

ANTHOLOGY
— ON —
DEMOCRATIC
INNOVATION

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I. WHAT WE AIMED FOR

THE INNOCRACY CONFERENCE AS A MULTI-PERSPECTIVE EXPERIMENT

WHERE WE COME FROM

Democratic systems are in a phase of systemic transition: from the post-war understanding of what democracy is - and how it works - towards a different, deeper democracy. In regards to the numerous challenges democracies faces, we need to question how to make democracies more resilient and to explore what the next steps towards a new form of democracy could be.

It seems unlikely that today's challenges, such as the destruction of our ecosystem or structural inequality, can be solved with the paradigms, structures and processes that helped produce them. Democratic systems need to be able to shape an increasingly complex world and respond to the socio-economic, cultural, technological, and ecological transformation processes that societies are going through.

Public discourse about the future of democracy often solely focuses on democratic reforms in order to improve existing structures and processes within the parameters of post-war democracy. Many ideas and experiments thus aim at improving the "status quo of politics". From citizens' assemblies to digital

tools for deliberation and participation, there is an abundance of ideas and tools that could help update our democratic systems.

In his book "Realizing Democracy", Harvard scholar Alberto Mangabeira Unger adds a new element to this "update" with his idea of radical reform: In his words, "reform is radical when it addresses and changes the basic arrangements of a society; its formative structure of its institutions and enacted beliefs; it is reform because it deals with one discrete part of this structure at a time." According to Unger, societies must work on both the radical and incremental level of political reform. In addition to changes at policy level, societies must be willing to also reflect on what would make a difference and open up to a more fundamental perspective and self-reflection on why democracy is needed, and how its structures can be rebuild within the boundaries of the ecosystem.

WHAT WE STRIVE FOR

We believe that both the systemic and a more incremental perspective on the future of democracy are necessary to drive meaningful and constructive change. Existential challenges will not be solved by only improving existing processes, and systemic change will not be delivered if we fail to push through incremental reforms.

During the “Innocracy - Conference on Democratic Innovation” on 28 November 2017, we brought together representatives from both the transformative and the incremental “democratic innovation schools”. Hosting over 120 participants and 26 speakers from 12 countries, our objective was to create a space

for exchange between an international community and participants from German politics, civil society and media. With the conference, we wanted to incentivise new networks and introduce a variety of international best practices into the German discourse on democratic innovation.

We offered a stage to noteworthy ideas that would change paradigms (such as the “SEED initiative - Solutions for the Environment, Economy and Democracy”), rewrite ground rules of democracy (such as the “Systemic Konsensing Principle”), as well ideas that would improve existing processes (such as the “Apptivism” digital democracy project).



INNOCRACY

CONFERENCE ON DEMOCRATIC INNOVATION

28 NOVEMBER 2017 | BETAHAUS BERLIN

We embedded those perspectives in a wider transformational frame thanks to our keynote speaker Maja Göpel of the German Advisory Council on Global Change (WBGU), who stressed the existential importance of considering the broader systemic boundaries, and especially making the market more democratic.

We thus successfully raised awareness for certain perspectives and hope that the networks created will transgress the boundaries between those who aim to rebuild a new kind of democracy, and those who try to improve the one we have.

The Anthology on Democratic Innovation presents a selection of the projects and ideas discussed during the Conference. It gives decision-makers, academia, journalists and civil society a glimpse into the vast array of ideas that are “already out there” in order to improve liberal democracies and make them fit for the 21st century.

For us, the day at the Innocracy Conference and the Anthology is merely the start of a broader and deeper dialogue we will carry on with the Democracy Lab. We hope you will

come along on this journey. We particularly thank the session hosts and speakers who contributed to this conference and are featured in this publication.

Enjoy the read!

The Democracy Lab team

Laura-Kristine Krause, Head

Hanno Burmester, Strategic Lead

Sophie Pornschlegel, Project Manager

II. BEYOND POST-WAR DEMOCRACY

APPROACHES FOR A NEW POLITICAL FRAME

In this first section, we would like to present ideas and projects that reflect on our liberal democracies in a broader sense. Rather than organising democratic innovators, proposing workshops or digital tools, the following section aims at rethinking democracy beyond the traditional thought framework. Starting with the “SEED initiative”, we explore the relationship between the political system and the broader anthropocene, as the economy, environment and democracy are inextricably linked together. Secondly, a collective of writers analyses the future for digital democracy

and in what way digitisation can promote citizens’ personal growth and a new kind of politics, whilst “the Wise Democracy Project” explores how we can create a shared language to guarantee the creation of collectively smart policies. The last two projects in this section also have systemic relevance for our democracy: The first initiative proposes an alternative to the majority principle governing our democracies for the past centuries, whilst the second proposes a new “working mode” and organisational structure for parties that is more citizen-centered and participatory.

1. SOLUTIONS FOR ENVIRONMENT, ECONOMY & DEMOCRACY

SEED Initiative, Lance Bennett | USA

2. THE POTENTIAL OF DIGITISATION AND INNER WORK FOR A NEW POLITICS

Keks Ackerman | Germany

3. ENSURING COLLECTIVELY SMART POLICIES

The Wise Democracy Project, Andy Paice | UK

4. A NEW PRINCIPLE FOR DEMOCRATIC VOTING

Adela Mahling and Erich Visotschnig | Germany & Austria

5. NETWORK PARTIES AND THE NEW PARADIGM OF CITIZEN-CENTERED POLITICS

Katarzyna Anna Klimowicz | Poland

① SOLUTIONS FOR ENVIRONMENT, ECONOMY & DEMOCRACY

SEED INITIATIVE, LANCE BENNETT | USA



The problem. Fundamental needs of growing numbers of people on the planet are threatened by a set of systemic problems: overconsumption and related waste, dependence on fossil fuels, economic policies that produce unsustainable growth and inequality, and diminished democratic control over the economy and environment. The thousands of groups tackling different parts of these problems are fragmented due to lack of broadly shared ideas, solutions, and political strategies. As a result most citizen activism seldom meets the nature or scale of the challenges. Many good answers to the crises in human systems already exist, but networks engaged with specific issues and localised projects often struggle to incorporate broader narratives in their work.

The idea. Solutions for Environment, Economy & Democracy (SEED) is an alternative to the global think tank network that spread policies inspired by the neoliberal ideology so effectively around the world in the last half century. As a distributed thought and action network, SEED operates in the following areas: 1) collaborations between SEED team members and diverse civil society organisations, resulting in 2) the production of short papers and social memes about economic, environmental, and democratic systems that are fair, representative, and sustainable, 3) spreading these ideas to better connect networks in different issue sectors, 4) weaving stronger ties among fragmented organisations currently working in areas such as sustainable economics, the future of work, measures of social well being, environmental justice, and democratic renewal.

