Conference Programme

Conference of the Research Section "Comparative Politics" of the German Political Science Association (Deutsche Vereinigung für Politikwissenschaft – DVPW)

Political Climate Change:
Regional, European and Global Comparative Perspectives

22-23 September 2022

E U R O P A – U N I V E R S I T Ä T   V I A D R I N A
Große Scharrnstraße 59
15230 Frankfurt (Oder)

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22 September 2022, 09:30
Logenhaus (LH) Logensaal, Logenstraße 11, 15230 Frankfurt (Oder)

Arrivals and registration

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22 September 2022, 10:00
LH Logensaal, Logenstraße 11, 15230 Frankfurt (Oder)

Welcome address from the President of the European University Viadrina, Prof. Dr. Julia von Blumenthal and welcome by the organizers

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DEMOCRACY TRACK
22 September 2022, 11:00
Gräfin-Dönhoff-Gebäude (GD 06), Europaplatz 1, 15230 Frankfurt (Oder)

Panel: **Current Research on the Meaning and Understanding of Democracy at the Regional, European and Global Level**

Chairs: *Norma Osterberg-Kaufmann (Humboldt University Berlin), Susanne Pickel (University of Duisburg-Essen)*

Outline: **Understanding of Democracy and the Crisis of Democracy**
Norma Osterberg-Kauffmann (Humboldt University Berlin) and Toralf Stark (University of Duisburg-Essen)

Is There a Dominant Meaning of Democracy?
Political Identity between Liberalism and Republicanism in 27 Democracies
Simon Bein (University of Regensburg)

Everything or Nothing: Researching democracy's promises?
Saskia Schäfer (Humboldt University Berlin)

Democracies are repeatedly confronted with a number of challenges. With regard to current research on the meaning and understanding of democracy, we consider three to be particularly significant. First, the prevailing understanding of democracy has not developed in a political vacuum. Democracy has been conceptually challenged continuously and the question arises as to which theoretically grounded understandings constitute viable alternatives or complements. But even in its liberal and mostly representatively institutionalized form within national political systems, it is coming under pressure, as a second challenge. On the one hand, there is declining satisfaction with political actors and the functioning of democracy as such. On the other hand, democracy as a system seems no longer to be unreservedly convincing, as exemplified by the rise of anti-democratic (populist, nativist, radical rightwing) and anti-system parties and the rise of non-democratic alternatives, e.g., technocratic regimes or authoritarian leadership. This leads us to the third field of struggle, the international perspective. The times of democratization in the sense of promoting (and adapting) liberal democracy are over, and we are in an era of post-democratization. "Post-democratization" describes political processes after the end of the transitional paradigm, and two overlapping processes can be observed: The attempt by elites to autocratize, and a population increasingly disillusioned with the usual offerings of "democracy." In the era of post-democratization, it can be observed that in many regions of the world illiberal alternatives to the liberal tradition, populism or even the relapse or persistence in authoritarian structures are increasingly emerging. The structure and persistence of political systems depends to a large extent on the support of the population. For a better understanding of the challenges outlined above at the regional, European and global levels, focusing on theoretical and conceptual issues is not enough. Rather, the attitudes of citizens and, in particular, their meaning and understanding of democracy also need to be taken into account. Research on the meaning and understanding of democracy has been growing steadily for some years. Besides useful theoretical and empirical insights, this research produces open questions concerning the conceptualization and the measurement of meanings of democracy.
Both conceptualization and measurement have different challenges which researchers should take into account when developing research designs, specifically by doing cross-cultural comparisons. With this panel we want to bring together comparative researchers who deal theoretically, conceptually and empirically with questions of meaning and understanding democracy and thus compile the latest

state of research. Papers that address these issues using case studies at the regional, European, or global level are also welcome.

Understanding of Democracy and the Crisis of Democracy
Norma Osterberg-Kauffmann (Humboldt University Berlin), Toralf Stark (University of Duisburg-Essen)

The empirical study of the understanding of democracy is a relatively new field of research that has emerged from the context of democracy measurement (indices) and democracy support (surveys). Thus, research on the understanding of democracy is firmly in the tradition of assuming the universality of (Western) liberal democracy (Dalton et al 2007). Only gradually is this conceptual and subsequently methodological narrowing breaking down in favor of the (re)recognition of democracy as an essentially contested concept (Gallie 1956), opening up the possibility of variable understandings of democracy at different times and in different contexts (The LOOP Science of Democracy Series 2021). With respect to both the question of the crisis of democracy and the finding of democratic regression (Schäfer/Zürn 2020; Manow 2020), research on citizens' understandings and meanings of democracy offers an opportunity for adjustments to the political system and for democratic innovation. Norris (1999) already makes clear with the finding of the critical citizen that citizens who are dissatisfied with democracy are by no means necessarily opponents of democracy. And those currently taking to the streets for freedom of expression and assembly in the Corona protests are by no means defenders of democracy (Nachtwey et al. 2020, Pickel forthcoming). The planned contribution aims at reviewing current research on the empirical understanding of democracy with regard to its relevance and potentials in the debate on the crisis of democracy and at advocating for a concept of democracy beyond institutional conceptions of democracy.

Is There a Dominant Meaning of Democracy?
Political Identity between Liberalism and Republicanism in 27 Democracies
Simon Bein (University of Regensburg)

In addition to the diversity of individual understandings of democracy, the relationship between collective understandings of democracy in a society is also of relevance. Is there really one dominant understanding of democracy in the established (liberal) democracies? Which understandings of democracy compete with each other, or what ideal-typical components compound existing collective understandings of democracy? From such a macro perspective, political identity is a suitable category for analysis: Political identities are part of political culture and thus also decisive for the stability and change of political systems. And political identities can be seen as a pre-existing level to the understanding of democracy: attitudes toward the concept of democracy emerge from internalized notions of political identity.
Political identity, then, defines profound notions of values and norms, narratives about the togetherness of the political community, and its affirmative ties. This three-

dimensional concept of identity enables the systematic analysis and differentiation of understandings of democracy: The first dimension of the normative basis takes into account different understandings of freedom, the relationship to the state, as well as political participation; the second dimension of historical continuity asks about the interplay between cosmopolitan-universal and patriotic- bound narratives of the political community; finally, the third dimension contains configurations of trust in fellow citizens and central institutions, as well as the status of a common good- or individual-oriented politics. This notion of political identity can be made explicit for the two dominant paradigms of the normative justification of democracy in the modern era: Liberalism and Republicanism. Finally, the article operationalizes the concept of political identity between the two ideal-typical forms in liberalism and republicanism based on current World Value Survey data for 27 established democracies from all regions of the world with the exception of Africa. The results show that there are very contradictory configurations of political identity in the empirical data, each with a different emphasis on liberal and republican elements.

The study can thus contribute to the question of, first, whether and to what extent the liberal conception of democracy is truly hegemonic and, second, what role a complementary republican element plays in it. Finally, the analysis can also serve as a starting point for connecting qualitative case studies on political identity and political culture to particularly contradictory and striking configurations and, if necessary, for identifying further ideal-typical understandings of democracy.

Everything or Nothing: Researching democracy's promises?
Saskia Schäfer (Humboldt University Berlin)

Observers have suggested that democratization and authoritarianisation sweep across the world in the form of waves. Several islands are said to remain relatively untouched by these supposed waves, including many countries in the Middle East. Against the background of alleged cultural clashes and incompatibilities, liberal commentators hailed the examples of Turkey and Indonesia as models for democratization in the early 2000s. Developments in the mid-2010s called this labelling into question. Authoritarianisation increasingly characterizes the countries' election campaigns, the elections themselves, and the public discourses before and after. Minoritized identities suffer from physical attacks and legal discrimination.

