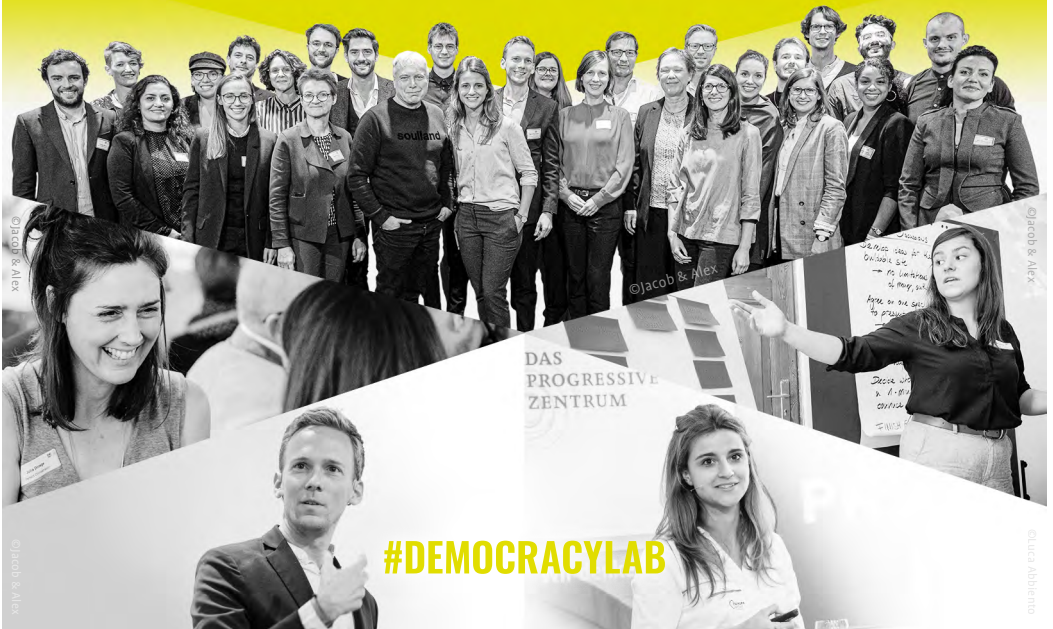




DEMO CRACY LAB

FINAL REPORT



#DEMOCRACYLAB

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EDITORIAL

Dear reader,

In April 2017, we launched the Democracy Lab. The Lab is a space within the independent think tank Das Progressive Zentrum dedicated to the future of democracy and democratic innovation. We created the Democracy Lab as a place for thinkers and doers to gather, network and think about new ideas for politics and civil society.

Our motivation to create this innovative platform came after the turbulent year 2016, with the election of Donald Trump as US President and Brexit becoming a reality. Almost two years later, we are confronted with an ongoing erosion of liberal democracy and shrinking spaces for civil society.

In this challenging context, we are convinced that democracy must not only be defended – but also rethought beyond its current paradigms. Our objective is to develop ideas to prepare our democracy for tomorrow's challenges, but also to develop a better political system that works for all citizens. This is why we started working on incremental reforms of democratic institutions and processes, as well as develop more systemic responses. Based on three pillars – processes, structures, and mental models – we launched several projects, developed new ideas and specific policy recommendations and contributed to the political discourse.

In order to achieve this, we built a vast network of thinkers and doers across Europe that promote democratic innovations.

Our project focused on representation and citizen participation as well as inclusion and mobilisation of young people in the political process. We also researched and discussed topics such as the future of political parties, their relationships to civil society and the cooperation between parliaments in Europe. We tried out new formats such as a “Learning Journey” to give people working close to politics the opportunity to better understand how to shape democracy in their daily lives. We also organised various event series, such as “Democratic Innovation Dinners” or the “Challenging Democracy” series, with prominent thinkers from across the globe.

The annual highlight of the Democracy Lab is the “Innocracy” conference which took place in November 2017, June 2018, and now for the third time in October 2019. There, projects and ideas for a more sustainable and inclusive democracy were presented in keynotes, workshops, and co-creative formats. The conferences brought together thinkers, activists, and decision-makers from over 20 countries to discuss a broad range of topics, such as democratising the knowledge economy, strengthening

transnational public spaces, and developing strategies for civil society organisations under pressure from authoritarian governments.

With its projects, events, and publications, the Democracy Lab has become a hub for innovators in the political sphere in Germany and all over Europe. We will continue our work, building a curated platform that empowers civil society and develops new ideas for democracy.

We would like to particularly thank the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and the programme “Demokratie leben!” for their support for the project “Demokratie 2025: Demokratische Innovationen für eine Gesellschaft im Wandel“.

Warm regards,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hanno Burmester".

Hanno Burmester
Strategic Lead Democracy Lab



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paulina Fröhlich".

Paulina Fröhlich
Head of Programme Future of Democracy

*"THE DEMOCRACY OF OUR SUCCESSORS WILL NOT
AND CANNOT BE THE DEMOCRACY OF OUR PREDECESSORS.
NOR SHOULD IT BE."*

ROBERT DAHL

TODAY, WE FACE A NUMBER OF CHALLENGES



DIGITALISATION

IS CHANGING OUR LABOUR MARKETS
AND THE WAY WE COMMUNICATE



CLIMATE CRISIS

IS CHANGING OUR ECONOMIC SYSTEMS
AND HOW WE LIVE

OUR WORLD BECOMES INCREASINGLY



POLITICAL DISENCHANTMENT & POPULISM
ARE GROWING

BUT OUR POLITICAL RESPONSES TEND TO BE BINARY,
OLD-FASHIONED AND UNIMAGINATIVE

WE WANT TO **CHANGE** THAT



NEW IDEAS & INNOVATIVE PROJECTS NEED A VOICE IN POLITICS
IN ORDER TO **RE-VIVE DEMOCRACY**



THESE IDEAS DESERVE TO HAVE AN



THIS IS WHY WE CREATED THE

**DEMO
CRACY LAB**

I. WHAT IS THE DEMOCRACY LAB?

Das Progressive Zentrum’s Democracy Lab was launched in April 2017 as a platform to bring together thinkers and doers to discuss democratic innovations. Its main objective is to develop positions, ideas and methods to improve and reform democratic structures and processes, but also to think beyond the current intellectual models we apply when thinking about our political system.