The process. With 14 members on the steering committee, and over 50 affiliates representing dozens of organisations working towards change, SEED creates diverse organisational partnerships and forges a distributed thought network. This network weaving process includes:

- Curating ideas from diverse networks
- Creating interactive content to bridge networks: monitoring idea flows in civil society and the media
- Developing political strategies to facilitate change
- Mapping network development
- Assessing effectiveness

SEED representatives use this idea framework and these collaboration exercises to host workshops and online dialogues with partners currently isolated by issue categories, rhetoric, geography, or political focus. Strategic partnerships based on shared ideas continue to develop through online tools that facilitate feedback, content distribution, and action

planning. The outcomes translate systems thinking into simple ideas that inspire individuals, organisations, parties, and policy makers to find common cause in these critical times.

Impact. When anti-democratic forces are on the rise, and neoliberal systems remain in power despite their unpopularity, developing common ideas and political strategies benefits everyone working for change. Sharing common visions based on simple, inspiring ideas can build more stable and effective popular movements that press for better representation of the public interest and the future of life on this planet.

Founders. The Center for Communication & Civic Engagement, University of Washington, Seattle USA; the School of Media and Information, University of Siegen, Germany; The International Institute for Socio-Informatics, Bonn, Germany.

More information: <http://seed.uw.edu>

LANCE BENNETT

INITIATOR | SEED INITIATIVE, UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON, USA



Lance Bennett is Professor of Political Science and Communication at University of Washington, Seattle, and Humboldt Research Fellow at the Freie Universität Berlin. His current work is focused on the rise of anti-democratic movements and parties, and the reasons why progressive movements have been less able to translate their high levels of activism into political party and electoral success. He is one of the founders of the SEED project, exploring Solutions for Environment, Economy, and Democracy. The goal is to develop communication logics that bridge diverse political networks with simple ideas that work better for people and the planet.

② THE POTENTIAL OF DIGITISATION AND INNER WORK FOR A NEW POLITICS

KEKS ACKERMAN, GERMANY

We are living in a time of tectonic shifts. Current change is rapid and exponential, transforming not only our economies, material culture and communication style, but human subjectivities and the awareness we have of the world and ourselves, our consciousness, in a much broader way.

In the 16th century, the printing press paved the way for the Reformation, the scientific revolution and the Enlightenment. Today, digital technologies open up yet another era, which has been called, among others, the Second Machine Age or Metamodernism. What kinds of maps are useful in this time of transition? What are the implications for politics? How can the political system be transformed in such a way that we can adequately deal with our current environmental, social and ethical challenges and create the kind of world we want to live in?

Two theses can potentially be the answer for this age of “New Politics”:

1. Digital dynamics point the way to a new operating system (OS) for society

Digital technologies have a number of inherent characteristics, which can stimulate the creation of new human skills and capacities,

providing us with a new level of thinking needed to solve the significant challenges of our day. “New Politics” will have to take these dynamics into account and use them proactively.

These digital dynamics include the following factors:

- Decentralisation
- Sharing/Collaboration
- Constant beta
- Open/Access
- Tracking and Remixing
- Cognifying /Artificial Intelligence
- Global Awareness

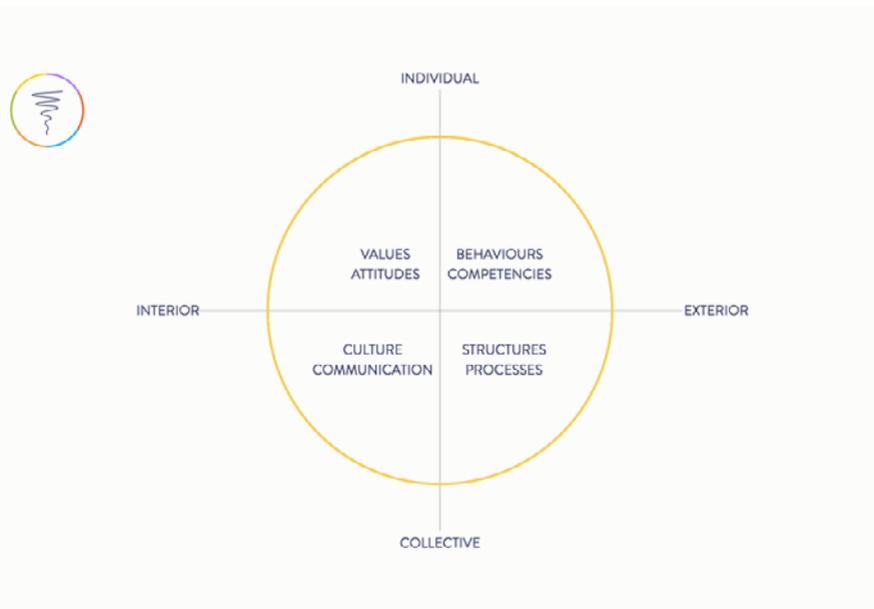
The interplay of these elements creates complexity. Dealing with this complexity opens up a potential which we can use. This includes the potential for self-organisation, co-creation, multi-perspectivity, collective intelligence, transparency and many more. Of course, this is the progressive, pro-social potential of digitisation. In reality, we see that technology is often used to reinforce the status quo, further specific interests, or even impose a repressive agenda. But if we are aware of the positive potential, we can design impactful projects and policies.

When we look at the political innovation space today – and there has been a huge increase in political entrepreneurship and innovation in the last two years – we see that exactly this potential is being tapped into. Most of the innovations in this (constantly updated) list of Tech for Democracy by the betterplace lab, make use of the aforementioned digital characteristics. They are open (for example, Open Parliament), transparent (e-democracia in Brazil or Yogera in Uganda), and collaborative (check out the crowdsourcing of the Icelandic constitution or the Citizen Labs in over 35 countries). Others, like Diskutier mit mir, encourage multiperspectivity or represent the spirit of constant beta (such as the Finish Place to Experiment).

2. Inner work, self and meta-reflection as core competencies for a new OS

While providing us with an exciting potential, digitisation and the accompanied pace and scope of change is exerting a huge pressure on every one of us. In order to adequately deal with the increasing complexity we need to grow as human beings. A “New Politics” has the duty to help citizens in this growth process.

Using a developmental model taken from the American integral philosopher Ken Wilber, we see that every phenomenon has four dimensions: exterior individual, interior individual, exterior collective and interior collective:



Graphic by Keks Ackerman, licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0, based on Ken Wilber’s AQAL

If change occurs in only one of the quadrants, it is often not sustainable, inclusive and healthy. But as a society we are lacking an adequate understanding and language for the inner dimensions.

Studying new political movements, we can see a longing by citizens to appear as “whole persons”. Instead of just appearing with their professional face in public, they want to be present with a much wider and fuller range of their beings. For this we need to foster a number of capacities, such as self-awareness, empathy, meta-reflection, multiperspectivity, and intuition, which we don’t teach anywhere in society. A “New Politics” would do well to develop a vision and an understanding of who we are and how we can internally host the rapid changes and become self-aware participants in the current transformation process. Thus an updated democracy and political ecosystem needs to tap into the potential opened up by digitisation and include an understanding and practices of inner development and growth.