At the same time, government representatives continue calling their systems "democratic" and even make this claim with more fervor than in earlier periods. What prompts this rhetoric of democracy amidst increasingly authoritarian politics? How do politicians themselves view the "majorities" that they claim to represent, and how do they relate to electoral and identity-based "minorities"? What exactly do politicians mean when they promise more "democracy"?

We argue that addressing these questions can enhance our understandings of the normative appeal of democracy and broaden scholarly notions of democracy which have in the last decades become narrower due to the hegemony of liberalism and the increase of quantitative measuring of democracy. In this presentation, we suggest various explanations for the continuing attraction of the term "democracy," even

among autocrats. Further, we discuss our ongoing research on what politicians mean when they promise their electorate more democracy.

12:30 **Lunch break**

DEMOCRACY TRACK
22 September 2022, 14:00
Gräfin-Dönhoff-Gebäude (GD 06), Europaplatz 1, 15230 Frankfurt (Oder)

Panel: **Current Research on the Meaning and Understanding of Democracy at the Regional, European and Global Level – continuation**

Chairs: *Norma Osterberg-Kaufmann (Humboldt University Berlin),*
Susanne Pickel (University of Duisburg-Essen)

Outline: **Explaining Public Support for Democratic Erosion:**
Trade-Offs or Divergent Understandings of Democracy?
Theresa Gessler (European University Viadrina), Natasha Wunsch (ETH Zürich)

The Demand Side of Democratic Backsliding:
How Divergent Understandings of Democracy Shape Political Choice
Natasha Wunsch, Marc S. Jacob, Laurenz Derksen (ETH Zürich)

Explaining Public Support for Democratic Erosion: Trade-Offs or Divergent Understandings of Democracy?

Theresa Gessler (European University Viadrina), Natasha Wunsch (ETH Zürich)

In contexts of democratic backsliding, citizens represent the last bulwark against the systematic dismantling of checks and balances by overbearing executives. And yet, the record of citizens pushing back against executive aggrandizement is mixed at best, with authoritarian-leaning leaders repeatedly confirmed in office in multiple countries. This tendency is puzzling: what drives citizens in established democracies to endorse political leaders who advocate a programme of democratic erosion? We leverage a conjoint survey experiment in Hungary to probe two alternative explanations why citizens choose undemocratic leaders. On the one hand, voters may engage in value trade-offs between the preservation of democratic procedures and alternative benefits they expect from a political leader in the form of economic buy-outs or cultural conservatism. On the other hand, distinct conceptions of democracy, most notably in the form of majoritarian or egalitarian understandings, may lead citizens to overlook violations of liberal democracy. Our findings indicate that while direct trade-offs are most prevalent among economically weak as well as rural respondents, a considerable share of our sample holds non-liberal understandings of democracy that lead them to overlook leaders' preferences to

undermine judicial independence. This signals that democratic attitudes among the citizenry represent an important vulnerability exposing a political system to democratic erosion where such a lack of liberal democratic commitment meets authoritarian-leaning elites. Our study feeds into broader debates on the role and limitations of citizens when it comes to countering trends of democratic backsliding.

The Demand Side of Democratic Backsliding:
How Divergent Understandings of Democracy Shape Political Choice
Natasha Wunsch, Marc S. Jacob, Laurenz Derksen (ETH Zürich)

Why do citizens in democracies fail to punish political candidates who openly violate democratic standards at the ballot box? The bulk of existing research assumes that a common understanding of democracy underpins citizens' evaluations of different candidates, resulting in a trade-off between undemocratic practices and partisan or economic considerations. We shed doubt on this assumption by showing that divergent understandings of democracy coexist among citizens and affect vote choice. We leverage a novel approach to estimate individual-level citizen commitment to democracy by means of a candidate choice conjoint experiment in Poland, a country experiencing democratic backsliding in a context of deep polarization. We find support for our claim that respondents with less clear-cut liberal democratic attitudes not only tolerate democratic violations more readily, but do so irrespective of a given candidate's partisan affiliation. Thus, we contend that a lack of attitudinal consolidation around liberal democratic norms explains continued voter support for authoritarian-leaning leaders.

15:30   **Coffee break**

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22 September 2022, 16:00
LH Logensaal, Logenstraße 11, 15230 Frankfurt (Oder)

DVPW Section meeting "Comparative Politics"

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22 September 2022, 17:00
LH Logensaal, Logenstraße 11, 15230 Frankfurt (Oder)

Gero-Erdmann Prize Award Ceremony and Keynote Speech

Andreas Busch and Valentin Gold (University of Göttingen)
"A Climate Change in German Politics?
Analysing the 2021 Coalition Treaty of the 'traffic light coalition'"

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22 September 2022, 18:30
LH Logensaal, Logenstraße 11, 15230 Frankfurt (Oder)

Reception

EMERGING CHALLENGES TRACK
22 September 2022, 11:00
Gräfin-Dönhoff-Gebäude (GD 07), Europaplatz 1, 15230 Frankfurt (Oder)

Panel: **German Energy and Natural Resources Policy**

Chair: *Zsuzsanna Végh (European University Viadrina)*

Outline: **Energy Governance in Europe.**
A comparative analysis of transition pathways
Nils Bruch, Jörg Kemmerzell, Michèle Knodt (Technical University Darmstadt)

Germany's political power in global natural resource politics
Jasper Finkeldey (Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg)

Energy Governance in Europe. A Comparative Analysis of Transition Pathways
Nils Bruch, Jörg Kemmerzell, Michèle Knodt (Technical University Darmstadt)

At the latest with the war in Ukraine, energy policy, which is a hot topic in European politics anyway, shifted to the center of political debates. It became clear that moving away from fossil fuel-based energy systems is not only related to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and mitigating climate change, but equally to energy security, energy affordability, and foreign policy strategies.
However, national energy systems in Europe are very heterogeneous, as structural conditions like geographic circumstances, economic traditions, and critical policy decisions, create distinct path-dependencies, that also shape current national and European energy policy discourses and transition pathways. To outline the distinct national pathways in a European context, we are examining data on the development of the European energy system and draw on examples from individual countries. We first assess the long-term evolution of Europe's energy mixes and then continue with a closer look at the developments of the main energy sources, governance structures and policy instruments. To assess the overall results of the energy transition in Europe, we develop a scoring system that takes into account both transition successes and greenhouse gas reductions. This scoring system is then applied to the EU-27 and the UK to compare the results of the different countries and to take stock of the development over the last 20 years.
The comparative analysis reveals a variety of transition configurations that will shape the future evolution of the European energy system. Mapping these variations is also important in light of current and emerging conflicts over European energy policy and in assessing medium- and long-term challenges on the path to climate neutrality by 2050.