We cover a wide range of topics to revive and innovate democracy. All projects within the Lab are carried out in cooperation with various partner organisations and bring together young experts, practitioners, and activists from several sectors.

THE DEMOCRACY LAB AIMS TO...

- ▶ **...reinvigorate democracy.** We want to empower political actors to successfully overcome the complex challenges of our time.
- ▶ **...develop innovative ideas to renew democracy,** which will inspire political decision-makers.
- ▶ **...promote democratic innovations in the public sector** by developing and testing them and thereby improving democratic practices.
- ▶ **...emphasise the advantages of change, agility and a culture of openness.** These are necessary for the legitimacy of our democratic institutions.



DISCUSSION PAPER "SHIFTING FRAMES"

"In six perspectives, the first paper of the Democracy Lab calls for a debate on mental models, architectures and processes on which liberal democracy is founded. In order to revive our current model of democracy, we need to start a discussion that does not replicate existing frames of thought. Instead, we need to create new ideas and perspectives by experimenting more and by cultivating a mindset that cherishes the imperfect."

THE PILLARS OF THE DEMOCRACY LAB



DISCUSSION PAPER "BEYOND (THIS) DEMOCRACY"

“Liberal democracy experiences multiple crises that are potentially fatal: an ecological crisis, a social crisis and an institutional crisis. To tackle these challenges, incremental reform within today’s parameters will not suffice. What it takes to both solve the crises and revive democracy is the re-definition of a 21st century democratic purpose and a radical, transformative approach to doing politics.”

A CONVERSATION WITH HANNO BURMESTER, STRATEGIC LEAD DEMOCRACY LAB

How did the idea of the Democracy Lab start?

Over the past few decades, it has become obvious that there is a growing gap between the structures and processes of representative democracy and the way citizens experience democracy in their daily lives. The Democracy Lab was created to address these complexities on different levels and including various perspectives.

How does the Democracy Lab differ from other projects in the field?

Our mission from the start was to rethink on a fundamental level what a democratic state and society have to offer. We were not interested in restricting ourselves to small procedural innovations but to think beyond the existing framework: transformation instead of innovation. Given recent political developments, we must consider how we, as a people, can change our collective culture and mindset at a time of climate crisis and digitalisation.

What are the substantial challenges for our democracies in this day and age?

In my opinion, we need to scratch beneath the surface to reveal the central challenges democracies face today. Democratic Institutions and processes are, at present, not working for their citizens and appear antiquated in the world of the 21st century. The reasons for this can be attributed to their history. Democratic societies in the ‘West’ were built upon social and economic exploitation. All democratic societies must find ways of eliminating the root causes

of social injustice. If we fail to accomplish this, we will also fail at saving our planet from the climate crisis we have created.

What are the answers offered by the Democracy Lab for these problems?

We are still working on an all-encompassing solution. But, honestly, we have had some impressive results already. First, we started by publishing several texts, which deal with the basics of democratic transformation in the 21st century. Over the past few years, several of our projects addressed the issue of structural reform. Our Policy Fellow Maik Bohne, for instance, got together with the Heinrich Böll Foundation to do a study on the way democratic representation can have a positive effect on the way citizens evaluate the legitimacy and trustworthiness of political actors. Our Lab has developed a range of new and complementary ideas for improving political processes. For example, we launched a project which was specifically designed to make politics more approachable to young people.

Reviewing the past two years, what were your highlights at the Democracy Lab?

Overall, having the opportunity to collaborate with our innovative and creative partners in building an international network of committed democrats, has been a great pleasure for me. The three “Innocracy” conferences were definite highlights of my work. It was at these conferences that it became most apparent

how people within and outside the field of politics are aching for a fundamental change in our democratic political systems.

How do you envision the future of the Democracy Lab?

We do not want to move forward the same way we have in the past. Some elements will continue to be central to our work: The “Innocracy” conference and our co-creative work ethic are

some examples. We will strive towards constant self-improvement in these areas. At the same time, we recognise the need for the advancement of new, larger-scale projects. We are, in fact, in the middle of the process of seeking out partners for our upcoming project: a new vision for democracy. Only if we, as a society, can construct a positive image for the future, we will be able to leave the status quo.

“

“Western democracies need a fundamental change to survive. Those, who wish to preserve our free democracy, must also be willing to support its radical reform now.”

Hanno Burmester, Strategic Lead Democracy Lab



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HANNO BURMESTER is Strategic Lead in the Democracy Lab and Policy Fellow at Das Progressive Zentrum. He was the one who had the idea for a Democracy Lab in the first place. With his company unlearn, he consults companies of all sizes on mastering the cultural aspects of digitisation. In the past, Hanno worked for different political institutions on the national level and as a journalist, mostly for public broadcasters.

II. OUR TOPICS & PARTNERS

In this section, you will find the highlights, topics, and partners we worked with. As a platform, we did not restrict ourselves to a set number of topics. Rather, as an open platform for dialogue and exchange, we looked at what our policy fellows and partners brought forward, selected topics, and then provided the necessary support and feedback for them to work on those topics. This method allowed us to recognise broader trends, such as the clear focus on community building and social cohesion in 2018, the question of ecological democracy in 2019, but also to give space to topics that normally are not on top of the agenda in politics and media, such as the cooperation between parliaments in Europe.