KEKS ACKERMAN

GERMANY

Keks Ackerman is a pseudonym for a collective of authors who are currently writing a book about the same topic.

③ ENSURING COLLECTIVELY SMART POLICIES

THE WISE DEMOCRACY PROJECT, ANDY PAICE | UK

Many initiatives are emerging that involve greater public participation in democratic processes, but does participation in itself guarantee the creation of policies and activities that are collectively wise? Indeed, is there any way to increase the chances that innovation in democracy truly creates broadly beneficial outcomes that support the long-term quality and sustainability of life?

This has been Tom Atlee's major inquiry for the past three decades. He founded the Co-Intelligence Institute as a non-profit organisation based in the USA that works to further the understanding and development of collective intelligence and wisdom. It focuses on catalysing this in the realms of politics, governance, economics, and the conscious evolution of our social systems.

This body of work has now been condensed and reformulated in a vast resource for democracy innovators: the Wise Democracy Pattern Language (WDPL). Its purpose is to help overcome humanity's current inability in generating shared understandings about the directions needed to tackle our 21st century mega-challenges of climate change, peak resources, mass migration, and the risks of runaway developments in technologies.

The WDPL toolset gives immediate access to an entire spectrum of design principles and elements to be taken into account in co-creating a deeply participatory culture. Groups, communities and societies can use it to generate policies and activities that are equal to the complex realities of the situations they face.

Its applications include the fields of:

- Education and action learning
- Designing participatory systems that generate collective wisdom
- Transforming organisations and communities
- Deepening social change strategy

The theory and patterns of the WDPL are based on hundreds of approaches and experiments that are already being successfully used around the world. It includes a range of seventy patterns to be explored: from "Systems Thinking" and "Feeling Heard" to "Checks on Extreme Inequality" and "Using Diversity and Disturbance Creatively".

By intelligently weaving together these many diverse ingredients and processes a realistic vision of insightful self-governance begins to unfold. The more one journeys into the patterns and their interconnections, the more a picture of a whole, coherent system appears. In effect it represents nothing less than the building blocks for a new DNA of thriving democracy.

This toolkit, despite being very new, has been used by facilitators, conference planners, conveners and democracy campaigners from all over the USA and Europe. The aim is to influence increasing numbers of groups, communities, political parties etc to work with these ideas and help them to incorporate more wisdom into their governance processes. In turn, the WDPL itself improves in its remit through active participation by anyone who feels called to engage in its development as an open source resource for the world.

More information: www.wd-pl.com

ANDY PAICE

COACH & FACILITATOR | CO-INTELLIGENCE INSTITUTE & WISE DEMOCRACY PROJECT, UK



Andy Paice is a London-based facilitator, mindfulness trainer, and campaigner for participatory innovations in democracy. In his twenties to early thirties he lived as a Buddhist monastic in a community in France. In 2009 he returned to the UK and began complementing his knowledge of Eastern traditions by studying Western psychology. This greatly influenced his understanding of the need to upgrade our systems of civic participation. He works with the Wise Democracy Project and is the founder of the Reinventing Democracy YouTube Channel which interviews people in the field of democratic innovation from all over the world and is one of the principal actors in the UK-based "Campaign for A Citizen-led Constitutional Convention".

④ A NEW PRINCIPLE FOR DEMOCRATIC VOTING

ADELA MAHLING & ERICH VISOTSCHNIG | GERMANY & AUSTRIA

The majority principle in a democracy only yields adequate results for binary elections. That is why a run-off voting system is often necessary. But real life is not binary. In addition, the majority principle creates victorious winners and defeated losers, thus being conflict-generating. In order to handle political problems successfully and without conflict, we need a principle for group decisions that can adequately process multiple suggestions for a problem.

In a parliamentary system, many countries need party coalitions. It takes time and energy to form them. Both parliamentary and governmental work in coalitions is difficult: They cannot work in a satisfactory manner because often the coalition partners have conflicting interests and the majority principle is not designed to handle conflicting interests in a balanced way. What could be a solution instead is a principle for group decisions that resolves conflicts instead of generating them: the “Systemic Konsensing Principle”.

This approach results in the following benefits:

- A multitude of proposals improve the quality of the final result
- Groups working with this principle strengthen their group coherence
- Instead of majorities based on power distribution and group ties, new majorities are formed based on the quality of the ideas and the acceptability of these ideas within the group

Conflicting interests are not an issue for the “Systemic Konsensing Principle”. Instead, different ideas inspire the group and improve the quality of the adopted solution. Even if a great variety of proposals is to be considered, the decision-process is still efficient.

Since a multitude of opinions can be taken into account, political parties with different political ideas can cooperate better and create synergies. In addition, the entire spectrum of opinions present in the public realm can be incorporated into governmental decisions, facilitating people’s engagement in politics. Politics would no longer

be controlled by a relatively small number of politicians. The danger of misuse of political power would also be reduced in the long term, and a democracy beyond any form of despotism could develop. Thanks to the “Systemic Konsensing Principle”, not only would a new political culture be established, but also a democracy which is centered around people rather than power.

More information: www.sk-prinzip.eu

ADELA MAHLING

FOUNDING MEMBER, KONSENSLOTSEN | GERMANY



Adela Hurtado Mahling co-founded the organisation “Konsenslotsen” and has dedicated her professional life to promoting the SK-Principle especially in organisations working in education. After having experienced many different kinds of group dynamics, she studied education sciences in Berlin with a special focus on education for democracy and “Global Citizen Education”. After graduating, she worked as a consultant specialised in change management and a freelance trainer for team development. With a life long interest in peaceful conflict resolution techniques, she studied Nonviolent Communication (NVC) and has been working as a trainer for NVC for over 15 years.

ERICH VISOTSCHNIG

CEO, ISYKONSENS | AUSTRIA



Erich Visotschnig has worked as a software developer and project manager of major IT projects in Germany, Belgium and France. He studied mathematics and theoretical physics. As a system analyst and manager of complex computer projects at IBM Austria, he has gained insight into the problems and difficulties of complex and large organisations. Together with his colleague Siegfried Schrotta, he has been conducting research on power-free structures and processes in society from a system analytic perspective. From this research, they developed the Systemic Konsensing Principle (SK-Principle) and procedures for its implementation. Since 2005, he has been working as a trainer and facilitator in the application of the SK-Principle in all areas of society.

⑤ NETWORK PARTIES AND THE NEW PARADIGM OF CITIZEN-CENTERED POLITICS

KATARZYNA ANNA KLIMOWICZ | POLAND

New network parties and their programmes announce the new era of citizen-centered politics. They change the way of thinking about public decision-making and the possibilities of civic engagement. New political formations that arose from social, grassroots and protest movements such as Podemos and Barcelona en Comú (Spain), Razem Party (Poland), Movimento 5 Stelle (Italy) or Pirate Party (Germany and Iceland) are mushrooming in many crisis-stricken countries in Europe and worldwide. These citizen-led political movements, standing out against “professional” politicians and a “traditional” way of doing politics, proposing alternative models of governance in which ordinary people change their role from passive subordinates to real decision-makers and equal partners in public administration.

