

11th Swiss Summer School in Democracy Studies and
7th Deliberative Democracy Summer School

INEQUALITY AND DELIBERATION

23 - 27 June 2025

University of Zurich

PROGRAMME

Monday 23

*Deliberative Minipublics and
the Struggle for Political Equality*

Keynote Lecture h. 16:00

Cristina Lafont Northwestern University
Moderated by Hannah Werner University of Zurich

Roundtable h. 17:30

Céline Colombo Office for Participation, Canton of Zurich
John Gastil Penn State University
André Bächtiger University of Stuttgart
Fabian Reidinger State Ministry Baden-Württemberg
Moderated by Daniel Kübler University of Zurich

Tuesday 24

No Justice Without Deliberative Democracy

Panel 1

John Dryzek University of Canberra
Moderated by André Bächtiger University of Stuttgart

Wednesday 25

*Challenging Inequalities in Latin America
Through Democratic Innovations*

Panel 2

Thamy Pogrebinschi WZB Berlin Social Science Center
Moderated by Daniel Kübler University of Zurich

Thursday 26

*Social Identities, Inequalities and Democratic
Decision-Making*

Panel 3

Edana Beauvais Simon Fraser University
Moderated by Alice el-Wakil University of Copenhagen

Friday 27

*How Europeans View and Evaluate Deliberative
Democracy. Insights from empirical research*

Panel 4

Jean Benoit Pilet Université Libre de Bruxelles
Moderated by Alexander Geisler University of St Gallen



Universität
Zürich ^{UZH}



UNIVERSITY OF
CANBERRA



CENTRE FOR
DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY
AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE



AGENDA

June 2025	Monday 23	Tuesday 24	Wednesday 25	Thursday 26	Friday 27
	KEYNOTE ROUNDTABLE UZH KOL G 217	Panel 1 UZH KOL G	Panel 2 UZH KOL G	Panel 3 UZH KOL G	Panel 4 UZH KOL G
09:00					
09:30		Seminar	Seminar	Seminar	Seminar
10:00					
10:30		KOL G 221	KOL G 221	KOL G 221	KOL G 221
11:00					
11:30					
12:00		<i>Lunch*</i>	<i>Lunch*</i>	<i>Lunch*</i>	<i>Lunch*</i>
12:30					
13:00		Parallel Workshops	Parallel Workshops	Parallel Workshops	Parallel Workshops
13:30					
14:00		KOL G 212 KOL G 220	KOL G 212 KOL G 220	KOL G 212 KOL G 220	KOL G 212 KOL G 220
14:30					
15:00					
15:30					
16:00	KEYNOTE 				
16:30	ROUNDTABLE 				
17:00	Aperitif 	Dinner* 	City Tour* 	Social activity* 	Closing Aperitif*
17:30					
18:00					
18:30					

*For summer school presenters and instructors only



VENUE

University of Zurich (UZH)

Building **KOL** Rämistrasse 71 8006 Zürich, Floor G

Keynote: Room **G 217**

Morning Seminars: Room **G 221**

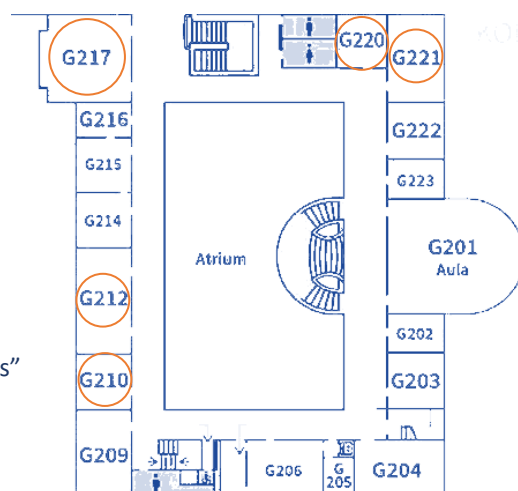
Afternoon workshops: Room **G 212, G 220**

Reception desk and office: Room **G 210**



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DAILY PROGRAMME

Monday 23 June

15:30 Registration and Admission KOL G 210

16:00 Welcome and Opening KOL G 217

Hannah Werner University of Zurich

Daniel Kübler University of Zurich

Simon Niemeyer University of Canberra

16:10 **KEYNOTE** *Deliberative Minipublics and the Struggle for Political Equality*