1. HIGHLIGHTS OF THE DEMOCRACY LAB





“Breakfast Briefing: Democratising the Knowledge Economy” (with Nesta and Prof. Roberto Unger)

July 2018:
Carrying out the
“Learning Journey”
of “Democracy as
everyday work”



July 2019:
Policy Brief
“The French
and German
Parliamentary
Treaty”

November 2019:
Series of workshops
on “Politicians ask,
Young People
answer”



June 2018:
**Discussion
Paper:**
“Beyond (this)
Democracy”

August 2018:
End of the first
project phase

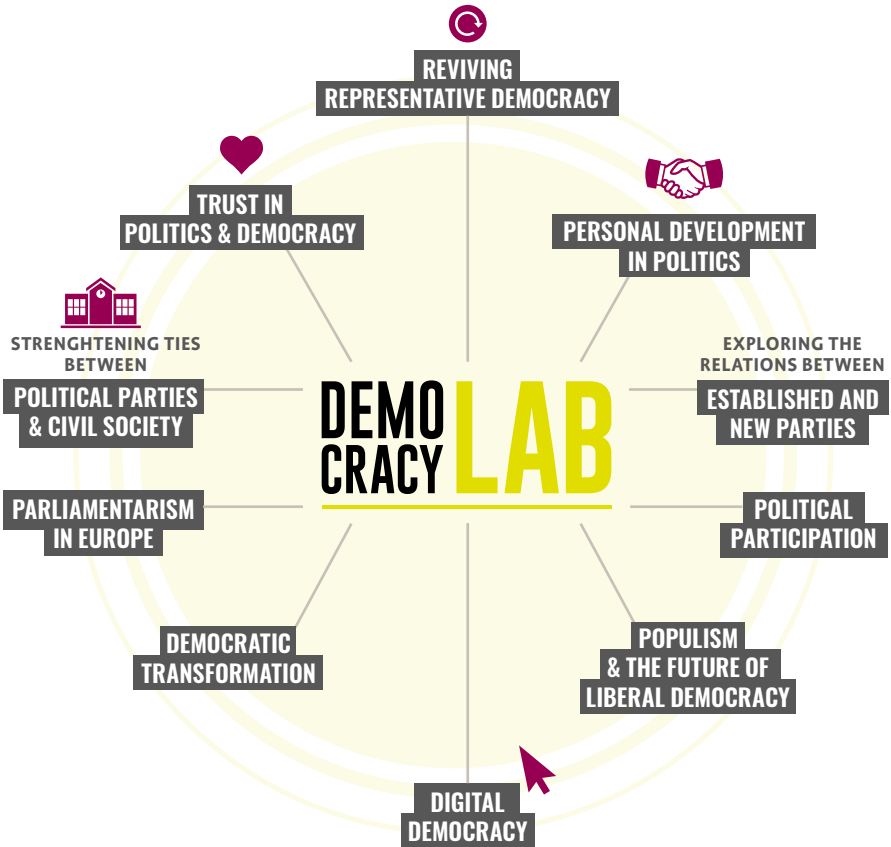
October 2019:
Third “Innocracy”
conference:
“Democratic
Transformation”

INNOCRACY 2019

**December
2019:**
End of
the second
project
phase

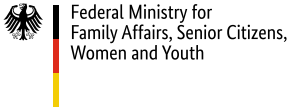
2. OUR TOPICS

As a Lab, our objective is not to have a chosen set of topics and work on them solving problems. Rather, we address the issues that are brought to us. This list is not exhaustive but covers what topics we worked on in the first phase – reflecting the needs of society and politics.



3. OUR PARTNERS

Funded by



as part of the federal programme

Demokratie **leben!**

Partners:



DISI



Liquid Democracy



Media partner of the “Innocracy” conferences 2018 and 2019:



III. OUR PROJECTS

Our projects of the past promoted the debate on democratic innovation and reform, providing new ideas to the political sphere, supporting and empowering civil society initiatives – to work towards a better society and democracy. This encompassed several different projects, event formats, and cooperations. In the following section, we will present three chosen projects in more depth.

1. REVIVING REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY

The common response given in Germany to political disenchantment and populism is: Let's increase citizen participation! By focusing on those debates, representation – the basic element for our democracies – has, in comparison, received little to no attention. Together with the Heinrich Böll Foundation, we decided to have a closer look at how to revive representative democracy beyond calls for more citizen participation.

From November 2017 to August 2018, we discussed these questions with several stakeholders in workshops, focus groups and during interviews. Amongst these stakeholders were: Experts, academics, elected representatives,

citizens from three German cities, with students of NRW School of Governance and, during a session at "Innocracy" conference 2018, with an international audience.

The results of those discussions were recapped in two publications: a Discussion Paper to set the scene and explain the core challenges representation faces, and a Policy Brief with concrete recommendations to improve representation in Germany.

Representative democracies have always faced the challenge of finding common ground between the different positions and interests found in plural societies. But against the



DISCUSSION PAPER
“REVIVING REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY”

POLICY BRIEF
“CONFIDENCE INSTEAD OF DISCONTENT”

present-day backdrop of ‘alternative facts’ and ‘fake news’ defining any kind of common good has become more difficult. We have chosen to take this challenge seriously in the continuation

of our project. We will have expert talks in autumn 2019, and together develop a plan and a set of strategies to counter the threat of authoritarian individualism.