New parties with horizontal network-structures and management systems (for instance based on local circles, meet-ups, members’ assemblies, etc.) organise online, strive to turn democratic ideals into practice and develop practical solutions to the most urgent global challenges related to the crises in our governance and eco-

nomie systems. Their tech-savvy leaders and members together with academics, urban activists and hacktivists search for ways to open up the processes of public decision-making, and to democratise our democracies through direct citizen participation. For the purpose of developing a new model of network governance, they implement various democratic innovations and experiments with digital tools which facilitate collective decision-making and public deliberation of citizens. The use of open-source software and interactive digital platforms also allows for greater governmental transparency and accountability to an extent that has never been possible before.

Placing citizens and their needs at the heart of politics is part of the new paradigm of these new network parties and how they do politics. The use of citizens’ collective intelligence and the creation of collaborative networks puts social change, self-organisation and the common good in the centre of democratic decision-making. Notwithstanding the numerous ideological, structural and organisational challenges coming with this development, the activity of net-

work parties, their participatory strategies and concrete digital tools are already renewing our democratic systems and empowering citizens.

More information:

European Consortium for Political Research, “New Models of Governance, Citizen-Centered Politics in Network Parties and Digital Tools Enhancing Citizen Participation”

KATARZYNA ANNA KLIMOWICZ

BOARD PRESIDENT, 4YOUTH FOUNDATION & PHD CANDIDATE, UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW | POLAND



Katarzyna Anna Klimowicz is doing her research on the implementation of the idea of participatory and deliberative democracy with the use of digital tools at the Faculty of Philosophy and Sociology, University of Warsaw. From the very beginning of her studies, she connected her academic research with civic journalism and social activism. Katarzyna is a Humanity in Action Senior Fellow as well as a Co-Founder and Board President of 4YOUth Foundation for Supporting Youth Initiatives, with which she coordinated a number of international and local projects promoting the idea of citizen participation, human rights, intercultural dialogue, ecology and sustainable development. She interned at the Institut de Govern i Polítiques Públiques at the Autonomous University of Barcelona (SP).



Participant reading the programme booklet at Innocracy 2017

III. BEST PRACTICES TO STRENGTHEN CIVIC ENGAGEMENT, REPRESENTATIVITY AND DECISION-MAKING

In this chapter, we would like to explore best practices on how to improve our democratic structures and processes. This section aims at inspiring with concrete projects for democratic innovation: Those strengthening civic engagement and political participation, and those trying to improve representativity and decision-making beyond the traditional processes.

Vedran Horvat of the Political Institute for Ecology presents a very concrete project on how to include more citizen participation in the running of public companies, in order to make sure it serves the public interest. Philippe Narval of European Forum Alpbach explains how the political sector can become more self-learning, as democratic innovations are not an end in itself - democracy has to constantly evolve and develop itself in order to remain a significant political system. With Marcin Gerwin's example of Citizens Assemblies in the Polish city of Gdańsk, we look at new forms of deliberation and citizens participation, whilst in Colombia, "Foro Nacional por Colombia" promotes democratic innovation projects especially in the Medellín region – from this experience the author names the important indicators when trying to engage citizens in democratic innovations.

Other projects focus on issues often overlooked but important to ensure that democracies remain resilient. "Neuland 21" for instance tries to give an answer to the rural-urban divide in Germany. The "Open Democracy Project" ("La Démocratie Ouverte") gathers a community of French democratic innovators, whilst the association "Artikel 1" proposes trainings and workshops across Germany to respond to populist narratives and launched an award to promote those fighting for democratic values. Finally, "Politics for Tomorrow" explains how citizen-centered learning workshops can improve decision-making in a number of organisations and "WePublic" is a concrete example on how to use digital tools for democratic participation. Above all, we want to show that whether it is in Germany, Poland or Austria, there are a large number of organisations, projects and thinking labs that provide new ideas and concrete proposals to improve our democratic systems.

1. THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF COMMONING

Institute for Political Ecology, Vedran Horvat | Croatia

2. HOW CAN POLITICS LEARN? THE CASE OF THE MAYORS MEETINGS FOR INTEGRATION

European Forum Alpbach, Philippe Narval | Austria

3. WHY CITIZEN'S ASSEMBLIES ARE BETTER DECISION-MAKERS

Marcin Gerwin | Poland

4. HOW TO ENGAGE PEOPLE IN DEMOCRATIC INNOVATIONS

Foro Nacional por Colombia, Natalia Andrea Osorio Restrepo | Colombia

5. USING DIGITISATION IN RURAL AREAS

Neuland 21, Silvia Hennig | Germany

6. CONNECTING FRENCH DEMOCRATIC INNOVATORS

La Démocratie Ouverte, Florent Guignard | France

7. PROMOTING DEMOCRATIC VALUES

Artikel 1 – Initiative für Menschenwürde e.V., Jana Faus | Germany

8. CO-CREATIVE APPROACHES FOR STATE-CITIZEN INTERACTION

Politics for Tomorrow, Caroline Paulick-Thiel | Germany

9. DEMOCRATIC TOOLS FOR A DIGITAL SOCIETY

WePublic, Adriana Groh | Germany

① THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF COMMONING

INSTITUTE FOR POLITICAL ECOLOGY, VEDRAN HORVAT | CROATIA



State enterprises in Croatia in the area of natural resources and public infrastructure are under pressure of privatisation, which is currently singled out as the only mechanism to combat inefficiency and corruption. That was the point of departure for the Institute for Political Ecology's research project on the democratisation of public services.

Often privatisation was motivated by the idea that state enterprises are underused when in public hand, and that citizens don't possess available instruments to produce efficient planning and impact on the priorities of the company, thus not being able to gain social control over their businesses. In addition, these companies were often cases of

“state capture”, where political and economic interests determine the priorities of the companies and hinder the public interest to be represented.

Thus, the research conducted aimed at the development of a model that couples democratic governance with ecological modernisation, ending the false choice between two policy options – unsustainable and inefficient business on the one hand, and privatisation on the other.

The project's objective was to showcase these public companies as examples for democratisation and the introduction of a commons based principle. In order to do so, the project

developed arguments for social movements and initiatives that will support democratic transformation of public companies and increase regular social control over them. This could then also lead to broader social support for improvements of public services and make sure that the social impact of public companies remains in public hands. The efforts to keep these companies in public hands already present one wave of democratisation, as it requires collective action of citizens who reclaim the resources and infrastructures they are paying taxes for.

Through an analysis of companies in the water, energy, and railways sector and the overall institutional ecosystem surrounding them, followed by the empirical validation through interviews, the project developed a set of recommendations. Implementing those could deliver revolutionary impact. By exposing public companies to the society, through developments of supervision and

participation, through digital monitoring of the businesses, annual reporting and through more scrutinised evaluation of their public impact, we are convinced that democratising public companies, improving the quality of service and increasing social ownership is possible.

