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Rethinking democracy in today's Europe

FINAL CONFERENCE AGENDA

05 | 02 | 26

Press Club Brussels Europe
Rue Froissart 95, 1040 Brussels

TEPSA trans-european policy studies association

ActEU

Funded by the European Union

09:30 **Registrations**

10:00 - 10:10 **Welcoming remarks**

- **Michael Kaeding,** Professor and ActEU Coordinator, University of Duisburg-Essen

10:15 - 10:45 **What kind of democracy do we need in an unstable world?**

- **Keynote speech moderated by Ann-Kathrin Reinl,** Research Fellow, GESIS Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences & ActEU Scientific Advisor

10:45 - 11:15 **Coffee break**

11:15 - 12:15 **Live polling - Can we still trust democracy?**

- **Sofie Marien,** Associate Professor, KU Leuven & ActEU Scientific Advisor
- **Anthony Zacharzewski**, President, Democratic Society
- **Valerie Frey**, Head of Division, Governance Indicators and Performance, OECD
- **Gaëtane Ricard-Nihoul**, Head of Unit, Public Opinion & Citizens Engagement Unit, Directorate-General for Communication, European Commission

Moderated by: **Alex Hartland**, Postdoctoral Researcher, University of Saarland

12:15 - 13:30 **Lunch break**

13:30 - 14:45 **"Us" vs. "them"? Culture wars and polarisation in our everyday life**

- **Zoe Lefkofridi,** Professor, University of Salzburg
- **Meera Selva,** Chief Executive, Internews Europe
- **Nourhene Mahmoudi,** Policy and Advocacy Advisor, European Network Against Racism
- **Harry Panagopulos**, Policy Officer, European Commission, Secretariat General – Citizens, Equality, Democracy and Rule of Law

Moderated by: **Méabh McMahon**, Chief Anchor, Euronews

14:45 - 15:00 **Short break**

15:00 - 16:00 **Who gets heard? Making voices count in European democracies**

- **Manuel Müller**, Senior Research Fellow, Finnish Institute of International Affairs & ActEU Scientific Advisor
- **Catarina Faria**, Press and Communications Adviser, Party of European Socialists (PES)
- **Eftichia Teperoglou**, Associate Professor, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
- **Igor Miskulin**, Desk Officer, DG External Policies, Enlargement, Western Europe and Northern Cooperation Unit, European Parliament

Moderated by: **Shada Islam**, Founder and Managing Director, New Horizons Project

16:00 - 16:30 **Coffee break**

16:30 - 17:30 **Critical reflections - From protests to power: what makes participation matter?**

- **Maija Setälä**, Professor, University of Turku & ActEU Scientific Advisor
- **Mariam Kaulashvili-Southwell**, Co-Founder, Daitove
- **Christian Beck**, Accredited assistant to Daniel Freund (Greens), European Parliament

Moderated by: **Louisa Parks**, Full Professor in Political Sociology, University of Trento

17:30 - 17:45 **Concluding remarks**

- **Daniela Braun,** Professor & ActEU Scientific Lead, Saarland University

17:45 **Reception**

ABOUT ActEU

How can we conceptualize and empirically measure political trust and legitimacy beyond the usual survey question "How much trust do you have in the parliament?"? Does the multi-level nature of European representative democracies require an identical level of citizen support at the regional, national and EU level? ActEU aimed at findings answers to these questions and more by pursuing two overarching goals: First, in phase 1, we mapped and investigated persistent problems of declining trust, legitimacy and representation in Europe with a particular attention to the polarization of societies and the EU´s multi-level structure. Knowledge gained from phase 1 flowed directly into the development of a toolbox of remedial actions characterizing phase 2, which crafted tailor-made toolkits for political and civil society actors, school teachers and university lecturers to deal with issues of declining political trust in representative democracies in flux and counteract a further decrease. We developed context-sensitive solutions for all polity levels and type of polarizing policy field (migration, environment, gender).

ABOUT TEPSA

The Trans-European Policy Studies Association (TEPSA) was established in 1974 as the first transnational research network in the field of EU affairs. It comprises leading research institutes throughout Europe, with an office in Brussels. Its aim is to provide high-quality research on European integration to stimulate discussion on policies and political options for Europe. This is achieved by the interaction between the European and national institutions as well as the academic and research community. TEPSA is active on a wide range of research topics, focusing on differentiated integration, the EU's external relations, democratic participation and citizens' engagement.