SOME CORE QUESTIONS

- ▶ How can differing political interests and opinions be aggregated in order to be represented properly in the political system, whilst keeping this system responsive and open to new ideas?
- ▶ How can ‘the people’ be represented beyond calls for more direct participation, and whilst strengthening the core institutions of representative democracy?
- ▶ How can we create new places of representation that enable a civilised and inclusive discourse on core issues of society and politics?
- ▶ What are the wishes and expectations of representation, both from the representatives (politicians) and the represented?

“

“Representative democracy can only be strengthened if the system empowers itself. We need a new debate culture between political parties and society, as well as between those represented and those representing.”

Maik Bohne, Fellow Democracy Lab



MAIK BOHNE is a Policy Fellow in the Democracy Lab and the director of the consultancy Die Gesprächspartner. For the 2009 initiative Pro-Dialog, Maik headed the nation-wide and cross-party campaign “Messengers for democracy”. As a consultant at IFOK, he worked both for public administrations as well as private companies for several years until his work eventually led him to the strategic department at the Hamburg Port Authority (HPA). Accompanying this work, Maik has been addressing questions of loss of confidence in the public space and the reform of democracy both in a journalistic and scientific manner.

2. POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE FROM DISADVANTAGED BACKGROUNDS

A social imbalance is an ongoing problem of the German democratic system. Low-income groups are under-represented in politics. This promotes a vicious circle of unequal participation and a lack of representation, leading to alienation of large groups of society and their democratic potential.

Looking at how to break this vicious circle, we soon understood that we would need to start at a young age, often with children and teenagers. This is why we focused on how to improve the political participation of young people from socially disadvantaged backgrounds.

Thanks to interviews with pupils and teachers from high schools in ‘rough areas’ of Berlin, which were made possible by the NGO Teach First Germany, our policy fellow Jérémie Gagné put together a set of recommendations to create more and better opportunities for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to participate in politics.

We presented the policy recommendations during a Paper Launch Event in May 2018 and discussed the results with experts in political education, youth organisations, and political parties.



A FEW SHORT RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ▶ Take young people and their problems seriously
- ▶ Avoid the *selection bias* & open up political rituals, content, and language
- ▶ Recognise and use the spaces young people visit, such as schools
- ▶ Strengthen the multipliers & develop contacts to politically conscious youth in difficult environments ('Train the trainers')
- ▶ Strengthen trust & build up political networks

The insights we gained from this project served as the groundwork for our follow-up campaign “Politicians ask, Young People answer” which we and our partnering Initiative Teach First Germany launched in autumn 2019. Our campaign aimed to get young people in touch with politicians from the State of Berlin. Throughout several workshops, young people could share their concerns with their state representatives and together work on finding solutions for them. After each meeting, the participating politicians would present what they had heard to parliament, and at the next workshop reported back their progress. By being a part

of this process, both parties experienced the mutual benefit of listening to and learning from one another. The politicians gained a better understanding of the challenges young people face, as well as their political potential. They, in return, had a sense of being taken seriously, which in the future may lead to further political engagement.

The results from the workshop were captured in a short film directed by the participating young people. As the protagonists of the film, they share their personal experiences with the audience.

“

“The lack of political participation does not come from a place of disinterest. Rather, our democracy requires more inclusive formats in order to give all citizens the chance of making their voices heard, especially those whose interests are most underrepresented. The Campaign “Politicians ask, Young People answer” took up this challenge. It created a space for politicians and young people to meet as equals and find solutions for problems that had been identified by the latter.”

Jérémie Gagné, Policy Fellow Democracy Lab



JÉRÉMIE GAGNÉ is a Fellow within the Democracy Lab, working on equal representation and political participation. Since 2016, he works for the political research and consulting agency policy matters. Previously, Jérémie worked with the Bertelsmann Foundation, managing publications on the social dimension of political participation. Jérémie holds two master’s degrees in political science and European affairs.

3. “LEARNING JOURNEY” - DEMOCRACY IN THE PROFESSIONAL WORLD

In the Democracy Lab, we like to think beyond traditional frameworks. This also means trying out new formats that have not yet been tested in a political context. One of these formats was called “Learning Journey” and took place in cooperation with the company Compass Orange, which is specialised in organisational development.

From March to June 2018, ten participants working in political parties, ministries, civil society organisations, and other public administration bodies gathered together for six workshop days.

They discussed how to live and promote democracy in their daily lives, working in organisations close to politics.

How can we all make sure to have a participatory culture in a professional context? How can we improve co-decision-procedures in hierarchical structures? At what level – individual or organisational, regional or national – can we ensure that democracy is a topic of conversation? These were some of the questions the participants discussed during this “Learning Journey”.



INTERVIEW

WITH CAROLIN GEBEL, FELLOW IN THE DEMOCRACY LAB

What was the “Learning Journey” and why is it an innovative format?

The driving force behind our “Learning Journey” was to offer empowerment and support to people from a range of different professional backgrounds. We firmly believe in making use of the creative space that lies between different sectors of society. Also, we recognise self-organisation as an important resource for innovation. Our group was made up of a few talented and engaged participants, who are committed to strengthening our democracy from within. Our common goal was to uncover the necessary patterns and requirements needed, to bring out the best in people in terms of their personal and organisational potential.

What was the concept for the “Learning Journey” and what did the participants learn throughout the six sessions?

The “Learning Journey” offered a safe space for self-reflection and personal as well as group-related learning processes. Along with the interests of the participants, theoretical inputs and interventions were given. I introduced

parameters and conditions for changing processes, dealing with resistance to change and creating constructive dialogue processes and community building. In this “Learning Journey”, we started to develop a special language to foster democratic structures in organisations, as well as in groups and society. For me, this was a very inspiring project.