Public companies can therefore be seen as some sort of battlefield: They are a place where progressive political forces can and need to demand institutional innovation in the forms of civic-public partnerships that democratise the overall economic activity. This would diminish “state capture” and open up room for an alternative development of the public sector, which would predominantly be steered by public interest.

More information: <http://ipe.hr/en>

VEDRAN HORVAT

MANAGING DIRECTOR, INSTITUTE FOR POLITICAL ECOLOGY | CROATIA



Vedran Horvat manages the IPE, a research and educational organisation that designs alternative development models and innovative institutional frameworks for democratic political and economic transformation of society. From 2005 to 2015, he was the country director of the Zagreb office of Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, a German green political foundation. From 2012 to 2017, he was the managing board member of the National Foundation for Civil Society Development and national correspondent for the Green European Journal. From 1998 to 2004, he worked as a journalist and web-editor in the daily political newspaper Vjesnik. He is a sociologist specialised in human rights, regularly publishing on European politics, civil society development, environmental issues, migration etc.

② HOW CAN POLITICS LEARN? THE CASE OF THE MAYORS MEETINGS FOR INTEGRATION

EUROPEAN FORUM ALPBACH, PHILIPPE NARVAL | AUSTRIA

Democratic innovation is not an end in itself; it only makes sense when its purpose is to make our society more inclusive and resilient. Innovation ultimately needs to benefit the welfare of society and help us overcome injustice and inequality. We often admire change just for the sake of change. A new party, a new movement or a new campaign will become the darling of public opinion and we forget to question if the “innovation” really takes us forward. Similarly we talk about the need for a more participatory and collaborative culture, as if it was an end in itself.

On the other hand, the reluctance of politics to engage in a more collaborative and participatory style of leadership, decision-making, and collaboration is real. There are a number of reasons for this attitude. There is the fear of losing status and relevance when one switches to a less hierarchical way of managing affairs. Also a certain path dependency on tried and tested methods might play a role, especially as rivals and with it the public are very unforgiving about failures in the political field. But often it seems that many in the political field simply have had no exposure to good quality collaborative and participatory processes and are thus unaware of the qualities it brings.

We are facing enormous challenges in our communities. We need to adapt to climate change, foster cohesion and social inclusion with an increasingly diverse population and find ways to organise economies in a more resource-efficient way. Politics is the solution, not the problem. A culture of participation in politics can increase ownership, cohesion, engagement, and offer a wider spectrum of solutions than a technocratic approach will ever yield. If we want to scale effective innovations learning becomes central, but how does politics learn?

What role rapid learning among politicians can play in times of crisis was shown by the Alpbach Forum in Austria. When in the summer of 2015 the country had to deal with the arrival of refugees, Austria's government was caught unprepared and unable to deal with the situation, so civil society stepped in. It became clear that small town mayors would also play a crucial role in the integration effort. A few mayors from small industrial towns to alpine hamlets alike had many years of experience in refugee integration, while many others simply had no idea of how to integrate refugees in their communities and were overwhelmed with the task.

In this context, the Alpbach Forum invented the “Mayors Meetings”. Within two weeks, we developed a crisp and engaging format with the two-sided purpose to honour those who had a successful track record in integration as well as to furnish inexperienced mayors with know-how, advice and a network. On 4 September 2015, more than a hundred mayors met in the village school gymnasium of Alpbach to listen to inspiring stories of pioneering mayors, meet experts from fields as diverse as immigration law to trauma psychology, and jointly reflect on the way forward. At the end all taking part were inspired by the “can do” atmosphere that had prevailed during the gathering. The meeting was based on the understanding that especially in times of crisis (but not only) we accept advice, embrace new methods and learn most effectively when we are taught by peers. Mayors would best accept the authority of other mayors, when it came to the politically contested issue of refugees. The Alpbach Forum had the authority to convene and was regarded as a neutral platform without a hidden agenda. We were able to rely on a network of co-hosts who were trained in the “Art of Hosting” and volunteered their time in facilitating small group discussions

in circle and world café settings. Under the guidance of two seasoned facilitators others helped to document and edit all relevant information that was later made available in an 80 page open-source handbook now available on the Alpbach Forum website. Storytelling stood at the core of the process as mayors who had already “solved” the integration challenge were willing to offer their advice. The meeting gave participants access to “social capital” and disseminated information in the most time efficient way (it only lasted four hours). On an emotional side, encouragement and appreciation reverberated throughout, while mayors were also able to experience a well done participatory process in a safe environment.

Now let us imagine that such effective and meaningful communities of practice and learning emerge all over Europe. We could share best practices and develop them further in a collaborative way on a number of societal challenges all based on the concept of connecting peers with other peers? Would that not be a simple but powerful concept to strengthen political leadership from the core?

More information: www.alpbach.org/labs

PHILIPPE NARVAL

MANAGING DIRECTOR, EUROPEAN FORUM ALPBACH | AUSTRIA



Philippe Narval graduated from L.B. Pearson United World College in Canada and holds university degrees from King's College London and the University of Oxford. He has published and frequently lectures on leadership, participation and European issues. He is currently on a four month sabbatical leave to complete a book on renewing democracy in Europe bottom up as a guest fellow at the Institute for Human Sciences (IWM) in Vienna.

③ WHY CITIZENS' ASSEMBLIES ARE BETTER DECISION-MAKERS

MARCIN GERWIN | POLAND

A citizens' assembly is a way of democratic decision-making which involves a group of randomly selected citizens. It can be organised on the level of a city, a country or an international community, for instance the European Union or United Nations. The composition of a citizens' assembly should match the demographic profile of the population of a community, in terms of gender, age, race, location, education level or other criteria, depending on the country. In other words, it is a community at small scale, which is created to enable an effective process of deliberation and learning about a particular issue. The aim of the citizens' assembly is to deliver solutions that will best serve the common good of the whole community.

The problem with the current form of representative democracy is that decisions can be made for the benefit of a political party rather than the society. Decisions can also be also influenced by lobbyists, or they do not respond exactly to the needs of the society. Since the citizens' assembly is selected by lot, there is no need to struggle to receive more votes in elections or to criticise members of other political parties. Members of the citizens' assembly are independent in their opinions - leaders of political parties cannot influence their decisions by, for example, offering

them support in electoral campaigns. The only aim of the citizens' assembly's work is to solve a particular issue presented to them.

Members of the citizens' assembly are similar to a jury. Unlike the members of parliament, they cannot meet with lobbyists in private. However, all stakeholders and interest groups can present their point of view openly during the meetings of the citizens' assembly. Actually, anyone who is interested in the topic can send his or her opinion to the citizens' assembly as a part of open consultation. The process is transparent – meetings of the citizens' assembly are transmitted live on the internet or television.

During polling, people are often asked for opinions on subjects they may not fully understand, so they may present superficial views. Organising a citizens' assembly involves a learning phase when experts present the issue or institutions and NGOs present their perspectives. It allows to deepen the participant's understanding of the topic and to make well-informed and reasoned decisions as a result. The members of the citizens' assembly are representative of society's diversity, which means that different points of view will be discussed during deliberation and taken into account. Citizens' assemblies

may be organised on any issue that is in the interest of the people. This includes social and technical issues as well. One of the main advantages of the process is the high quality of decisions that are made for the common good.