Germany's political power in global natural resource politics
Jasper Finkeldey (Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg)

This paper aims at tracing and evaluating five recent trends in German natural resource politics and evaluate them in light of political power discourses in earth system governance. Germany is relatively natural resource-poor and thus dependent on imports. The policy field of German natural resource politics is focused on energy imports on the one hand and securing 'high-tech raw materials' to ensure future technologies 'made in Germany' on the other. Dominant nation states such as Germany are often criticized for facilitating unequal natural resource exchange relationships and 'resource grabs' in poorer countries thus weakening democratic governance and exploiting its dominant position vis-à-vis resource-cursed countries. Drawing on key government reports, corporate documents and secondary literature, this paper argues that there is a recent paradigm shift in German resource politics. The paper first shows that German resource politics has moved from a more market-oriented to a political steering approach. Second, sustainable resource and transparency are promoted – at least on paper. Third, new forms of resource partnerships are promoted including bilateral resource partnerships and multi-level governance initiatives. Four, the data revolution has created new possibilities of sighting and exploiting natural resources around the globe. Five, connecting to the first trend, there is a new emphasis on sovereignty that is in tension with Germany's interdependence in the field of trade policy more generally and resource politics in particular.

In a second part of the article, the five trends above are mapped onto different notions of political power in earth system governance. In this context, I suggest to look at the power-knowledge nexus as well as geopolitical notions of power to explain the paradigm shift in German resource politics. New data technologies 'made in Germany' and discourses around sustainability and transparency enable new intangible forms of domination. Geopolitically, Germany in cooperation with the European Union is exploring ways to access critical resources around the globe. These geopolitical exercises of power often create internal conflicts in the resource exporting countries. Finally, the paper will conclude by a critical assessment of Germany's use of political power against the backdrop of global political climate change.

12:30   **Lunch break**

EMERGING CHALLENGES TRACK
22 September 2022, 14:00
Gräfin-Dönhoff-Gebäude (GD 07), Europaplatz 1, 15230 Frankfurt (Oder)

Panel: Information and Disinformation Policy

Chair: *Timm Beichelt (European University Viadrina)*

Outline: **Vernetzte Desinformationskampagnen: der Fall Nawalny**
                Christoph Deppe and Gary S. Schaal (Helmut Schmidt University Hamburg)

                Political Climate Change im Lichte von Big Data
                Thomas Kestler (University of Würzburg)

                **Die Migration von Argumenten. Algorithmische Mustererkennung in der
                Politikwissenschaft**
                *Jürgen Neyer. Mitja Sienknecht, Sassan Gholiagha (European University Viadrina,
                European New School of Digital Studies)*

Vernetzte Desinformationskampagnen: der Fall Nawalny
Christoph Deppe, Gary S. Schaal (Helmut Schmidt University Hamburg)

Disinformation, misinformation and propaganda have long existed in various forms in all modern mass societies. The form, function and effect of these information disorders has constantly adapted to the respective societies and their media technologies. However, due to increasing digitization and the associated shift of personal communication and information into digital spaces, today's societies and their discursive spaces are much more complex and fragmented than they were just a few decades ago. This implies that today disinformation, misinformation and propaganda are problems of an unprecedented scale. Additionally, the manner in which these information disorders affect democracies has not been adequately researched. This also applies to the economies of scale of their dissemination. Existing research diagnoses that information disorders have a variety of negative effects on democratic societies, but the heart of the problem, the mechanism of disinformation strategies, remains underexplored. This work is an attempt to investigate the mechanisms of disinformation strategies empirically and theoretically. In a first step, we present an analytical framework based on the systemic approach of deliberative democracy. Second, we apply our analytical framework to the current case of reporting of the Russian state financed media company RT DE and others on the poisoning of Russian opposition politician Alexei Navalny in August 2020. Furthermore, we analyze the protocols of the press conferences with German government officials at Bundespressekonferenz, where media personnel can ask unchecked questions, to investigate the content creation of RT DE and others. Third, based on the results of the case study, we discuss the implications of the findings for deliberative processes in democratic systems. The central results of our analysis are that in the Navalny case, a networked disinformation campaign took place across multiple channels. We were able to show that the campaign used disinformation strategies aimed at damaging the authority and credibility of political institutions, scientists, medical experts and the media. Another frequently used strategy fuels the

radicalization of language and intentionally breaks taboos in order to further deepen societal cleavages and raise communication barriers. The resulting decrease of deliberative quality in society leads to the acceleration of the alienated from democracy, especially in individuals with little media competence, who are particularly susceptible to disinformation. With this article we hope to contribute to a deeper understanding of disinformation strategies. The research on information disorders is not only of academic interest, but also the first counter-strategy against a development that may seriously damage today's liberal democracies. The knowledge of these mechanisms is a necessary condition for the development of adequate technical and social responses.

Political Climate Change im Lichte von Big Data
Thomas Kestler (University of Würzburg)

Ausgangspunkt dieses Beitrags ist die Annahme, dass die Hintergründe des beobachteten *political climate change* innerhalb der politischen Öffentlichkeiten Westeuropas auf der kognitiven Ebene zu verorten sind. Genauer: Es wird argumentiert, dass es sich um einen Prozess handelt, der weniger mit Einstellungen und affektiven Bindungen als mit kognitiven Inhalten zu tun hat, also mit politische relevantem Wissen oder schlicht mit dem faktischen (nicht dem bekundeten) Interesse (im Sinne von Aufmerksamkeit oder kognitiver Energie) an demokratierelevanten Informationen. Vermutet wird also, dass die Institutionen und Verfahren der repräsentativen Demokratie nicht unbedingt an Unterstützung verlieren. Was sie verlieren, ist das Interesse des Publikums. Sie besetzen einen immer kleineren Anteil des kognitiven Raums der Bürgerinnen und Bürger.
Um diese These zu begründen wird auf Daten von *Google Ngram* zurückgegriffen. Anhand dieser Daten lässt sich die Beschäftigung mit einzelnen Thema und Inhalten in Textpublikationen im Zeitverlauf nachvollziehen. Hierfür wird zunächst das Instrument *Google Ngram* vorgestellt und in seiner Reliabilität sowie hinsichtlich der Validität der Daten diskutiert, wobei auf erste Ergebnisse aus einem an der Universität Würzburg angesiedelten Forschungsprojekt zurückgegriffen wird, das die Daten von *Google Ngram* für den deutschen Textkorpus validiert. Anschließend wird anhand einzelner Suchbegriffe und Begriffskombinationen gezeigt, dass seit Beginn der 1990er Jahre ein abnehmendes Interesse vor allem in zentralen Bereichen der repräsentativ-demokratischen Institutionenordnung zu beobachten ist, während rechtliche und sozialstaatliche Aspekte an Bedeutung gewinnen. Dies deutet darauf hin, dass in der Wahrnehmung der Öffentlichkeit die demokratischen Institutionen und Verfahren an Bedeutung verlieren, während die *Output*-Seite der Demokratie stärker gewichtet wird. In einem letzten Schritt wird diskutiert, wie dieser Befund zu bewerten ist und was er für die Funktionsweise demokratischer Prozesse im Hinblick auf Verantwortlichkeit, Kontrolle und Beteiligung bedeutet.

Die Migration von Argumenten. Algorithmische Mustererkennung in der Politikwissenschaft
Jürgen Neyer, Mitja Sienknecht, Sassan Gholiagha (European University Viadrina, European New School of Digital Studies)

Unter welchen Bedingungen werden Argumente rezipiert? Wie muss ein Argument aussehen, damit es in Wissenschaft und Politik zur Kenntnis genommen und von anderen übernommen wird? Dieser Frage wird hier im Rahmen eines abduktiven und algorithmenbasierten Verfahrens der Mustererkennung nachgegangen. Hierzu wird in einem ersten Teil der etablierten Unterscheidung zwischen Erklären und Verstehen die Perspektive des musterbasierten Erkennens gegenübergestellt. In einem zweiten Teil wird beschrieben, wie sich eine erkennensorientierte Epistemologie in ein empirisches Forschungsprogramm übersetzt. Im dritten Teil dieses Beitrags werden allgemeine methodologische und konkrete substantielle Erkenntnisse des verfolgten Ansatzes diskutiert.