What is the role of democracy in a professional context?

This is an important philosophical question! Our “Learning Journey” built on the following premise: If you wish to foster democracy in your society, you have to act democratically – in all aspects of life. The “Journey” is all about reflecting on your own attitudes towards decision-making, participation and dealing with minority views and opinions that do not affect us personally. For example, *New Work* theories often give the perhaps misleading impression that the process of employment is becoming more ‘democratic’. We will have to take a close look at past and future developments and see if this assumption proves to be accurate.

“

“If you wish to foster democracy in your society, you have to act democratically – in all aspects of life. The “Learning Journey” was about reflecting on your own attitudes towards decision-making, participation and dealing with minority views and opinions.”

— **Carolin Gebel**, Fellow in the Democracy Lab

What are Communities of practice?

Communities of practice is a form of group deliberation to create and gain knowledge related to a specific interest. The concept of *Communities of practice* describes a type of learning that has existed for as long as people have been learning and sharing their experiences. *Communities of practice* can also arise naturally if people working together share a common interest. Or they can be created, such as in environments created during the “Learning Journey”.

Knowledge in groups and organisations is nothing that can be managed. It has to be cultivated, like a garden.



©Compass Orange

CAROLIN GEBEL is a Fellow within the Democracy Lab and worked closely with us as a cooperation partner during the “Learning Journey”. She is the Managing Partner at Compass Orange, an organisational development company. Her work focuses on change management and cultural processes as well as personality development and sustainability in management.



©Jacob & Alex

Workshop during the “Learning Journey”

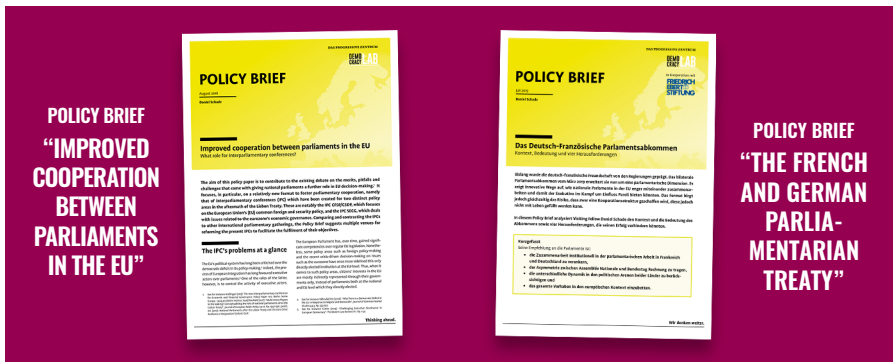
4. INTERPARLIAMENTARY COOPERATION FOR AN EMPOWERED EUROPE

Many of the challenges that the individual member countries of the European Union face require European solutions. At the same time, it is currently difficult for inter-governmental institutions to find a consensus on the critical questions concerning foreign, economic, and social policies. To increase the European Union's capability to act, stronger parliamentary cooperation would be more effective.

Our visiting fellow Daniel Schade researches the current challenges for improved collaboration, particularly by considering interparliamentary conferences and the German-French treaty. In a first Policy Brief (August 2018) on

the interparliamentary conferences, Schade works on the meaning of the national parliament in decision-making processes. For this, Schade analysed the work of interparliamentary conferences since the Treaty of Lisbon and developed recommendations on how such a reform could appear.

In the second Policy Brief (July 2019), Schade emphasised the meaning of the parliamentary dimension of the German-French friendship and gave clear recommendations for action to both parliaments.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- ▶ Anchor the cooperation formally in parliamentary procedures
- ▶ Take measures to adjust the differences in parliamentarianism
- ▶ Think about different political processes in both countries
- ▶ Expand the process to other European parliaments

“

“Parliaments are the central institutions of representative democracy. However, with an increasing internationalisation of politics, they often fall behind the national governments. The two Policy Papers on parliamentary cooperation in both the German-French and the European context show how MPs can strengthen their role again and thus legitimise our democratic forms of government.”

— Daniel Schade, Visiting Fellow in the Democracy Lab



DANIEL SCHADE is a researcher in European Studies at the Otto-von-Guericke-Universität Magdeburg and Guest Lecturer at Sciences Po Paris. After receiving his PhD from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), he then worked at the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna. At Das Progressive Zentrum he is a visiting fellow working on the question of European Political Design and the future of parliamentarianism.

5. DIGITAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES IN OUR DEMOCRACY

The opponents of liberal democracy have mastered effective communication strategies. It is worth considering taking a closer look at these groups in order to effectively face the challenges of our democracy. Steve Bannon, the former chief strategist of the current US President, is famous for his populist communication, his provoking behaviour and also for his efforts to bring together similar thinking politicians for his authoritarian agenda, worldwide. In September 2019, we organised

the Berlin premiere of the documentary “The Brink”, which follows Bannon for over one year during this attempt. At the end of the event, we discussed with Alexander Sänglerlaub and Carina Book what progressive communication could learn from the new right-wing movements – as well as what strategies should not be used, but instead condemned. The small cinema filled each and every last seat, with 50 attendees.

“While some of our guests were convinced that liberal politicians’ agendas are merely lacking convincing content, others instead believed it is the ill-suited form of liberal politics itself that makes it unattractive.”

Paulina Fröhlich, Head of Programme Future of Democracy



Berlin premiere of “The Brink”, documentary about Steve Bannon

IV. THE ANNUAL HIGHLIGHT: THE “INNOCRACY” CONFERENCE

How do we bring together a broad range of thinkers and doers that provide innovative ideas on democratic innovation? That was one of the questions we asked ourselves straight from the beginning of the Democracy Lab. Whilst sitting on a bench outside our office on a sunny summer day, we came up with the idea of an “Innocracy” conference, to be held annually in Berlin.