Prof. Cristina Lafont Northwestern University

moderated by **Prof. Hannah Werner** University of Zurich

The rise of inequality in recent decades has led to an unequal concentration of political power that threatens to wipe out the achievements of centuries of democratic struggles for political equality. This concern explains the appeal of deliberative minipublics such as citizens' assemblies, citizens' juries, or deliberative polls. By empowering ordinary citizens to participate in political decision-making, these institutions can offer citizens a powerful tool to counteract the oligarchic tendencies of electoral democracies. Many argue that since random selection provides all citizens equal chances to exercise political power, citizens' assemblies promote political equality better than electing representatives from political elites. This view fuels proposals for conferring legislative authority to minipublics, either to complement or to replace electoral institutions. In this talk, I analyze the interpretation of political equality that guides these proposals and show its undemocratic features. It justifies a form of 'rule by the few' that would disempower the citizenry even more. I argue in favor of proposals for institutionalizing minipublics that would empower the citizenry and thus improve democratic equality.

Reading

- Lafont, Cristina, and Nadia Urbinati. 2024. *The Lottocratic Mentality: Defending Democracy against Lottocracy*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press (Introduction and Chapter 8).

17:30 **ROUNDTABLE**

Céline Colombo Office for Participation, Canton of Zurich

John Gastil Penn State University

André Bächtiger University of Stuttgart

Fabian Reidinger State Ministry Baden-Württemberg

Moderated by **Daniel Kübler** University of Zurich

18:30 Aperitif 



Tuesday 24 June

PANEL 1 *No Justice Without Deliberative Democracy*

Seminar KOL G 221

9:00 **Prof. John Dryzek** University of Canberra

moderated by **Prof. André Bächtiger** University of Stuttgart

Inequality matters to the degree it is unjust. At the micro level, deliberation has been charged with perpetuating unjust social inequalities, reflected in unequal communicative capacities across individuals. At the macro level, deliberative processes could be complicit in the legitimization of an unjust political economy. Against such critics, I argue that epistemic injustice can be effectively remediated within deliberative forums. Further, at both micro and macro-systemic levels, effective and inclusive deliberation is needed to tell us what justice should mean in particular contexts. The kind of agency necessary here can only flourish under deliberative democratic conditions, such that there can be no justice without deliberative democracy. The argument can be illustrated in relation to climate justice, the Sustainable Development Goals, vaccine justice, genome editing justice, and an alternative to effective altruism.

Readings

- Alnemr, Nardine, Choucair ,Thais, and Nicole and Curato. 2020. 'Can the Poor Exercise Deliberative Agency in a Multimedia Saturated Society? Lessons from Brazil and Lebanon'. *Political Research Exchange* 2 (1): 1802206.
- Dryzek, John S. 2013. 'The Deliberative Democrat's Idea of Justice'. *European Journal of Political Theory* 12 (4): 329–46.
- Parthasarathy, Ramya, Vijayendra Rao, and Nethra Palaniswamy. 2019. 'Deliberative Democracy in an Unequal World: A Text-As-Data Study of South India's Village Assemblies'. *American Political Science Review* 113 (3): 623–40.

12:00 Lunch UZH Mensa MEN

Workshops

	Workshop A KOL G 212	Workshop B KOL G 220
	<u><i>Climate & Environmental Justice</i></u> with John Dryzek and Alice el-Wakil	<u><i>Cleavages and Polarization</i></u> with André Bächtiger and Marco Steenbergen
13:00	Katariina Kulha University of Turku <i>Advancing justice in climate transitions: the potential contributions of deliberative mini-publics - an introduction</i>	Eugen Chapiro University of Southern Denmark (SDU) <i>Reaching agreements on polarized issues: how deliberative consensus-making affects polarization</i>
13:45	Pierrick Chalaye University of Pau and Adour Countries <i>Democratising the (just) energy transition</i>	Basel Mansour University of Geneva <i>Deliberative democracy as a tool to steer historical reconciliation in deeply divided</i>
14:30	Break	
15:00	Mengya Li University of Zurich <i>Deliberative Mechanisms in Co-Produced Low-Carbon Governance: A Case Study of China's Pilot Cities</i>	Jesse Mehravar University of Western Ontario <i>The Inclusivity of Majority and Minority Constructions of Canadian National Identity Boundaries in Face-to-Face Conversations</i>
15:45	Faris Henry Gergis Molde University College <i>Bridging or Barricading? Exploring the State Stakeholders' Attitudes Towards Public Participation in the Context of Sustainable Urban Mobility in Bergen and Trondheim</i>	Agim Selami TU Berlin <i>Using Democracy to Remedy Democracy: Citizens' Assemblies in North Macedonia</i>
16:30	Discussion	Discussion
17:00	End of workshops	
18:00	Book launch session	
19:00	Dinner Restaurant UNITURM UZH	