15:30   **Coffee break**

DEMOCRACY, POPULISM AND DISINFORMATION TRACK
23 September 2022, 09:15
Gräfin-Dönhoff-Gebäude (GD 05), Europaplatz 1, 15230 Frankfurt (Oder)

Panel: Challenges of Measuring Democratic Backsliding

Chairs: *Toralf Stark (University of Duisburg-Essen),*
              Christoph Mohamad-Klotzbach (University of Würzburg)

Outline: **Patterns of Democratic Backsliding in Eastern Europe?**
              Poland's, Hungary's, and Slovenia's Path to Autocratic Rule
              Susanne Pickel (University of Duisburg-Essen)

              New Babel in democratization studies?
              How we can situate, conceptualize and measure 'democratic backsliding'.
              Rolf Frankenberger (University of Tübingen)

              Measuring Regime Transformation as Episodes of Democratization and Autocratization
              Seraphine F. Maerz (Goethe University Frankfurt/Main), Amanda B. Edgell (University of Alabama), Matthew C. Wilson (University of South Carolina), Sebastian Hellmeier (WZB Berlin), Staffan I. Lindberg (University of Gothenburg)

              Challenges of Measuring Democratic Backsliding
              Theresa Gessler (European University Viadrina)

With the end of the transition paradigm, new terms such as re-autocratization and backsliding, decline or regression of democracy have become established in the debate on the transformation of political systems. A common feature of these concepts is that they deal with a process that has tended to play a subordinate role in

the debate on democratization. More precisely, it is the erosion of democratic systems to the level of autocratic regimes, caused by the dismantling of democratic structures by democratically legitimized elites. Actually, it was not really conceivable that seemingly almost consolidated democracies would revert to authoritarian structures, but countries like Hungary and Poland have taught us otherwise. However, the field of research is by no means sufficiently outlined with these extreme examples. The question also arises of how (right-wing) populist forces, for example in the United States, Italy or Slovenia, are changing the institutions and processes of established, liberal democracies in such a way that we are still talking about democracies, but with dysfunctionalities. At the heart of these considerations is a problem that continues to generate debate in the empirical measurement of democracy: the meaning in terms of the quality of democracy. Determining the extent to which an established democracy deteriorates within its system type requires the identification of minimal functional criteria of democracy. In times when autocratic rulers use democracy as a façade for authoritarian power structures under the guise of democratic electoral procedures, a mere reference to the basic function of voting as a minimal criterion of democracy seems to be of limited value. Rather, it seems to make more sense to develop a continuum of procedural and substantive manifestations of the quality of democracy, starting from a normative basic concept, that also identifies less obvious changes in democratic institutions and their functioning. Consequently, the panel will focus on the question of how concepts of democratic backsliding can be empirically mapped within Quality of Democracy indices. We would like to discuss conceptual, methodological as well as analytical contributions.

Patterns of Democratic Backsliding in Eastern Europe?
Poland's, Hungary's, and Slovenia's Path to Autocratic Rule
Susanne Pickel (University of Duisburg-Essen)

Bei den politischen Umbrüchen von autokratischer zu demokratischer Herrschaft in Osteuropa beobachtete die Transformationsforschung Prozesse der Vorbildwirkung und des Schneeballprinzips, in denen sich Übergänge zur Demokratie ausbreiteten und nach ähnlichen Mustern verliefen. Paktierte Übergänge an Runden Tischen gestalteten die Einführung demokratischer politischer Verfahren in Polen und Ungarn zwischen softlinern der sozialistischen Führung und der Opposition. Slowenien spaltete sich nach einem Volksentscheid von Jugoslawien ab. Die ausgehandelten Übergänge galten als besonders tragfähig für eine Konsolidierung der Demokratie. Auffällig ist, dass gerade die Staaten, die als erfolgreiche Beispiele der demokratischen Konsolidierung gepriesen wurden, ihre Demokratien nicht dauerhaft stabilisieren konnten und sich – gemeinsam – auf dem Weg in die Hybridität, wenn nicht gar Autokratie befinden. Sie schließen sich auf diesem Weg zusammen und verfolgen innerhalb der EU gemeinsame Ziele. Was sind die Ursachen dieser Entwicklungen? Finden sich gemeinsame Muster des backsliding? Und sind gängige „Demokratiemaße" wie V-Dem, Freedom House, Polity 5 oder BTI und SGI in der Lage, mögliche Muster des backsliding-Prozesses abzubilden? Ausgehend von

gemeinsamen Mustern der „transition to democracy" zeigt der Beitrag zunächst die Backslinding-Prozesse im Zeitverlauf auf und erläutert die Periodeneffekte, die entscheidende Phasen markieren. Die Ursachen des Backsliding sind demnach vorrangig im Bereich des Erklärungspotenzials von Akteurstheorien zu suchen: "Democratic backsliding is the incremental erosion of institutions, rules, and norms that results from the actions of duly elected governments" (Haggard/Kaufman 2021: 27). Polarisierung, Wahl und Abwahl bestimmter Parteien und Entscheidungen ihrer politischen Führungspersonen können als Auslöser von demokratiebeschränkenden politischen Entscheidungen und Gesetzgebung ausgemacht werden. Mehrheitsbedingungen (Effekte von Wahlverhalten), Koalitionsbildungen und die Qualität demokratischer Parlamentsarbeit und Parteiorganisation schaffen die Gelegenheitsstrukturen für die Effektivität politischer Entscheidungen, Veränderungen der demokratischen Institutionen und Verfahren herbeizuführen, und so die politische Macht der politischen Führungspersonen dauerhaft zu sichern. Das „democratic backsliding" der Akteure geht somit dem „backsliding" demokratischer Institutionen voraus. „Transition from democracy" ist akteursgetrieben. Ungarn fungiert dabei vielfach als Vorreiter, dem die beiden andere Staaten, oft mit deutlich höherer Geschwindigkeit, folgen. Die Parallelen sind unübersehbar: Sowohl die ideologische Prägung der Parteien als auch die traumatisierenden Erfahrungen der Parteichefs sowie ihre Vorgehensweise bei der Deinstallation der Demokratie zeigen auf den ersten Blick ein gemeinsames Muster. Die „Demokratiemaße" V-Dem/Demokratiematrix, Freedom House, Polity 5 und BTI/SGI werden daraufhin untersucht, ob sie in der Lage sind, diese akteursgetriebenen Autokratisierungsprozesse und ihre Muster abzubilden.