We did not want another conference full of panel discussions and white collared shirts. Rather, our objective was to bring together academics, politicians and civil society activists from across the globe and especially Europe – breaking up bubbles and promoting an open dialogue that might sometimes be uncomfortable, but always constructive.

INNOCRACY CONFERENCE ON DEMOCRATIC INNOVATION 28 NOVEMBER 2017 | BETAHAUS BERLIN

In November 2017, the first “Innocracy - Conference on Democratic Innovation” took place in Berlin, with a central focus on innovating the political process. Hosting over 120 participants and 26 speakers from 12 countries, we created a space for exchange, incentivised new networks and introduced a variety of international best practices into the German discourse on democratic innovation.

For those who were interested, but could not physically be in Berlin, a live stream of the conference’s mainstage was provided. Additionally, thanks to a “Speaker’s Dinner”, all of the invited speakers could get to know each other better in a personal setting. Following the conference, we published an “Anthology on Democratic Innovation”, which presented some of the most interesting projects from the “Innocracy” conference.

INNOCRACY 2 0 1 8

In June 2018, we organised the second “Innocracy” conference, this time with a strong emphasis on tackling the core challenges our democracy faces, such as digitalisation, globalisation, and climate change, but also questioning traditional paradigms at the heart of the social contract: economic prosperity and social mobility.

In this spirit, “Innocracy 2018” thus invited its participants to confront the systemic challenges democracy must overcome in order to survive. Entitled “The Next Democracy”, we categorised the different sessions in four clusters: “Systemic Reform”, “Sustainable Democracy”, “Digital Democracy” and “Community and Belonging”.

THE FORMATS OF “INNOCRACY 2019”

**INSPIRE:**

A short, catchy stage presentation followed by a Q&A session with the audience. Inspire talks are moderated throughout the day.

**CO-CREATE:**

A facilitated workshop which aims at working together on a question in a collaborative environment and at developing results.

**DEBATE:**

An open dialogue format aimed at exchanging and discussing ideas.

Over 180 participants from Germany, France, Belgium, the UK, Italy, Sweden, the Netherlands, and Poland participated, listened, discussed and exchanged ideas. Our guests were, amongst others, Ulrike Guérot, who presented the idea of the European Republic; Claus Leggewie and Patrizia Nanz, who presented the idea of “Future Councils”; and a range of young leaders who discussed the future of democracy. The conference ended with a keynote speech by German Family Minister Franziska Giffey entitled “Is politics changing? We are changing politics!”, where she ended on an important message: Politics needs to be framed in a manner accessible to everybody – that is the only way trust can be reinstated in democracy.

INNOCRACY **2019**

The third “Innocracy” conference took place in October 2019. Its focus was based on the question of how democratic transformation processes can be applied towards inclusive and sustainable societies. While the main themes of “Digital Democracy” and “Sustainable Democracy” discussed the ‘Outer How’, the third main theme of “Democratic Mindset” focussed on the ‘Inner How’. Uffe Elbæk, the founder and leader of the green Danish party Alternativet, held the opening keynote speech on the relationship between people and nature, which he considered as a requirement for the revitalisation of democracy. Next to the interactive formats, such as co-creation workshops as well as inspire-talks with Q&As and open debates, there was also a live podcast recording and a “Democracy Slam”. Over 230 visitors and 32 speakers from 11 countries participated.



DAS PROGRESSIVE ZENTRUM

DEMO LAB

#INNOCRACY

"Of course coal and cars are just the tip of the iceberg, as our entire economic and financial system need an overhaul. We need a just transition 2.0, which is transformational, radical and democratically rooted"

Sabrina Schulz, Policy Fellow



DAS PROGRESSIVE ZENTRUM

DEMO LAB

#INNOCRACY

CONFERENCE ON DEMOCRATIC INNOVATION

"For me, innovative democracy means us, the citizens, regaining control over both politics and the economy"

Daniel Chavez, Transnational Institute

“

“We certainly do believe that we need more incremental innovation both with regards to the political space and the economic space. But we also realised that this is not enough. Which is why “Innocracy 2019” focuses on democratic transformation. Instead of asking how we can improve the given picture – this is what innovation does – we ask how we must reconfigure its frame – which is what transformation aims to do. So we will ask which new ground rules our societies need in order to be able to meet the existential challenges of today and tomorrow.”

Hanno Burmester, Strategic Lead Democracy Lab





Family Minister Franziska Giffey speaking at “Innocracy 2018”



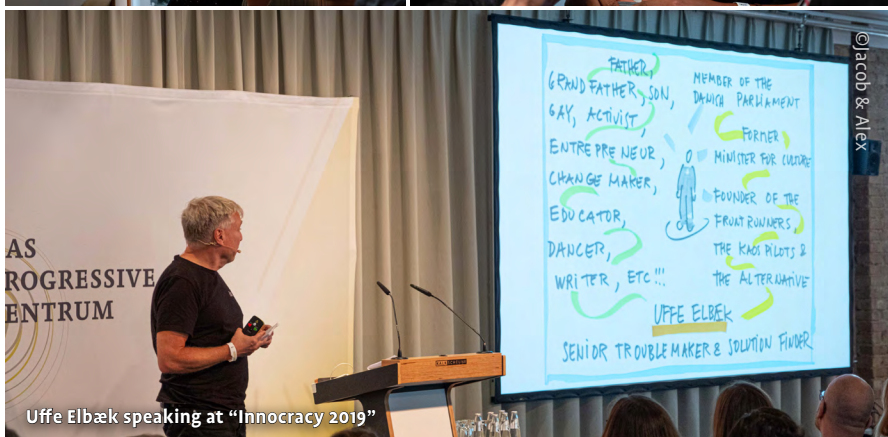
Workshop session during “Innocracy 2018”



Workshop session during “Innocracy 2018”



Workshop hosts of “Innocracy 2019”



Uffe Elbæk speaking at “Innocracy 2019”

THE THEMES OF “INNOCRACY 2019”



DIGITAL DEMOCRACY:

Which political decisions will help to align technological innovation with the fundamental values and goals of democratic societies?