Wednesday 25 June

PANEL 2 *Challenging Inequalities in Latin America
Through Democratic Innovations*

Seminar KOL G 221

9:00 **Prof. Thamy Pogrebinschi** WZB Berlin Social Science Center
moderated by **Prof. Daniel Kübler** University of Zurich

Inequality is one of the most pervasive challenges to democracy. It erodes political inclusion, weakens accountability, undermines the rule of law, and perpetuates social injustices. Yet, while socioeconomic disparities restrict opportunities for meaningful citizen participation, democratic innovations emerge as a response to such problems, aiming to enhance democracy by improving social equality and political inclusion. This lecture will explore how democratic innovations can address inequality, focusing on Latin America, one of the most unequal regions in the world. Using a problem-driven approach to democratic innovations, we will examine concrete cases of participatory institutions and processes designed to tackle income and territorial inequalities, unequal access to goods and services, and discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, and age.

Readings

- Pogrebinschi, Thamy. (2023) *Innovating Democracy? The Means and Ends of Citizen Participation in Latin America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press - pages: 1-12 and 58-76.
- Touchton, Michael, and Brian Wampler. (2014). "Improving Social Well-Being Through New Democratic Institutions." *Comparative Political Studies*, 47(10), 1442–1469.
- Schattan Ruas Pereira Coelho V. & Waisbich L., (2016) "Participatory mechanisms and inequality reduction: searching for plausible relations", *Journal of Public Deliberation* 12(2)
- Pogrebinschi, Thamy. (2023) *Innovating Democracy? The Means and Ends of Citizen Participation in Latin America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press - pages 12- 36 (optional, for Latin America context)

12:00 Lunch UZH Mensa MEN

Workshops

	Workshop A KOL G 212	Workshop B KOL G 220
	<u><i>Representation and Communication</i></u> with Thamy Pogrebinski and Nenad Stojanovic	<u><i>Institutional Design</i></u> with John Gastil and Alexander Geisler
13:00	Nivek Thompson University of Technology Sydney <i>Inclusion in deliberative mini-publics: challenges and opportunities</i>	Mariana Morais TU Berlin <i>Space politics of citizens' assemblies: seating, badges, and microphones arrangements shaping inclusive participation</i>
13:45	Olivia Kamgain University of Ottawa <i>Can descriptive representatives be accountable?</i>	Pieter Velghe UCLouvain <i>Policy Follow-Up of Participatory Processes in Brussels: Tracing the impact of participation in an institutionalized context</i>
14:30	Break	
15:00	Weronika Kędzia Adam Mickiewicz University <i>The Language(s) of Deliberation: Citizens' Assemblies in Multilingual Societies of Central and Eastern Europe</i>	Victor Sanchez-Mazas University of Geneva <i>Innovating democracy with the people? Designing a citizens' assembly for democracy</i>
15:45	Ralph Martins The Ohio State University <i>Storytelling in small-group deliberation: Who, What, and Why?</i>	Elisa Vogel Pennsylvania State University <i>Digital affordances and deliberative democracy: A comparative case study of online participatory technologies</i>
16:30	Discussion	Discussion
17:00	End of workshops	
18:00	City Tour – Zurich's powerful women	
20:00	End of City Tour	





Thursday 26 June

PANEL 3 *Social Identities, Inequalities and Democratic Decision-Making*

Seminar KOL G 221

9:00 Prof. Edana Beauvais Simon Fraser University
moderated by Prof. Alice el-Wakil University of Copenhagen