New Babel in democratization studies?
How we can situate, conceptualize and measure "democratic backsliding"
Rolf Frankenberger (University of Tübingen)

One of the main concerns of scholars of democracy and democratization in the last one and a half decades is democratic decline (Freedomhouse 2020). Freedomhouse's Freedom in the world index frequently registered net declines in freedom and democracy around the world, affecting both established (liberal) and electoral democracies. And, of course, autocracies that further closed and thus paid into the trend of democratic decline in the logic of Feedomhouse. This small empirical spotlight on the underlying phenomenon makes its salience clear. But: how is it conceptualized and subsequently measured empirically? A quick look at the latest relevant publications shows: We are heading for a new Babel in democratization studies (Armony and Schamis 2005) – this time aiming at capturing reverse developments. For already on the conceptual and conceptual level, a multitude of approaches can be found: democratic backsliding (Bermeo 2016; Waldner and Lust 2018), de-democratization (Freeman 2018; Goodfellow 2017), Democratic regression (Diamond 2021) or recession (Levistky and Way 2015), democratic erosion (Laebens and Lührmann 2021; Kneuer 2021) and decay (Gerschewski 2021) as well as democratic breakdown (Tomini and Wagemann 2018) are all used to describe what

Freedomhouse coined decline. When it comes to measurement, continuous measures of democracy prevail: Freedom House, Polity, EIU and VDem by and large share strategies of gradual measurements of political regimes' quality of democracy (Diamond and Morlino 2004, 2005; Morlino 2017). Or, in other words, they measure the existence and quality of democratic characteristics independently of the type of regime in question and establish thresholds for distinguishing democracy and autocracy. Taken together, the situation closely resembles already known discussions on how to conceptualize democratic and autocratic regimes and on how to assess them empirically. The problems remain the same: without having clearcut definitions of the underlying concepts including (minimal) characteristics necessary for a concept to be in place and thresholds that must not be fallen short of, any endeavour of measuring phenomena such as change will be either blurred or misleading. I argue that we have to make some distinctions and agree on some premises to develop consistent measures of regime change and transformation. First, democracy and autocracy are distinct types of political regimes. This, second, leads to the fact that it does not make sense to measure the democratic quality of an autocracy and vice versa. Third, change in degree and change in kind are two different phenomena. Degree refers to the quality of something, e.g., if a regime is democratic, the quality of this democracy can differ in terms of democracy and democracy+. This is what studies on the quality of democracy such as Diamond and Morlino (2004; 2005) refer to – and what is mostly meant when referring to democratic backsliding, regression, erosion and so on. Accordingly, autocracy can also differ and be upgraded, resilient (Heydemann and Leenders 2011), open or closed. So quality can be measured as a continuum within a category, but not across categories, as quality is a property of a category. Difference in kind refers to a fundamental, or substantial difference in characteristics and functionalities, such as the difference between autocracy and democracy. If a democracy becomes an autocracy and vice versa, we talk about transformations. These, I argue can only be measured as shifts in characteristics (maybe using thresholds, minimum characteristics, or necessary conditions). Fourth, we have to differentiate democracy (democratic institutions and procedures) and orientations towards democracy. A change in democratic institutions and procedures then can change the quality of democracy. A change in beliefs, opinions and orientations towards democracy is not a change of democracy as such, but at least indicates that cognitive, evaluative and/or affective orientation of the demos has changed. This implicates that we have to differentiate democracy from the demos.   I will exemplarily illustrate the different ways to conceptualize and measure differences in regime change and transformation by using country vignettes. This might help to find ways to avoid a prolonged stay in New Babel.

Measuring Regime Transformation as Episodes of Democratization and Autocratization

Seraphine F. Maerz (Goethe University Frankfurt/Main), Amanda B. Edgell (University of Alabama), Matthew C. Wilson (University of South Carolina), Sebastian Hellmeier (WZB Berlin), Staffan I. Lindberg (University of Gothenburg)

Gradual processes of democratization and autocratization have gained increased attention in the literature. Assessing such processes in a comparative framework remains a challenge, however, due to their under-conceptualization and a bifurcation of the democracy and autocracy literatures. This paper provides a new conceptualization of regime transformation as substantial and sustained changes in democratic institutions and practices in either direction. It considers ten patterns with distinct outcomes. This allows for studies to address both democratization and autocratization as related but obverse processes. Using this framework, the article introduces a dataset that captures 680 unique episodes of regime transformation (ERT) from 1900 to 2019. These data provide novel insights into regime change over the past 120 years, illustrating the value of developing a unified framework for studying regime transformation. Such transformations, while meaningfully altering the qualities of the regime, only produce a regime transition about 32% of the time. The majority of episodes either end before a transition takes place or do not have the potential for such a transition (i.e. constituted further democratization in democratic regimes or further autocratization in autocratic regimes). The paper also provides comparisons to existing datasets and illustrative case studies for face validity.

Challenges of Measuring Democratic Backsliding

Theresa Gessler (European University Viadrina)

The literature on citizens' perceptions of democracy has argued that citizens' evaluations of democracy provide a 'microscope with a quality seal' (Gómez und Palacios 2016), namely that citizens are able to judge the performance of democratic systems and that these evaluations converge with expert scores such as the Democracy Barometer. In principle, this could provide promising measures of democratic quality and democratic backsliding as citizens experience changes to democratic systems and may look behind democratic façades meant to deceive formal indicators.

In contrast, literature on citizens' responses to democratic backsliding has argued that even citizens who value democracy typically fail to punish democratic backsliding. One argument here has been that citizens may simply not recognize democratic backsliding as such (Schedler 2019), another that partisanship may bias such evaluations (Graham und Svolik 2020; Simonovits, McCoy, und Littvay 2022). While the former would invalidate conclusions we draw from citizens' evaluations, the latter means we have to distinguish if partisanship biases not only voting behaviour but also perceptions of backsliding.

Bridging these two perspectives, I address whether we can rely on citizens' assessment in the measurement of democratic backsliding. Specifically, I analyze

whether democratic erosion is visible in survey data on evaluations of democracy in several countries that have experienced democratic backsliding in the past 10 years. I also analyse whether changes are driven by the changing perceptions of government- or opposition supporters and whether political interest increases citizens' sensitivity to democratic backsliding. For this, I draw on the ESS Rotating Module on Democracy (first asked in 2012/2013 and repeated 2020-2022) which will be published in June 2022. To provide additional evidence on the mechanism, I also use original survey data from Hungary that explicitly asks citizens about change to three aspects of democracy.

11:15   **Coffee break**

DEMOCRACY, POPULISM AND DISINFORMATION TRACK
23 September 2022, 11:30
Gräfin-Dönhoff-Gebäude (GD 05), Europaplatz 1, 15230 Frankfurt (Oder)

Panel: **Populism and Radical Right-Wing Parties**

Chairs   *Kristina Weissenbach (University of Duisburg-Essen), Michael Minkenberg (European University Viadrina)*

Outline: **Patterns of radical and populist voters.**
How radical and populist voters differ in their democratic attitudes
Carsten Wegscheider (University of Salzburg), Toralf Stark (University of Duisburg-Essen) Susanne Pickel (University of Duisburg-Essen)

Populism and Parliaments: Examining Patterns of Deparliamentarization
Lisa H. Anders (University of Leipzig), Sonja Priebus (European University Viadrina)

Populism as A Practice and in Civil Society: A Theoretical Inquiry
Murad Nasibov (Justus Liebig University of Giessen)

Patterns of radical and populist voters How radical and populist voters differ in their democratic attitudes
Carsten Wegscheider (University of Salzburg), Toralf Stark (University of Duisburg-Essen) Susanne Pickel (University of Duisburg-Essen)

Radical and populist parties embody alternative conceptions of democracy that favor direct popular participation over decision-making by elected representatives and constitutional control. Yet, little is known whether these concepts of democracy are reflected at the citizen level and whether the voters of these parties share similar views of democracy. In this article, we therefore address the following research questions: How are citizens' attitudes towards principles of democracy related to their support for radical and populist parties? By distinguishing between three dimensions of democratic attitudes (liberal, substantive, authoritarian), we expect that the lower citizens' support for liberal democracy and the higher their support for authoritarian

regime alternatives, the more likely they are to vote for radical and populist electorates. Furthermore, we expect that the more citizens support a substantive conception of democracy, the more likely they are to vote for radical left populist parties. We test our assumptions using individual-level survey data from the European Values Study (EVS) 2017. Based on the PopuList, we distinguish between support for populist parties as well as radical left and right (populist) parties. We further combine the individual-level data with data from Populism and Political Parties Expert Survey (POPPA) to include continuous measures of populism and radicalism. We analyze how democratic attitudes on three different dimensions (liberal, substantive, authoritarian) and individuals' democratic knowledge, i.e., their cognitive ability to distinguish between democratic and authoritarian regime characteristics, influence support for radical and populist parties. Our results thus have important implications for research on voting behavior and party competition on democratic principles.