More information:

Sitra, „With meaningful conversations comes the true potential of participatory democracy“

MARCIN GERWIN

INITIATIVE FOR CITIZENS' ASSEMBLIES | POLAND



Marcin Gerwin is a specialist in participation and sustainability. He initiated the first citizens' assembly in the city of Gdańsk in Poland and was involved in designing and coordinating three of them. Initiative for Citizens' Assemblies is an informal group from Poland established to promote deliberative democracy. Citizens' assemblies provide high-quality decisions developed by an independent group of citizens, thanks to the process of random selection. They are involved in organizing citizens' assemblies and run workshops on this issue.



④ HOW TO ENGAGE PEOPLE IN DEMOCRATIC INNOVATIONS

FORO NACIONAL POR COLOMBIA,
NATALIA ANDREA OSORIO RESTREPO | COLOMBIA

For many scholars, democratic innovations are a response to citizens' dissatisfaction with representative democracy. Their main objective is to improve the legitimacy of the decision-making process by solving collective problems in a way that incorporates citizens' views. Democratic innovations comprehend different institutional designs such as popular assemblies, mini-publics, direct democracy mechanisms, and digital participation, amongst others. In Latin America, democratic innovations appeared during the 1980s and 1990s as a part of the democratisation process that allowed left parties and independent candidates to come into power. At the same time, international pressure demanded more decentralisation in Colombia, which helped to develop democratic innovations.

Even though democratic innovations aim to increase citizens' engagement, one of the main difficulties setting them up is to engage communities in the participatory processes. This difficulty arises for many reasons, primarily because people are not aware of their right to participate, the existence of participatory spaces, or they do not trust the governments implementing the democratic innovation. Being able to engage citizens is

a crucial element for making a participatory experience a form of democracy as it determines its inclusiveness, the sectors of society that are represented and therefore if the process itself is legitimate. Otherwise, democratic innovations can become a tool for just legitimising governmental decisions that have been previously taken.

Scholars, such as, Fung (2003), Smith (2009), and Geissel (2009) provide insights into the institutional designs that motivate people to participate and engage in collective actions. Although this is an essential element for stimulating participation, the study of two cases in Antioquia, Colombia, points out the importance of considering other contextual factors, such as the legal framework, how actors and structuring forces interact, existing social capital, etc., when designing the participatory model.

The factors that motivate people to participate can be classified into three groups:

- The first group comprehends all the internal motives and pre-conditions that lead to someone to participate. These motivations are associated with the individual or collec-

tive benefits and costs that participation implies. Evidence suggests that people feel more willing to engage when the process allows solving a pressing physical need, for example, access to water.

- The second group includes all the elements of the institutional design that encourage and enable inclusive participation. Some elements are deciding who can participate; where and when it will take place; if the given space is for deliberation or decision making; the competencies, skills or information that citizens need for their effective participation, etc.

- Finally, the third group comprehends the complementary elements that help to increase civic engagement and reach a broader public, such as the use of the media to spread the word about the process and build trust among actors.

In Medellín, the local government had to implement different measures to overcome particular situations that prevented people from participating. This shows that context-specific participatory innovations are necessary, just like the need to adapt the experience to the reality of each community.

More information: www.foronacional.org

NATALIA ANDREA OSORIO RESTREPO

SOCIAL INCLUSION PROFESSIONAL, FORO NACIONAL POR COLOMBIA | COLOMBIA



Natalia Osorio Restrepo is a Colombian lawyer with an MPP from Hertie School of Governance and more than seven years of field experience in the public sector in Colombia as a lawyer and policy adviser for the mayoralties of Medellín and Bogotá and national level governmental institutions. During the last four years her work and academic interest has been focus on the research and field-practice of new democratic innovations. Natalia works as a researcher and field professional at Foro Nacional por Colombia, a NGO dedicated to improving democracy in Colombia, with a special focus on training citizens in how to participate and to influence governmental policies. Before, she worked as research assistant for Prof. Thamy Pogrebinschi researching participatory experiences in Latin America (project Latinno.net), and collaborated as freelancer consultant with Transparency International.

⑤ EMPOWERING RURAL AREAS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

NEULAND 21, SILVIA HENNIG | GERMANY

During the 2017 German parliamentary election, the Alternative for Germany (AfD) drew 55% of their votes from communities with less than 20,000 inhabitants, and another 20% from communities with less than 50,000 inhabitants. Considering that around 50% of the German population lives in communities with less than 50,000 inhabitants, the fact of the AfD collecting 75% of their votes there points to increased levels of populism in rural areas. Public opinion research indicates that many of these voters show fundamentally lower levels of trust in democracy and our democratic institutions and that it is precisely this lack of trust which has become the main driver of the populist vote in rural areas.

The old urban-rural divide is back. And not just that: it is possibly the single most important driver of the populist vote across Western democracies today. Yet, at the same time, the urban-rural gap in quality of life seems to be one of the last politically acceptable forms of social inequality in Western societies. Faced with complaints about poor public transport and long commutes, closing schools and shops as well as inadequate healthcare, empty-pocketed politicians often tell their rural constituents that there is little to be done about it and that another tightening of the belt is in order as demographic change progresses.

But are these developments as inevitable as they seem? Is the periphery truly sentenced to die a slow death? – Neuland 21, a newly founded think & do tank based in Berlin, challenges this view and has set out to reinvent countryside life for the 21st century. Its founders believe that rural areas stand to gain a lot from the accelerating digitisation of today's economy and society, which offers new solutions to old problems and allows for new synergies between urban and rural communities. By challenging the old ways of thinking about the urban-rural dichotomy, the organisation is sparking cautious hopes for a rural renaissance in the digital age.

Relying on a growing network of professional experts, technology partners and researchers, Neuland 21 aims at building and disseminating practical knowledge on how to use digitisation and social innovation to create smart rural regions. The think tank's small interdisciplinary teams explore questions such as: How can rural transport be improved through ride-sharing apps? Which business models work best for small-scale village shops and pubs? Can rural co-working spaces help avoid commutes and revive local communities?

Picking up on promising pilots and international best practices, Neuland 21 develops standardised digital applications, social innovation

models, and business toolkits, specifically designed to increase the level and quality of private and public services in sparsely populated areas while still being economically self-sustaining. Neuland 21 also functions as a lab which puts its best ideas from theory into practice where they are most needed. The organisation works with some of the most peripheral regions to identify and address local innovation needs in such diverse sectors as food supply, mobility, work, education, health, and community life. The resulting increase in quality of life is often instantaneous, enabling communities to more effectively tackle socio-economic exclusion, demographic change, and outward migration.

It is due time politicians started making bigger efforts to renew the rural population's trust in our democratic system by starting to care more about their basic needs. Neuland 21 is showing them how to do just that.

