



DEMOCRACY: OLD TRENDS, NEW PROSPECTS

When: 16-17 May 2024

Where: FSPAC2, str. Minerilor 85, Cluj-Napoca (T1 & T2)

As commentators keep reminding us, 2024 is unprecedented from the perspective of elections the world over (Judson 2023; The Economist 2023). Many democratic nations will see elections for national assemblies and/or heads of state, including India, Mexico, the Russian Federation, the US and of course Romania. Elections for the European Parliament are also taking place. However, our heading to the polls is taking place in an increasingly polarised, post-truth public domain, where the diversification of understandings of societal phenomena, e.g. climate transformation, the world order, societal resilience and change, challenge decades-old political processes and institutions in their mandates and how we use them to govern. The steady rise in conservative and radical attitudes fuelling extreme right political forces in Europe and beyond, the increasing relevance of nativist and protectionist discourse, politically influential religious communities and figures normalising intolerance and politics by violent means, and rising Euroscepticism all make 2024 a momentous electoral year. Inevitably we recognise familiar – old – trends, but also ponder over what might be promising or indeed worrying new developments and prospects.

Our conference seeks contributions that engage with evolutions of democracies, of their institutions, and of their supporters and critics. We invite you to contribute with original research papers, think pieces and other scholarly work on the following and related issues:

- Continuing trends and new developments in adaptations of and changes to core democratic principles and institutions, both formal and informal;
- Continuities and changes to the social, economic, governance and cultural ‘infrastructure’ on which democracy as a day-to-day operation rests;
- Encouraging and concerning prospects for democracy/-ies as an ideal/-s;
- Opportunities for and risks to democracy as a form of government for freedoms, inclusion and social cohesion, the protection of the environment and the living world, and economic growth.

We actively encourage diverse undergraduate and postgraduate students, doctoral candidates, researchers and practitioners to submit papers, including work in progress, that relate to the theme of democratic ideals, institutions of democracy and democracy in institutions, and practices of democracy and democratic practice across all domains: political participation and participatory democracy, comparative politics, European integration and Europeanisation, public policy, political theory, international relations, constitutional law, political economy, and related domains, including political



philosophy, feminist theory and other critical social theories, gender studies, animal rights, migration, development studies, public administration, political communication and media studies.

This is a **hybrid event**: you are welcome to take part in person or via Zoom.

This conference has no participation fee. We are unable to offer financial support for participants.

Call for Panels: please submit a 250-word blurb by 5 February 2024. We will get back to you with a decision by 12 February 2024. Please send your blurb to: bori.kovacs@fspac.ro

Call for Papers: please submit your abstract of max. 250 words by 1 April 2024. We will get back to you with a decision by 10 April 2024. Please send your abstract to: bori.kovacs@fspac.ro

The organising committee: Daniela Angi, Borbála Kovács & Bogdan Radu

References

Judson, Ellen. 2023. '2024 Will Be a Litmus Test for AI's Effect on Elections – and Voters' Faith in Them'. *The Guardian*, 7 July 2023, sec. Opinion.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/jul/07/2024-litmus-test-ai-elections-voters-trust>.

The Economist. 2023. '2024 Is the Biggest Election Year in History'. *The Economist*, 13 November 2023.

<https://www.economist.com/interactive/the-world-ahead/2023/11/13/2024-is-the-biggest-election-year-in-history>.