Populism and Parliaments: Examining patterns of deparliamentarization
Lisa H. Anders (University of Leipzig), Sonja Priebus (European University Viadrina)

Around the globe, populists attack and undermine the liberal democratic order. With their plebiscitarian approach to democracy and their monistic perception of popular power, they constrain liberal institutions, particularly constitutional courts tasked with checking political majorities. Most contemporary studies on democratic erosions focus on the relation between populism and (the rule of) law in general and populism and constitutional courts in particular. The question of how populists target parliaments, which they see as obstacles to implementing the will of the people, has in contrast received comparatively little theoretical and empirical attention. While a few recent case studies have partly filled this gap by providing in-depth knowledge about individual cases, we still miss systematic comparative work on the patterns by which populists disempower parliaments. With this paper we contribute to filling this gap. We do so with a comparative study that systematizes the reforms that populists use to curtail the powers of parliaments. The paper starts with theorizing the relationship between populism and parliaments and then goes on to operationalize parliamentary power. Relying on previous works, we focus on three dimensions of parliamentary power, the parliaments' direct influence on policymaking, the ex-ante selection of external officeholders and the ex-post control of the cabinet. Based on this and drawing on evidence from parliamentary archives and case-study observations, we systematically analyze and compare parliamentary reforms in parliamentary systems where populist parties are the major forces in government. The overall aim is to examine if there are typical patterns, i.e. a 'populist toolbox' to weaken parliaments and what dimensions of parliamentary power are particularly targeted by populist governments.

Populism as A Practice and in Civil Society: A Theoretical Inquiry
Murad Nasibov (Justus Liebig University of Giessen)

The growing populism around the world, indebted largely to the rise of (new) authoritarian regimes and in general democratic backsliding which is empirically well detected, has attracted renewed scholarly interest in the study of phenomena in recent years. In parallel to right-wing, authoritarian populism and in part as a reaction to them, the left-wing populist discourse has only been in rise in the same period. Nevertheless, the comparative prevalence of (the empirical observation of) right-wing, authoritarian populism has led to the blurring of boundaries between populism and authoritarianism. It has become more and more difficult to answer the question of How can populism and authoritarianism be distinguished from each other? In an attempt to answer to this question and partly to recognize the existence of left-wing populism, a few scholars set out to re-define populism as a "thin" ideology which can host both left-wing and right-wing "thick" ideologies.

The emerging "populist minimum" – claiming to represent the "people" or volonté générale, anti-elitist and anti-establishment orientation, and questioning of the democratic legitimacy of non-majoritarian institutions in society – allow two major implications to draw from it. First, the three core attributes or "populist minimum" identified in the literature enables to re-conceptualize it as a practice rather than ideology. This paper, thus, attempts to deliver a theoretical account of populism as a practice.

Second, once reconceptualized as a practice, there remains no reason not to extent the exercise of populism to civil sphere, borrowing the latter concept from Jeffrey. C. Alexander, except one. In order to be able to establish populism as a practice in civil society, the question of claiming to represent the "people" without directly and or immediately claiming to power – that is, without engaging in direct political competition for a political office – needs to be clarified. This is because, one major reason for populism to be attributed exclusively to political parties and politicians is the implicit assumption running across the literature that one cannot claim to represent the "people" without engaging in political struggle for political power. This is a logical fallacy that if one claims to represent the "people", he or she should aim also to represent them in office. Yet, this link might not be so direct as the literature, overall, assumes it to be. There is no reason not to think that one may choose to speak on behalf of the "people" and further engage in practices which are anti-establishment and questions the legitimacy of non-majoritarian institutions. Populism understood in its minimal definition can well be practices in the civil sphere, too. Rather, populists, as shown in different examples, can well come to politics from civil society.

Building on these discussions in the literature as well as drawing examples of cases from around the world, the author engages in a theoretical inquiry to provide a new account of his own by first reconceptualizing populism as a practice and then arguing about the possibilities for stretching this practice beyond political parties and politicians – to civil society and civil society representatives. Once extended to civil sphere, there emerges a larger flexibility to theorize both left and right wing,

prodemocratic and anti-democratic, pro-liberal and anti-liberal, pro-constitutionalist and anti-constitutionalist populist practices.

13:00 **Lunch and departure**

DEMOCRATIC RESILIENCE TRACK
23 September 2022, 09:15
Gräfin-Dönhoff-Gebäude (GD 06), Europaplatz 1, 15230 Frankfurt (Oder)

Panel: **Authoritarian Attacks and Democratic Resilience: Means, Actors, and Networks**

Chair: *Silvia von Steinsdorff (Humboldt University Berlin)*

Outline: **Resisting through Law: Lawyers in Turkey**
Gülçin Coşkun, Ertuğ Tombuş (Humboldt University Berlin)

The Structure and Hierarchies of Transnational Online Networks of European Anti-Gender Movement Organizations on Twitter
Dominika Tronina *(Humboldt University Berlin)*

Limits of Legitimation: Erdogan, Charisma and Opposition
İrem Tuncer-Ebetürk (WZB Berlin), Defne Över (Texas A&M University):

Supporting democratization of neighbors in the east in the face of immense security challenges from Russia: a mission impossible?
Sandro Megrelishvili (Ilia State University, Tbilisi, Georgia)

Hate speech against intersex people in Greece (online)
Nikoletta Pikramenou (Aristotle University Thessaloniki)

Meteorological climate change points to the fact that local problems are increasingly transnationally and trans-locally interwoven which, in turn, require new solutions that are not simply tied to nation states but operate across different regional levels. Similar observations can be made for political climate change. Attacks on liberal democracies spread across the globe and have taken new forms and actor constellations. From Erdoğan in Turkey to Bolsonaro in Brazil or to Trump in the USA, populist authoritarian leaders have railed against the values and institutions of constitutional democracy. Yet, this attack is not limited to political leaders and parties. Right-wing groups, mobilizing against globalization, women's and LGBTQ rights, immigrants, and minority groups, played an important role in the increasing erosion of liberal values and trust in the existing political institutions. Nevertheless, democratic actors and movements expressing resistance against undemocratic attacks are not absent. On the contrary, also those who aim at preventing political climate change have adapted to the interconnected logics of challenges to democracy by strengthening existing institutions and creating new constellations of trans local resistance.

