



Center for EU
Enlargement Studies

CENTRAL
EUROPEAN
UNIVERSITY



FRONTIERS OF
DEMOCRACY

Embedding Democratic Values

Social Transition and Political Socialization in Central and Eastern Europe

Venue: Central European University (1051 Budapest, Nádor u. 9), Popper Room

Date: December 4, 2015

Democratization is a complex process that entails both critical choices of new institutions, and most importantly, the rooting of those institutions in the societal ethos. Most of the literature on democratic transition and consolidation has been dominated by the study of institutional crafting, especially in post-communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe, where not only political but also economic and social institutions had to be created in the aftermath of the fundamental transformations starting to occur after 1989. However, the footprint of a healthy democracy cannot only be measured in terms of institutional performance, but it has to include citizens' engagement with the new institutions, and, in fact, a change of mentality that reflects their attachment to the new system.

Thus, the process of embedding democratic values and creeds in a pre-existing belief system marred by features of mistrust, fear and corruption created by totalitarian communist regimes and hardships of transition is a difficult task. We consider that the construction of a democratic political culture – one that reflects interest in and understanding of the new system, and also the desire to participate, motivated by political efficacy – is a process worth exploring, from both academic and practical points of view. During these unstable times, it is the people's attachment to democratic values that may keep governments in check and preclude them from slipping into populist and anti-democratic measures.

10.00 – 10.30 Registration

10.30 – 10.40 Opening Remarks

Delivered by Miklós Haraszti, Director of Research on Human Rights, CEU Center for EU Enlargement Studies, Budapest

10.40 – 12.30 Panel 1. – Embedding Democratic Values

The first discussion of the workshop introduces the “Frontiers of Democracy: Embedding Democratic Values” project and lays out the key ideas and points behind. It will then initiate a discussion around the connections between institutional and social transition, change of rules and change of mentalities.

Speakers:

Bogdan Radu, Visiting researcher, CEU Center for EU Enlargement Studies, Budapest

Olga Gyarfásová, Assistant professor, Institute of European Studies and International Relations, Comenius University, Bratislava

Adam Reichardt, Editor-in-chief, New Eastern Europe, Cracow

Alexandru Baltag, Associated expert, Foreign Policy Association of Moldova, Chisinau

Chair:

Zsuzsanna Végh, Research fellow, CEU Center for EU Enlargement Studies, Budapest

12.30 – 13.30 Lunch break

13.30 – 15.30 Panel 2. – Political Socialization and Participation

The second panel focuses on the role of political socialization in shaping new democracies and states in transition. It pays particular attention to conventional and unconventional political participation and new trends in CEE in this domain (e.g. the rise of social media). It seeks to explore what role certain arenas of socialization and participation have in changing mentalities and embedding democratic values.

Speakers:

Dániel Mikecz, Junior Research Fellow, Institute of Political Science, Hungarian Academy of Sciences; Research fellow, Republikon Institute, Budapest

Jan Husák, Czech Council of Children and Youth, Prague

Maria Zolkina, Research fellow, Democratic Initiatives Foundation, Kyiv

Chair:

Bogdan Radu, Visiting researcher, CEU Center for EU Enlargement Studies, Budapest

15.30 – 15.40 Concluding remarks

*With this event, the Center for EU Enlargement Studies launches a series of discussions around various aspects of democratic change in order to study the phenomenon of social transition and how democratic values become embedded in societies in transition. The discussions are organized in the framework of the project entitled “**Frontiers of Democracy: Embedding Democratic Values in Moldova and Ukraine**”, but their scope of enquiry reaches beyond and encompasses democratic change in the wider Central and Eastern European region. The project “Frontiers of Democracy: Embedding Democratic Values in Moldova and Ukraine” is supported by the International Visegrad Fund and is part of the “Frontiers of Democracy” initiative of the Central European University. It is implemented in cooperation with EUROPEUM in the Czech Republic, the Foreign Policy Association in Moldova, the Institute for Euro-Atlantic Cooperation in Ukraine, the Kosciuszko Institute in Poland and the Research Center of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association.*