More information: <http://neuland21.org>

SILVIA HENNIG

FOUNDER, NEULAND 21 | GERMANY



Silvia Hennig is passionate about the future of jobs and skills in the digital economy. While spending four years at the European Parliament, working on the EU's research and innovation policy, she got hooked on the question how emerging technologies impact people's working lives and their ability to make a living in a rapidly changing economy. At the Harvard Kennedy School, she worked on new policy approaches to tackle the challenges that automation and digitization create for labor markets and education systems. In 2016, she spent her summer at Germany's labor ministry, researching the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on the workplace and contributing to the ministry's white paper on the future of work. She is currently a consultant with the OECD's Higher Education Department, advising them on adult learning, upskilling, and creating more inclusive higher education systems.

6 CONNECTING FRENCH DEMOCRATIC INNOVATORS

LA DÉMOCRATIE OUVERTE (OPEN DEMOCRACY), FLORENT GUIGNARD | FRANCE

As in many Western countries, France's democracy needs to be changed for the better: 76% of the 18-24 year olds didn't vote during the last European elections, whilst 79% of French citizens think that democracy doesn't work well. Only 1% of the population are members of a political party (Odoxa, June 2015).

Part of the solution is the community of democratic innovators fighting for a more open and participative democracy. "La Démocratie Ouverte" ("Open Democracy") is a community that federates and organises most of the French democratic innovators. Amongst them are NGOs, associations, social entrepreneurs, activists, researchers, and civic techs.

They work at:

- Creating active citizens (civic media, community organising, etc.)
- Improving citizen participation (tools for civic engagement, petitions, consultation, polls, etc.)
- Making politics more effective (voting systems, elections, participatory budgets, etc.)

Démocratie Ouverte carries out programmes of its own, including the projects "Territoires hautement citoyens" (Citizens' territories), a

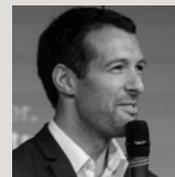
civic lab experimenting innovation in regions and territories, "Système D", an incubator for helping civic innovators to have more impact and "Les Halles Civiques", the French civic hall in Paris, opening in 2018.

In addition, "La Démocratie Ouverte" promotes medias and tools to facilitate civic engagement, such as "Le Drenche", which is a debate newspaper presenting the pros and cons to help civic engagement and fight filter bubbles; "Accropolis", a live streaming media helping young people to understand politics; "Voxe.org", a toolbox for connected citizens, including a world-wide used programme comparator; "Make.org", which facilitates civic ideation and mobilisation. It promotes tools to empower citizens, such as "Kawaa", that helps every citizens organising quality meetings, debates, and mobilization; "LaPrimaire.org", which tested new methods including blockchain securised electronic voting; "Demodyne.org", a platform helping citizens to organise and build a programme making politics more effective, as well as "Parlement & Citoyens", a platform to write legislation with the collective intelligence of citizens.

More information:
www.democratieouverte.org

FLORENT GUIGNARD

CO-FOUNDER, LA DÉMOCRATIE OUVERTE | FRANCE



Florent Guignard is 30 year-old entrepreneur, with a scientific background. He is the co-founder of newspaper "Le Drenche", a online media platform in France. He is also President of the association "Démocratie Ouverte", a federation of civic innovators working to improve democracy in France and abroad.

Speaker's Dinner for session hosts on the eve of Innocracy 2017



7 PROMOTING DEMOCRATIC VALUES

ARTIKEL 1 – INITIATIVE FÜR MENSCHENWÜRDE E.V., JANA FAUS | GERMANY

GERMAN BASIC LAW

Art. 1

Human dignity shall be inviolable. To respect and protect it shall be the duty of all state authority.

Art. 2

The German people therefore acknowledge inviolable and inalienable human rights as the basis of every community, of peace and of justice in the world.

The German Basic Law begins with those two articles. These sentences are simple and clear, and yet, they voice all of the experiences on German history and still challenge us today. More and more people are turning their backs on the values of our Basic Law and are turning towards extremists and demagogues.

The association “Article 1 – Initiative for human dignity” (“Artikel 1 – Initiative für Menschenwürde e.V.”) wants to oppose the destructive and backward-looking, anti-democratic tendencies and foster an open and tolerant culture. The objective of the association is to challenge civil society, shake out lethargy and generate courage. It’s about fighting for democracy. “Article 1 - Initiative for human dignity” is a non-profit and non-partisan association and an open network, which has grown to about 100 persons from companies, associations, churches, trade unions, foundations, agencies and dedicated fighters for democracy.

One of the projects of the association is the „Demokratiefabrik“ (“democracy factory”). The first objective of this project is to create strong and persuasive narratives and communicate them to the wider public. “Article 1” thus initiated a nationwide students award called “VOLKER”. This award gives a voice to ideas that promote democratic values and aim at inspiring people working for a peaceful society. The creative competition takes place every two years and the main target groups are students and apprentices. The chosen ideas will then be brought to life together with “Article 1” and are promoted on the streets, online and in the media. The first “VOLKER” award ceremony took place on 30 April 2017 at the theatre Volksbühne Berlin.

The second objective is to pass on knowledge. At the so called “BoostCamps”, the association trains local volunteers on how to deal with right-wing populism and verbal attacks. In these workshops, participants learn about

populism and the ideology behind populist parties, in order to better assess populist arguments and to successfully stand their ground against populist arguments. The objective of the “BoostCamps” is less to fight racists or populists directly but rather to empower those who work for a free, open and human society.

The third objective of “Demokratiefabrik” is to connect. “Article 1” launched the online platform “de.bay” in order to bring people together who commit themselves actively to democracy and human rights.

More information: www.artikel-eins.de

JANA FAUS

CHAIRWOMAN, ARTIKEL 1 - INITIATIVE FÜR MENSCHENWÜRDE E.V. | GERMANY



Jana Faus is the chairwoman of Artikel 1. She is a feminist and a dedicated fighter for democracy. She trains local volunteers on how to deal with right-wing populism throughout Germany. When she is not engaging for Artikel 1, she is responsible for developing and testing campaigns and ideas for pollytix strategic research GmbH and has been a managing partner there since 2012. Jana Faus graduated in social sciences from Mannheim University and Utrecht University. She has previously worked as a research executive at Research International Pty Ltd in Singapore, as a senior account manager of The Leading Edge Pty Ltd in Sydney and as a freelance consultant in Berlin.



Participants discussing at Innocracy 2017

⑧ CO-CREATIVE APPROACHES FOR STATE-CITIZEN INTERACTION

POLITICS FOR TOMORROW, CAROLINE PAULICK-THIEL | GERMANY

Current societal and political challenges can only be addressed if the creative forces within our democratic system are unleashed. Politics for Tomorrow is a non-partisan initiative working towards this cultural shift in politics by facilitating innovation with and for the public sector, using human-centered learning formats. Our learning approach is based on real challenges, setting free the collective intelligence of the people involved in order to generate viable solutions. Building on design-thinking approaches, we empower our participants to unlock the potential for collaborative action within the policy cycle. We strengthen transformative competencies towards the creation of public value for individuals and organisations, enabling public representatives to actively shape the evolution of state-citizen interaction, to break up

the silos they are working in and to take initiative for more sustainable and participatory policy-making.