SUSTAINABLE DEMOCRACY:

Which democratic reforms will enable democratic societies to re-embed into the boundaries of the ecosystem? How can democracy help to balance the immediate needs of its citizens and the interests of future generations?



DEMOCRATIC MINDSET:

What do citizens and decision-makers need to be able to meaningfully shape transformative times? What are the consequences for education, social security, political participation, etc.?

<http://www.progressives-zentrum.org/innocracy2019>



Before the “Innocracy” conferences, a “Speaker’s Dinner” took place so that those invited to speak at the conferences could get to know each other and discuss the topics beforehand.

V. FURTHER TOPICS & EVENTS

Aside from our main events and projects, we worked on a number of topics that are all connected to our main objective: Innovating democracy and thinking beyond the traditional paradigms. With discussion papers, policy briefs, paper launch events and discussion rounds, we touched upon a large range of topics related to the future of democracy.

TOPICS WE WORKED ON:

- ▶ “Network Parties – a New Model to democratise and digitise Party Politics?”
- ▶ “Parliamentary Cooperation in the EU and the role of interparliamentary Conferences”
- ▶ “Transforming not digitising: Germany’s path to Digital Democracy”
- ▶ “Populism and De-Democratisation”
- ▶ “The privatised Democracy – how the Outsourcing of Citizen Participation harms our Democracy”
- ▶ “Five Theses for the Democracy of tomorrow”



DISCUSSION
PAPER
“THE
PRIVATISED
DEMOCRACY”

DISCUSSION
PAPER
“TRANSFORMING,
NOT DIGITISING”

FORMATS

1. “DEMOCRATIC INNOVATION DINNERS”



From August 2017 onwards, the Democracy Lab launched an event series entitled “Democratic Innovation Dinners”. In these small formats, we brought together several experts to discuss relevant issues in more depth and in a setting that allowed for an open,

constructive discussion. Thanks to the more informal character of these events under the *Chatham House Rule*, the guests spoke freely, which enabled us to explore points of disagreement and consensus on certain issues with more honesty.

OUR TOPICS

- ▶ Policy recommendations for democratic innovations at the national level
- ▶ Personal development possibilities in the political sphere
- ▶ Updating our democracy: exploring opportunities for change in times of global challenges
- ▶ The development of network parties across the European political landscape
- ▶ Citizen-centered administration in the digital age



2. ROUNDTABLE SERIES: “CHALLENGING DEMOCRACY”

In the “Challenging Democracy” series, we organised exclusive quarterly roundtables with a selected group of participants to discuss the challenges liberal democracies face as well as concrete political responses, together with the think tank Zentrum Liberale Moderne.

The first event took place in February 2018 with the book presentation by academic and author Yascha Mounk, “The People vs. Democracy: Why our Freedom is in Danger and how to save it”. The second event of this series took place in May 2018 and discussed the rise of right-wing populism in Europe and beyond, amongst others with Harvard academic Peter Hall, who specialises in European Studies, and populism expert Cas Mudde of the University of Georgia. In June 2019, the roundtable “Humour in political Discourse: genius, tasteless, dangerous?” followed – moderated by Ferda Ataman, and discussed by Marion Horn, the editor-in-

chief of BILD am Sonntag, Dominik Höch, a lawyer specialised in media law, and Ingmar Stadelmann, a stand-up comedian. In October 2019, we worked on the topic of “Ecology and Freedom”, with a focus on the question, how can liberal democracies implement effective climate policy. Addressing this question, Ralf Fücks from the Zentrum Liberale Moderne, Sabrina Schulz, Director of Federal Affairs for the KfW and Julia Hertin, Executive Director of the German Advisory Council on the Environment, all gave exciting inputs on the topic. The series is also planned to take place in 2020.

VI. THE DEMOCRACY LAB IN THE NEWS

In addition to our projects, the team members of the Democracy Lab were regularly invited to conferences, panel discussions, and workshops to present the work of the Democracy Lab.

Further, we published articles in newspapers and were partners at several conferences, such as the “Creative Bureaucracy Festival” hosted by Tagesspiegel, the “Revision Summit” as well as the international conference “Q Berlin Questions”.

CONTRIBUTIONS IN THE PRESS

ZEITUNG ONLINE

“WHERE ARE THE IDEAS FOR DEMOCRACY?”

July 2017,

by Hanno Burmester & Laura-Kristine Krause

BR

“HOW CAN WE IMPROVE OUR DEMOCRACY?”

August 2019,

with Paulina Fröhlich

TAGESSPIEGEL

“WE’RE READY!”

October 2019,

by Hanno Burmester & Patrizia Nanz



PICTURES FROM KEYNOTES AND TALKS



PICTURES FROM KEYNOTES AND TALKS



VII. THE TEAM BEHIND THE DEMOCRACY LAB

Without a team of dedicated, engaged and energetic people, the Democracy Lab would not be what it is today. Through this project, we have learned that the best ideas emerge in dialogue with others. This is why the most important aspect of our work is to provide a platform for thinkers and doers and to establish an infrastructure for projects to strive.

