dataset on the level of representation among candidates and MPs, the multilevel multinomial analysis of the political repertoire in 20 European countries supports the posited hypothesis.

Mónica Ferrin (University of Zurich):
Satisfaction with Democracy: An Empirical Assessment

One of the most commonly used indicators of political support is 'satisfaction with democracy' (SWD). However, the use of this indicator is not uncontroversial, and it has been strongly criticized in past years. This paper is an attempt to taken on previous criticisms against the SWD-question and evaluate whether these hold empirically. It undertakes this task by means of Round 6 of the European Social Survey, which allow for a more precise account of this disputed measure**.**

Sarah Perry (University of Mannheim):
Democracy Monitoring Project and Beyond – Satisfaction with Life in the Community

Identification with the political community represents the most fundamental form of political support: It comes along with a general disposition to cooperate with one another. While effective

and democratic political performance are both relevant, the focus on nation states, democratic performance is usually considered to be most important for political support. Within federalist democracies, however, multiple political communities exist. They differ in their extensiveness, distance and level of abstractness. Due to political division of labor in federalist systems they also differ in their political meaning for people's lives. Against this background it is questionable that democratic performance is always playing a key role in generating and sustaining political support. It is rather plausible that the relevance of democratic and effective political performance varies with the political meaning the political communities have for people's lives. Accordingly, in my dissertation project I intend to pursue the research question why people identify with their political community.

Antoinette Scherz (University of Frankfurt):
Political autonomy: collective self-determination or individual right?

The of international legitimacy has become an issue of growing importance as states interact with each other more closely and through different forms of organisations and treaties. Therefore, political theory needs to address the question of legitimacy also from an international perspective. In order to understand the legitimacy of an international order (and its organisations) that is largely based on states, a critical assessment of the normative status of peoples as the relevant actors in state institutions is necessary. This paper addresses two questions basic for this issue: first, when does a government represent a people? Or in other words, what is the relationship between peoples and democratic government? Second, is why the independence of peoples has intrinsic moral value? Or to put the question differently, what is the people's autonomy based on, a *collective right to self-determination* or an *individual right to political autonomy?* I will suggest a concept of peoples as having normative value based on their democratic structure and the promotion of individual rights and interests. Moreover, I propose a Kantian approach of self-determination based on individual, political autonomy. This approach does not only give reason for the restriction of political autonomy through the compatibility with the freedom of all others but also puts emphasis on the relationship between peoples.

Lukas Peter (University of Zurich):
Democracy and the Commons: An Analysis of Democratic Freedom in the Classical Liberal and (Neo)Marxist Discourses on the Commons (Concept of dissertation project)

Since the finance crisis of 2007/8, much discontent with both the present economic system of capitalism and the existing structures of democratic nation states has been expressed. As an answer to these problems, the idea of the commons has become quite popular as an alternative "beyond market failure and government regulation" (Elinor Ostrom). I will argue that both the "classical liberal" and the "(Neo)Marxist" discourses on the commons actually represent two sides of the same coin that spins around two central problems of democratic freedom: centralized state hierarchy and coercive and detrimental market mechanisms. Furthermore, I will argue that the concept of the commons can lead to a paradigm shift in our understanding of democratic freedom, by suggesting that the access to common property is an important, or even necessary, precondition for strengthening and realizing collective freedom.

Working Sessions

Since its establishment in 2011, the group has pursued particularly two aims: first, to foster collaboration among young scholars and, second, across disciplines and, second, to engage in knowledge transfer activities. The working sessions provide space to discuss previous and ongoing project collaborations. Several proposals for future collaborations have been discusses, e.g. to work towards a joint publication output, to organize a small conference, to apply for a medium-scale research grant, to engage in knowledge transfer of academic outputs into society. We aim at financing future activities by applying for appropriate funding instruments such as the SNF funding instrument International Exploratory Workshops. The group of workshop participants was made up of young researchers from diverse disciplines, all dedicated to analysing key questions of democratic legitimacy, such as norms and functioning of democratic citizenship. The participants agreed to centre the next activities particularly on two topics: *Normative and empirical research on direct democracy* and *Norms for citizenship and democratic institutions to support them*. The group intends to realize panels for international conferences and to organize internal and external workshops related to these topics. More information about the detailed planning is available upon request.

Workshop participants 19-20 September 2014

	Name	University/Affiliation	Position
1	Rebecca Welge	University of Zurich/ NCCR Democracy	PostDoc
2	Lea Heyne	University of Zurich/ NCCR Democracy	PhD candidate
3	Karima Bousbah	University of Zurich/ NCCR Democracy	PhD candidate
4	Alice el-Wakil	University of Zurich/ NCCR Democracy	PhD candidate
5	Mónica Ferrin	UZH, Centre for Ethics	PostDoc
6	Sarah Perry	University of Mannheim	PhD candidate
7	Arndt Leininger	Hertie School of Governance	PhD candidate
8	Antoinette Scherz	University of Frankfurt	PostDoc
9	Lukas Peter	University of Zurich/ NCCR Democracy	PhD candidate