

## European Democracy under Threat: How to Make EU Democracy Resilient against Internal and External Challenges?

20 June 2023, 6.30 p.m.

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European democracy is under increasing pressure from internal and external threats. Within the EU, populists and autocrats are challenging European values, the rule of law, and liberal democracy. During the COVID 19 pandemic, many governments have curtailed the rights of parliaments. A new kind of “democratic deficit” has thus emerged in Europe, in which governments have instrumentalised the state of emergency to circumvent parliamentary rules of control and legislation. Moreover, external actors aim to destabilise EU political systems by manipulating elections, spreading fake news and rising cyber-attacks. In the wake of the Russian war against Ukraine, such attacks have taken on a geopolitical dimension.

The European Commission plans to publish its review of the Democracy Action Plan and propose a Defence of Democracy Package to better address these challenges. One year before the next European elections, one question stands out in particular: Are the 2024 European elections safe – free, fair, and equal? We need a thorough assessment of the risk of these elections being disrupted and manipulated? The 2023 Round Table on European Democracy will therefore discuss what makes an emerging and dynamic political system resilient. It will take stock of the state of European democracy and its internal and external challenges. Based on this assessment, we would like to discuss measures that the EU should take to make European liberal and social democracy more resilient to internally and externally induced disruptions. In discussing concrete policy recommendations, particular attention will be paid to the erosion of European democracy in times of crisis, such as the pandemic, and to the risk of vote rigging in European elections by actors from third countries.

### Welcome

Julia ÇETINKAYA, Research Associate, Jean Monnet Chair for Interactive Multilevel Democracy in Europe, Otto-von-Guericke-University of Magdeburg

Julian PLOTKA, Research Associate, Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn and University of Passau

### Panellists

Sandro GOZI, Member of the European Parliament, President of the Union of European Federalists and the Spinelli Group

Christian MOOS, Rapporteur for the Defence of Democracy Package, European Economic and Social Committee; Divisional Director European and International Affairs, German Civil Service Association (dbb); Secretary-General, Europa-Union Deutschland (EUD)

Dr. Maria SKÓRA, Research Associate, Institut für Europäische Politik, Berlin

Jurgis VILČINSKAS, Deputy Head of Division, Strategic Communication, Task Forces and Information Analysis, European External Action Service

### Moderators

Frederico CAMPATELLI, Student, Otto-von-Guericke-University of Magdeburg

Marei ZIZELMANN, Student, University of Passau