My present work builds on the notion that we need to rethink the nature and location of collective action due to not only changing modes of production, technology, and communication, but also the rise in identity politics and other postmodern features of political culture (Warren 2001). I consider how the socio-demographic composition of social and political associations—including democratic innovations—impact their ability to achieve democratic aims. By “democratic aims,” I mean outcomes related to inclusion, outcomes related to learning and opinion change, and outcomes required for democratic legitimacy—such as representing difference and coordinating cooperation. Specifically, I consider whether associations need to promote cross-cutting interactions to achieve democratic outcomes or whether, and under what conditions, exclusive identity-based associations—such as exclusive racial-, gender-, or sexuality-based associations—can promote democratic aims. Existing work in democratic theory does not hold high hope for exclusive identity-based associations (Warren 2001). In my present work, I make the case that the positionality of identity-based group matters for whether these groups have higher or lower potential for achieving democratic outcomes. Drawing on feminist theories of intersectionality, Iris Young's concept of seriality, and bellhooks' theories of centering the margins helps us see that, when it comes to constituting identity groups, there is more flexibility in terms of exit than we might think, what it means to couch something in terms of common interests varies depending on context, and identity goals can promote cooperation and coordination, thus deepening democratic legitimacy. That is, even the most basic, ascriptive identity groups are not merely given, they are taken up and enacted, and how and why they are taken up and enacted matters for their democratic potential

Readings

- Warren, Mark E. 1999. ‘Introduction’. In *Democracy and Trust*, edited by Mark E. Warren, 1–21. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wojciechowska, Marta. 2019. ‘Towards Intersectional Democratic Innovations’. *Political Studies* 67 (4): 895–911.
- Young, Iris Marion. 1994. ‘Gender as Seriality: Thinking about Women as a Social Collective’. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 19 (3): 713–38.

12:00 Lunch UZH Mensa MEN

Workshops

	Workshop A <i>Marginalization</i> with Edana Beauvais and Hannah Werner	Workshop B <i>Theories of Inclusion</i> with Alice el-Wakil and Simon Niemeyer
13:00	<p>Marcella Pereira Nery HWR Berlin</p> <p><i>Political Inclusion of Marginalized Groups in Democratic Innovations: A Study of the German Context</i></p>	<p>Ceri Holman University of York</p> <p><i>Addressing Inequalities Through Deliberative Pedagogy</i></p>
13:45	<p>Euchan Jang Ohio State University</p> <p><i>Deliberation's Dark Matter: Silence, Marginal Speech, and Systemic Exclusion</i></p>	<p>Kirsten Lydic University of Pennsylvania</p> <p><i>Accessing the imaginary: Participatory intervention research as a catalyst for enacting strong democracies</i></p>
14:30	Break	
15:00	<p>Olivia Gheyselinck Vrije Universiteit Brussel</p> <p><i>Intersectional Barriers to Participation in Climate Assemblies: A Study of the Brussels and Paris Cases</i></p>	<p>Nemanja Andjelkovic University of Belgrade</p> <p><i>The contribution of deliberative democracy to the process of democratization of the public sphere: articulating inclusive contestation</i></p>
15:45	<p>Iphigénie Koutsougeras UCLouvain</p> <p><i>Intersectionality and Deliberative Democracy: Theoretical Challenges and Methodological Complexities</i></p>	<p>Sammy McKinney University of Cambridge</p> <p><i>The Politics of Scaling Democratic Innovation: Meanings, Goals, and Concerns</i></p>
16:30	Discussion	<p>Olivia Mendoza University of Canberra</p> <p><i>Emotional Labour: A Feminist Agenda for Deliberative Democracy</i></p>
17:15		Discussion
17:30	End of workshops	
17:45	Meetup at bQm bar	



Friday 27 June

PANEL 4 *How Europeans View and Evaluate Deliberative Democracy: Insights from empirical research*

Seminar KOL G 221

9:00 **Prof. Jean Benoit Pilet** Université Libre de Bruxelles
moderated by **Alexander Geisler** University of St. Gallen

While we know that citizens assemblies and other deliberative forums are spreading across Europe, we still know relatively little about how they are perceived by the wider public. In this lesson, we will present and discuss the burgeoning literature on public support for deliberative democracy. In particular, we will explore three elements: (1) how much support there is among Europeans for a greater use of mini-publics, (2) what are the main traits of citizens who support (vs. those who oppose) a deliberative turn in contemporary democracies, and (3) under what conditions mini-publics seem to generate greater public support.

Readings

- Choi, Jeongho, and Byung-Deuk and Woo. 2025. 'Support for a Strong Leader or Democracy, or Both?' *Democratization* 32(1): 76–95.
- Claassen, Christopher, Kathrin Ackermann, Eri Bertsou, Lucas Borba, Ryan E. Carlin, Amnon Cavari, Sirianne Dahlum, et al. 2025. 'Conceptualizing and Measuring Support for Democracy: A New Approach'. *Comparative Political Studies* 58(6): 1171–98.
- Pilet, Jean-Benoit, Davide Vittori, Sebastien Rojon, and Emilien Paulis. 2024. 'Who Do Europeans Want to Govern? Exploring the Multiple Dimensions of Citizens' Preferences for Political Actors in Nine European Countries'. *Party Politics* 30(2): 367–78.