In 2015, “Politics of Tomorrow” were pioneers in promoting the idea of using design methods for policy-making by hosting the first conference on this topic in German-speaking countries. As members of the Open Government Partnership Network in Germany, they actively support the idea that governments must become more transparent towards their citizens and more inclined to engage in dialogue and co-creation activities with communities.

More information:
www.politicsfortomorrow.de

CAROLINE PAULICK-THIEL

PROCESS FACILITATOR, POLITICS FOR TOMORROW | GERMANY



Caroline Paulick-Thiel has a track record in developing and hosting cross-sectoral learning environments, especially in the fields of sustainable development and responsible innovation. In 2012, she co-founded “Next Learning”, a non-profit association that supports societal transformation processes by fostering new learning environments and initiated “Politics for Tomorrow” with a focus on public sector innovation in 2015. Since 2014, Caroline is senior consultant of the German civil society research platform “Forschungswende”, which promotes new models of governance in research and innovation politics.

⑨ DEMOCRATIC TOOLS FOR A DIGITAL SOCIETY

WEPUBLIC, ADRIANA GROH | GERMANY

The way we communicate and interact is hugely influenced by the internet. However, democratic political systems and decision-making processes have not significantly changed, despite the vast opportunities the digital age provides for our political system. For this purpose, appropriate digital tools for political communication are still to be developed.

On the one hand, there are clear opportunities: In this new digital era, we might never have had better chances to achieve full participation of citizens as well as more understanding and trust between different groups of people, such as citizens and their representatives. The internet can be seen as a tool for decentralised, participative, anti-hierarchical, and democratic decision-making. On the other hand, misinformation, hate speech and propaganda have the power to dominate the internet and fundamentally influence and sway public opinion. Recent global political developments have arisen under a stream of fake news, echo chamber, and bots on social networks. The way algorithms work on these networks is in their essence anti-social, even more so because they create invisible boundaries and perspectives that shape our beliefs. Thus, a democratic medium for constructive social and political communication is missing.

“wepublic” was started as a project to build exactly this medium. In the long run, we want to create algorithms for the public good and enable many-to-many communication, i.e. communication between groups of people, by clustering data in a way that allows understanding and interacting on a large scale. As a first step, we are working on making political communication and participation easier, faster, more accessible and more constructive by using the multiple opportunities provided by digitisation.

For the German Federal Election in 2017, we created an easy-to-use messenger app on which allowed citizens to ask questions and rate those. The questions were then passed on to politicians from all major parties, who then had to answer them. Citizens received the answers directly on their phone where they were able to compare and rate them. Citizens could thus actively shape an agenda but also see which questions came up in the community. The messenger allowed citizens to be informed about topics across party lines.

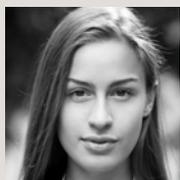
Another project of wepublic addressed young citizens without strong party ties, who are passionate about specific issues but not so much about politics, and who are using the internet as their primary news channel. Wepublic fol-

lows an issue-specific rather than a party-specific approach, which is suitable in order to connect citizens of various backgrounds and which works both at local and national level. The vision was to embed direct digital tools and measures into the representative political process in a way that surpasses democratic instruments such as petitions and referendums. By combining an easily accessible digital tool with design and gamification, the main objective was to stimulate on-demand interaction and exchange of ideas and questions between citizens and politicians, that allows better decision-making processes and outcomes. This way, wepublic promotes digital democracy.

More information: www.wepublic.me

ADRIANA GROH

FOUNDER, WEPUBLIC | GERMANY



Adriana Groh studied political science and sociology in Frankfurt am Main and Maastricht. After writing her thesis on questions of political participation, Adriana understood that political communication and participation have to get easier, faster, more accessible - and more digital. Since 2016, she has applied her academic knowledge to the development of the project “wepublic”. It has since then developed from an idea into a dynamic start-up, with the launch of the app “+ me” as a pilot project for the German general election in 2017. Currently, Adriana is focused on reaching a new objective for wepublic: Creating better digital tools for citizens and politicians to communicate and cooperate in-between elections.

THE DEMOCRACY LAB

LAURA-KRISTINE KRAUSE

HEAD OF THE PROGRAMME “FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY”, DAS PROGRESSIVE ZENTRUM



Laura-Kristine Krause heads the programme “Future of Democracy” at Das Progressive Zentrum. Previously, she worked as a Senior Associate at Bernstein Public Policy and was a Policy Fellow at Das Progressive Zentrum. Laura Krause is Co-Chairwoman of the grassroots think tank D64 - Center for Digital Progress and Fellow of the Transatlantic Digital Debates 2017. She studied Political Science and Public Policy in Passau, Berlin, and Seattle, worked on national election campaigns in Germany and the United States and publishes on digital democracy, party reform, and women in politics.

HANNO BURMESTER

POLICY FELLOW & STRATEGIC LEAD, DAS PROGRESSIVE ZENTRUM



Hanno Burmester is Policy Fellow at Das Progressive Zentrum and Strategic Lead of the Democracy Lab. He focuses on the future of democracy, and the future of political parties. His consultancy firm Unlearn facilitates the development of self-organized teams and organizations, and offers scalable values work. In the past, Hanno worked for several political institutions at national level and as a journalist.

SOPHIE PORNSCHLEGEL

PROJECT MANAGER, DAS PROGRESSIVE ZENTRUM



Sophie Pornschlegel is Project Manager at Das Progressive Zentrum in the Programme “Future of Democracy”. She also co-heads of the “Post Brexit Europe” Programme Area for grassroots think tank Polis180 on European and foreign affairs. She previously worked as a public affairs consultant and at the European Commission Representation in Berlin. She holds an M.Sc. in European Affairs from Sciences Po Paris and the London School of Economics (LSE) as well as a B.A. in Politics from Sciences Po Paris.

DEMOCRACY LAB

Das Progressive Zentrum launched the Democracy Lab in April 2017. It offers a space for creative, interdisciplinary and international exchange as well as network-building. As a collaborative platform, we aim at translating ideas coming from civil society into practical recommendations for decision-makers in the field of democratic innovation. Our projects cover a wide range of topics, from digital democracy, the engagement of young people in politics to the issue of representativity and trust.

www.democracylab.de



Das Progressive Zentrum, located in Berlin, is an independent and non-profit think tank. The aim of Das Progressive Zentrum is to foster new networks of progressive actors from different backgrounds and to promote innovative politics as well as economic and social progress. In this respect, Das Progressive Zentrum gathers mainly young thinkers and decision makers from Germany and Europe in its progressive debates.

www.progressives-zentrum.org

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Demokratie **leben!**

Das Progressive Zentrum e.V.

Dominic Schwickert, Executive Director at Das Progressive Zentrum e.V. (V.i.S.d.P.)

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