The panel aims to analyze two counter dynamics of this political climate change: authoritarian attacks and democratic resilience. It pays specific attention to actors and institutions that operate under altered logics and constellations. Right-wing movements are increasing their influence and capacity for mobilization through transnational networks. For that purpose, they are making more and more use of internet and new communication technologies to establish networks with their counterparts in different parts of the world. The patterns of coalition building among challengers of liberal democracy and their capacity to use new communication infrastructures are worth being studied more closely. As to the question of democratic resilience, the panel focuses on new constellations of trans local resistance. in times when national governments are under pressure or unable to act. Sustainable and solidarity cities have brought local politics and cities into the discussion as another possible source for a democratic response to the present political challenges. Yet, trans local resistance is not limited to the city networks or municipal cooperations. Feminist groups from Poland to Turkey connect each other to the fight against gender-based violence and to ensure full implementation and enforcement of the Istanbul Convention. New social movements link their claims to more radical democratic changes. What kind of new and innovative democratic practices do they develop and employ in their resistance to autocratization? We welcome further contributions that aim to capture varieties of means and scopes of authoritarian attacks and democratic resilience from a theoretical or an empirical perspective. We equally invite papers from experienced and younger researchers.

Resisting through Law: Lawyers in Turkey
Gülçin Coşkun, Ertuğ Tombuş (Humboldt University Berlin)

An important dimension of the recent democratic backsliding and authoritarian developments is the threat to the rule of law and judicial independence. As a result of the authoritarian attacks, courts can hardly function as a limitation over the actions of the executive and law has increasingly become an instrument of suppression, rather than a venue for justice. Studies on threats to judicial independence and the rule of law have mainly focused on courts and judges, particularly apex courts. Yet, attacks to lawyers as a crucial aspect of the authoritarian attacks are mostly overlooked. This paper aims to address this gap by examining the Justice and Development Party's attacks on lawyers in Turkey. Especially lawyers who are defending human rights activists, journalists, and civil society representatives have been working under the threat of state repression. Given the crucial role lawyers play in rights defense and search for justice, impairing their capacity to do their job freely and securely is another way of an authoritarian attack on to rule of law and judicial independence. This paper aims to portray different dimensions of oppression and attacks on lawyers. Then, it examines the strategies and tactics of human rights lawyers to fight against state harassment and intimidation. The paper argues that the lawyers' inexhaustible resistance through law constitutes one of the main factors delegitimizing the AKP regime internationally.

The Structure and Hierarchies of Transnational Online Networks of European Anti-Gender Movement Organizations on Twitter
Dominika Tronina (Humboldt University Berlin)

During the last decade, so-called anti-gender movements have spread across Europe who vaguely antagonize the concept of gender and policies associated with it such as sexual minority rights, reproductive rights, or treaties against gender-based violence. While these movements seem increasingly transnational and operate actively online, we lack deeper knowledge about how transnationalization is enacted online and to what degree digital media communication might facilitate transnationalization. The paper therefore aims to investigate the transnational online interaction between European anti-gender movement organizations on Twitter. Using social network analysis, it aims to identify the influential actors of anti-gender online activism and map their transnational constellations across European countries.

Limits of Legitimation: Erdogan, Charisma and Opposition
İrem Tuncer-Ebetürk (WZB Berlin), Defne Över (Texas A&M University)

Transitions to authoritarianism bring new forms of legitimacy claims. When personalization accompanies authoritarianism, the charisma of the leader becomes one typical domain through which legitimacy is claimed. In contrast to ordinary belief, charisma is not about a leader's extraordinary characteristics. It is constructed and performed by the leader in a strategic effort to legitimize personalistic rule. In this paper, we argue that the limits of this effort are drawn in the interaction between the ruler, the followers, and the opposition. Followers' confirming and opponents' contesting practices delineate these limits. Through a study of Turkey's contemporary transition to personalistic rule, we highlight mocking and nostalgia as two such practices that constrain Erdoğan's charisma-producing strategies.

Supporting democratization of neighbors in the east in the face of immense security challenges from Russia: a mission impossible?
Sandro Megrelishvili (Ilia State University, Tbilisi, Georgia)

One of the central pillars of EU's foreign policy is its effort to support reformation and democratization process of its neighbors in the East. Even though, not always successful, with its 'carrot' (sometimes 'stick') approach, it is a major agent for change for states like Georgia, Ukraine and Moldova. Faced with immense geopolitical shifts and rising tensions between the West and Russia, its priorities have shifted somewhat. Now, it faces a risk that these countries will fall under direct Russian influence, becoming vassal states instead of sustaining their sovereignty, with EU losing leverage over them. Indeed, in Ukraine, Russia uses its military power to achieve that goal. Faced with such a reality, EU adjusted its behavior and started acting more assertively. The best manifestation of that is the expected granting of candidacy status to Ukraine and Moldova, and perspective on candidacy status to Georgia. It should be highlighted that, the move was more a response to Russian

aggression and its possible consequences, rather than a reward to successful implementation of democratic reforms. And indeed, the fate of these countries and potential to tilt into the pro-Russian camp is not resolved. That is especially true in the case of Georgia with more authoritarian tendencies evidenced in recent years. Considering all that, the question arises: How should EU address both of the abovementioned goals simultaneously? Is that possible at all? The paper will describe EU's policy in Georgia [or Ukraine and Moldova/or Eastern Neighborhood], assess its influence on the democratization process and reflect on the challenge of meeting two ends – geopolitical and democracy promotion – at the same time.

Hate speech against intersex people in Greece (online)
Nikoletta Pikramenou (Aristotle University Thessaloniki)

Intersex people are born with sex characteristics that do not fit the female/male binary. For example, an intersex person may be born with XXY chromosomes instead of XY (male) or XX (female) chromosomes. When an intersex infant is born doctors often perform sex 'normalisation' cosmetic surgeries to fit its body into the sex binary. In addition, intersex persons are subjected to hate speech within medical settings based on their sex characteristics. Intersex Greece, which is the only intersex led organisation in Greece, has been gathering complaints over the years by intersex individuals -and their families- who have been victims of hate speech. Such incidents mainly involve privately expressed forms of hate and publicly expressed hate speech through online blog social media. The main actors behind such incidents are doctors, teachers, alt-right politicians, and the church. For instance, intersex adults have reported that doctors called them "a nature's mistake, parents of intersex babies (born with mild to moderate hypospadias), repeatedly report that child-urologists insist in the performance of "normalising" surgeries, otherwise these babies "will never be real men", or "won't urinate standing, so they will not be men", or "won't be normal men". Moreover, certain websites (usually run by the church), provide online disinformation on intersex issues while users of social media such as Twitter, YouTube, Facebook usually call intersex people as "disordered", "abnormal", "hermaphrodites". In 2017, Greece updated its legal framework on hate speech to include 'sex characteristics' as a protected ground but there is a lack of implementation and awareness. At the same time, in 2021, the European Commission (EC) launched an initiative to expand the list of European Union (EU) crimes to include hate speech and hate crime. Considering the above developments, this presentation aims to introduce the results of the fist intersex-led study held in Greece on hate speech (online and offline) and elaborate on how could democracy and human rights be protected in the times of hate speech, disinformation, and online attacks?