12:00 Lunch UZH Mensa MEN

Workshops

	Workshop A	KOL G 212	Workshop B	KOL G 220
	<u>Impacts of Deliberation</u>		<u>Artificial Intelligence in Deliberation</u>	
	with Jean Benoit Pilet and Simon Niemeyer		with Daniel Kübler and Francesco Veri	
13:00	Fanny Möckel Uppsala University		Nicolás Palomo Hernández Scuola Normale Superiore	
	Potentials and challenges of deliberative mini-publics in Swedish landscape planning		Doing politics through the algorithm: Using AI to 'augment' deliberative democracy	
13:45	Elena Anna Paola Reinhart University of Geneva		Brooke Hubsch Penn State University	
	Participation equality and Opinion Changes		AI, Governance, and Talking Together: The role of deliberative values in public perception of decision legitimacy	
14:30	Break			
15:00	Andri Heimann University of Zurich		Toni Wessmann University of Turku	
	Exploring deliberative multiplier effects on minipublic participants' social network		Analyzing Citizens' Assembly Discussions: Deliberation, Outcomes, and the Role of AI in Synthesizing Results	
15:45	Tim Daw Stockholm University		Omer Bilgin University of Oxford	
	A survey experiment on the public impact of video media on a climate assembly. Effects on attitudes towards climate policy and citizens' assemblies.		To what extent can AI tools reduce representational inequalities in deliberative democratic engagements?	
16:30	Valeria Vuk University of Zurich		Maher Akraa University of Zurich	
	Online Citizen Participation and Democratic Legitimacy: The Impact of Self-Selection and Sortition		Meme Warfare and Digital Hate Speech: Analyzing Extremist Discourse in Swiss Student Protest Comment Sections	
17:15	Discussion		Discussion	
17:45	End of workshops			
18:00	Final Aperitif			
				



INSTRUCTORS

Cristina Lafont	Northwestern University	John Gastil	Penn State University
John Dryzek	University of Canberra	André Bächtiger	University of Stuttgart
Thamy Pogrebinski	WZB Berlin Social Science Center	Alexander Geisler	University of St. Gallen
Edana Beauvais	Simon Fraser University	Francesco Veri	University of Zurich
Jean Benoit Pilet	Université Libre de Bruxelles	Simon Niemeyer	University of Canberra
Nenad Stojanovic	University of Geneva	Daniel Kübler	University of Zurich
Alice el-Wakil	University of Copenhagen	Hannah Werner	University of Zurich
Marco Steenbergen	University of Zurich		

PARTICIPANTS

Maher Akraa University of Zurich	Ceri Holman University of York	Olivia Kamgain University of Ottawa
Olivia Gheyselinck Vrije Universiteit Brussel	Nemanja Andjelkovic University of Belgrade	Euchan Jang Ohio State University
Omer Bilgin University of Oxford	Marcella Pereira Nery HWR Berlin	Victor Sanchez-Mazas University of Geneva
Iphigénie Koutsougeras UCLouvain	Sammy McKinney University of Cambridge	Faris Henry Gergis Molde University College
Tim Daw Stockholm University	Fanny Möckel Uppsala University	Mengya Li University of Zurich
Pierrick Chalaye University of Pau and Adour Countries	Nicolás Palomo Hernández Scuola Normale Superiore	Pieter Velghe UCLouvain
Jesse Mehravar University of Western Ontario	Toni Wessmann University of Turku	Katariina Kulha University of Turku
Elena Anna Paola Reinhart University of Geneva	Brooke Hubsch Penn State University	Kirsten Lydic University of Pennsylvania
Elisa Vogel Penn State University	Andri Heimann University of Zurich	Valeria Vuk University of Zurich
Weronika Kędzia Adam Mickiewicz University	Olivia Mendoza University of Canberra	Agim Selami TU Berlin
Nivek Thompson University of Technology Sydney	Basel Mansour University of Geneva	Eugen Chapiro University of Southern Denmark
Ralph Martins Ohio State University	Mariana Morais TU Berlin	

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23 - 27 June 2025, Zurich

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