For that, we have a wonderful team with Das Progressive Zentrum. We would like to thank all the people who made the Democracy Lab possible – our partners, the continuous support of our colleagues, the policy fellows and especially the Managing Director of Das Progressive Zentrum, Dominic Schwickert. Special thanks go to our graphic designer Daniel Menzel, who always bore with us despite the long hours and demanding requests.

In an ever-accelerating world, organisations have to adapt to their environment – this also goes for us. Some of our colleagues left the Democ-

racy Lab during the journey to pursue further careers in the political sphere, and of course, are continuing to fight for a better democracy. We would like to thank our project assistants Stefan Landt and Elisabeth Gniosdorsch for their continuous support. Finally, a big thank you to digital the all-rounder Ann Cathrin Riedel, who supported the Lab as Das Progressive Zentrum's social media manager.

We would also like to thank Laura Bickel and Fabian Voß who worked on the pilot project of the Democracy Lab and Tanya Shoshan, who through being responsible for the organisation and coordination of the “Innocracy” conference 2019, played a central role in the Democracy Lab. Additionally we want to thank the interns who worked on the Lab in 2017, 2018, and 2019: Falco Hüsson, Nicolina Kirby, Eva Zimmermann, Felix Beer, Nele Fritsche, Lukas Kögel, Txai de Almeida, Serafine Dinkel, Romy Hansum, Hendrik Zschoch, Anna Körner, Marcel Bürkle, Paula Faul, Emma Gollhardt, Maxine Fowé, and Johannes Alber.



The team behind “Innocracy 2019”

© Jacob & Alex

HANNO BURMESTER

STRATEGIC LEAD DEMOCRACY LAB



As the strategic lead of the Democracy Lab, Hanno Burmester develops and designs innovative projects and is responsible for the overarching strategic decisions. He brings extensive experience and expertise from various political institutions, from his work as a journalist and as co-founder of the consulting firm unlearn from the field of organisational development in the Democracy Lab. His main focus here is on the future of democracy and parties.

PAULINA FRÖHLICH

HEAD OF PROGRAMME FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY



Paulina directs innovative projects aiming to foster a dialogue between citizens, such as "Europa Hört – eine Dialogreise". Among other things, her work includes projects dedicated to creating a roadmap for dealing with anti-democratic populism in the public realm. Before taking up her current position, Paulina co-founded the initiative Kleiner Fünf, which supports people in constructively countering right-wing populism by employing 'radical politeness'. Shortly after, she became its media spokesperson. Additionally, Paulina worked for The German Society for International Cooperation and Krah AG. She studied Geography and Islamic Studies (B.A.) at the University of Münster and the University of Helsinki and graduated with an M.Sc. in Integrated Water Resource Management from the TH Cologne and Jordan University.

PAUL JÜRGENSEN

TRAINEE IN THE PROGRAMME FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY



After graduating in Governance and Public Policy at the University of Passau and Cardiff University, Paul completed an M.Sc. in Politics, Economics, and Philosophy at Hamburg University. Paul has gained work experiences in several political foundations in Germany and abroad. Additionally, he has worked for Miller & Meier Consulting and Syspons, two Berlin-based consulting firms. Next to his engagement with Das Progressive Zentrum, he teaches political theory at Hamburg University and volunteers as a tutor for underage refugees.

TANYA SHOSHAN

COORDINATOR OF THE "INNOCRACY" CONFERENCE, DEMOCRACY LAB



Tanya Shoshan is a recent graduate from the Hertie School of Governance with a Master of Public Policy. She holds a Bachelor in European Studies from the University of Maastricht and spent a semester abroad in Valencia, Spain. During her studies, Tanya has supported Das Progressive Zentrum as an intern and Project Assistant in the programme International Relations, focusing on EU-related projects. Additionally, she has gained practical experience in the European Parliament and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation.

LAURA-KRISTINE KRAUSE

FORMER HEAD DEMOCRACY LAB



Before Laura Krause became Managing Director of More in Common Germany, she led the Democracy Lab until March 2018. Previously, she worked as a senior associate at Bernstein Public Policy. Laura Krause is co-chair of D64 and Fellow of Transatlantic Digital Debates 2017. She studied Political Science and Public Policy in Passau, Berlin, and Seattle.

SOPHIE PORNSCHLEGEL

FORMER PROJECT MANAGER, DEMOCRACY LAB



Before working for the European Policy Center (EPC) in Brussels, Sophie Pornschlegel managed and coordinated the projects, working with the cooperation partners and in the team as well as the “Innocracy” conference. Her focus is on social cohesion, right-wing populism, and Europe. It brings in experiences from political institutions, private companies, and think tanks. She studied Political Science and European Studies in Paris and London.

MICHELLE DEUTSCH

FORMER PROJECT ASSISTANT, DEMOCRACY LAB



Michelle Deutsch joined the Democracy Lab as a project assistant after being an intern at Das Progressive Zentrum. She has been involved in writing publications and organising events – including the success of the 2018 “Innocracy” conference. She is currently studying Public Policy in the Hertie School of Governance master’s degree program, with a particular interest in citizen and online participation.

DEMO CRACY LAB

Das Progressive Zentrum launched the Democracy Lab in April 2017. It offers a space for creative, interdisciplinary and international exchange. 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



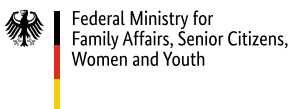
Das Progressive Zentrum, located in Berlin, is an independent and non-profit think tank. The aim of Das Progressive Zentrum is to foster new networks of progressive actors from different backgrounds and to promote innovative politics as well as economic and social progress. In this respect, Das Progressive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

www.progressives-zentrum.org

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IMPRESSUM

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**DEMO
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