11:15   **Coffee break**

DEMOCRATIC RESILIENCE TRACK
23 September 2022, 11:30
Gräfin-Dönhoff-Gebäude (GD 06), Europaplatz 1, 15230 Frankfurt (Oder)

Panel: **European International Bodies in Strengthening Democratic Resilience: Actors, Means, Challenges**

Chair: *Claudia Matthes (Humboldt University Berlin)*

Outline: **The role of the CJEU and the ECtHR in strengthening the democratic resilience,**
Kaja Kaźmierska (Humboldt University Berlin)

Invisibility of international bodies in context of contested statehood
Friederike Augustin (Humboldt University Berlin)

**The Council of Europe Before and After Russia's Expulsion:
Between Law and Politics**
Esra Demir-Gürsel (Humboldt University Berlin)

The Court of Justice of the European Union in the case law of the Polish Constitutional Court – the current breakdown, its root cause and significance
Agnieszka Sołtys (Polish Academy of Science, Warsaw)

Just like the meteorological climate change, the political climate change requires a rapid and decisive action from both national and international actors. Neglected at first, the political climate change in Europe is gaining more and more attention from various bodies at European level, engaging in the counter movement opposing the change, protecting and promoting the rule of law. In light of the massive attacks on the independence of the judiciary in some of its member states, the EU has recently stepped up its efforts to monitor and consolidate the rule of law within the Union, and other European bodies followed this direction. The panel would examine the impact of the European international bodies, such as the Venice Commission, the Council of Europe, the European courts, and any regional cooperation mechanisms on strengthening the democratic resilience in Europe. It will analyse the means available to the European bodies when engaging in supporting the democratic resilience and the challenges they may encounter. The Venice Commission, an advisory body to the Council of Europe, in its recommendations and advisory documents defends the rule of law in no uncertain terms. However, can it lead to a considerable impact, when there is no enforcement mechanism linked to its work? While the Venice Commission might appear to offer a weaker rule of law protection than the European Union for example, it is noteworthy that it has a wider scope as it covers 47 Member States, compared to the EU's 27. The Council of Europe also provides it with credibility and authority. The EU has been known to reply upon the Venice Commission findings in its own documents, policy drafts, and most recently – in the annual rule of law reports of the European Commission. Therefore, to what extent can the soft law issued by the Venice Commission, rather than binding rules on the Member States, lead to a meaningful change? The European Courts are also adopting a more active role in the European system of rule of law protection. While so far it has been predominantly the CJEU which shaped the European understanding of judicial independence in its

numerous rulings, the Strasbourg Court is increasingly trying to indicate its readiness to become an active actor in the defining of the European concept of the rule of law and judicial independence. It can be seen both in the recent judgments of the ECTHR and in the fact it accepted a number of new cases to render a judgment on, all concerning the state of judicial independence and the rule of law in the Member States. However, the question remains if the courts are rather monitoring the changes "from the back seat" or whether they become "active guardians" of the rule of law and democratic values? Equally, the impact of the European courts' jurisprudence on the changes in the Member States is not yet fully known and requires further research.

The Council of Europe, Venice Commission, and the European Courts, whilst the most well-known international actors on the European political stage are not the only bodies active in the protection of the rule of law in Europe. The panel would also welcome contributions concerning the roles, means and challenges faced by other bodies on the European level, such as OSCE or regional co-operation groups for instance the Visegrád group or the Weimar Triangle, when acting for the protection of the rule of and strengthening democratic resilience. We welcome further contributions that aim to capture the extent to which the European bodies contribute to strengthening democratic resilience in Europe from a theoretical or an empirical perspective. We equally invite papers from experienced and younger researchers Papers: The role of the CJEU and the ECtHR in strengthening the democratic resilience, Kaja Kazmierska (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin) The European courts (CJEU and ECtHR) are adopting a more and more active role in protecting the rule of law and attempting to stop the authoritarian attacks especially in the countries where the political climate change is the most present. The ways in which the courts can get involved in questions concerning the rule of law are constantly redefined in order to face the emerging challenges. To what extent does it bring forward the desired change in practice? Are the sanctions imposed by the CJEU and ECtHR effective in reversing the political climate change in the member states? The paper will examine the above taking the example of Poland, analysing the selected relevant case law of both courts and the reaction of Poland in the aftermath of judicial decision. Promoting institutional resilience within judicial systems, Friederike Augustin (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin) The Council of Europe, and the Venice Commission as its advisory body in particular, takes up an important role in the forming and developing international standards on judicial independence as one of the core elements of the Rule of Law. While the core principles of judicial independence are undisputed, the evolution of the international standards show that a growing emphasis has been placed on internal mechanisms, such as judicial self-administrative bodies. The paper will examine to what extend the "political climate change" in Europe is reflected in this evolution, and moreover to what extend the promoted features can provide more autonomy to judicial actors and safeguard institutional resilience within judicial systems.

The role of the CJEU and the ECtHR in strengthening the democratic resilience
Kaja Kaźmierska (Humboldt University Berlin)

The European courts (CJEU and ECtHR) are adopting a more and more active role in protecting the rule of law and attempting to stop the authoritarian attacks especially in the countries where the political climate change is the most present. The ways in which the courts can get involved in questions concerning the rule of law are constantly redefined in order to face the emerging challenges. To what extent does it bring forward the desired change in practice? Are the sanctions imposed by the CJEU and ECtHR effective in reversing the political climate change in the member states? The paper will examine the above taking the example of Poland, analysing the selected relevant case law of both courts and the reaction of Poland in the aftermath of judicial decision.

Invisibility of international bodies in context of contested statehood
Friederike Augustin (Humboldt University Berlin)

The Council of Europe, and the Venice Commission as its advisory body in particular, takes up an important role in the forming and developing international standards on judicial independence as one of the core elements of the Rule of Law. While the core principles of judicial independence are undisputed, the evolution of the international standards show that a growing emphasis has been placed on internal mechanisms, such as judicial self-administrative bodies. The paper will examine to what extend the "political climate change" in Europe is reflected in this evolution, and moreover to what extend the promoted features can provide more autonomy to judicial actors and safeguard institutional resilience within judicial systems.

The Council of Europe Before and After Russia's Expulsion: Between Law and Politics
Esra Demir-Gürsel (Humboldt University Berlin)

Soon after launching its aggressive war against Ukraine, on 16 March 2022, Russia was expelled from the Council of Europe (CoE). In its 73 years-long history, this was the first time, CoE expelled a member state for breaching its obligations to respect the rule of law and human rights and to collaborate in order to realize the goals of the organization under Article 3 of the Statute of the CoE. This was not, however, the first time when Russia acted in breach of its membership obligations. Nor was Russia alone in its blatant disregard of its obligations arising from Article 3 of the Statute. Since the past decade, systemic breaches of human rights and the rule of law have been rampant also in a number of other member states of the CoE. The CoE organs, including the European Court of Human Rights, Secretary General, Parliamentary Assembly, and the Committee of Ministers, received severe criticism for their cautious, delayed, and weak responses to such breaches. Against this background, this paper will first provide an overview of the patterns of CoE organs' responses to both Russia's and some other member states' systemic breaches of human rights. It

will then discuss the possible implications of Russia's exclusion for the broader CoE context.

The Court of Justice of the European Union in the case law of the Polish Constitutional Court – the current breakdown, its root cause and significance
Agnieszka Sołtys (Polish Academy of Science, Warsaw)

The current breakdown in the relationship between the Polish Constitutional Court and the Court of Justice of the European Union (ECJ), or more broadly between Poland and the European Union, has crucial significance in light of the processes of regional integration taking place in the EU. This paper reveals this breakdown by analysing the current case law of the Polish Constitutional Court in European integration matters. It is argued that the root cause of the constitutional crisis in Poland is the departure from the principles of liberal democracy in the jurisprudence of the Constitutional Court, which are foundational – in the light of the assumptions of the integration process – for the axiological identity of the EU and its Member States.

13:00   **Lunch and departure**