



EUROPEAN DEMOCRACY ACTION PLAN

17 March 2021 | 10:00 – 12:45 | Online event



The rise of populism and increasing attacks against civic space and free media are a sign that democracy cannot be taken for granted. To address these challenges, it is necessary to consolidate the foundations of democracy by protecting citizens' ability to engage into free and informed public debate and to make decisions through free and fair processes. The phenomena of malign interference into debates, misinformation and disinformation call for efforts in the area of awareness raising to help citizens distinguish as much as possible facts from fiction.

The hearing will feed the EESC preparation of its Opinion on the [Democracy Action Plan](#) which lays the ground for the adoption of measures in these areas, through the promotion of free and fair elections (including democratic engagement beyond elections), the strengthening of media freedom, and the countering of disinformation.

#EUDemocracy

Programme

10:00 - 10:15 | OPENING

- **Mr Istvan Komoróczy** – EESC Study Group President: welcome
- **Mr Carlos Manuel Trindade** – EESC Rapporteur: presentation of the Opinion's objectives

10:15 - 11:00 Panel I – GENERAL ASPECTS

Moderator: **Mr Andris Gobiņš** – EESC Co-rapporteur

- **Ms Carla Grijó** – Deputy General Director of European Affairs, Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- **Mr Julien Mousnier** – Head of Unit SG.E.1 (Citizens, Equality, Democracy & Rule of Law), Secretariat General of the European Commission
- **Ms Aleksandra Dulkiwicz** – Mayor of Gdansk, Committee of the Regions Rapporteur for an opinion on the European Democracy Action Plan
- **Prof. Carlo Ruzza** – Professor of Political Sociology at the University of Trento
- **Ms Alexandrina Najmowicz** – Secretary General, European Civic Forum

11:00 - 11:15 Questions & Answers

11:15 – 11:30 – BREAK

11:30 – 12:15 Panel II – SPECIFIC ASPECTS: Elections, democratic engagement, media, disinformation

Moderator: **Mr Alfredas Jonuska** – EESC Member of the Study Group

- **Mr Domènec Ruiz Devesa** – Member of the European Parliament (S&D, Spain)
- **Mr Todor Ivanov** – Secretary general, Euro Coop
- **Mr Julian Scola** – Head of Press and Communications, European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)
- **Ms Renate Schroeder** – Director, European Federation of Journalists (EFJ)
- **Mr Flavio Grazian** – Participatory Democracy Manager, European Citizen Action Service (ECAS)

12:15 - 12:30 Questions & Answers

12:30 - 12:45 | CLOSURE

- **Mr Carlos Manuel Trindade** – EESC Rapporteur
- **Mr Andris Gobiņš** – EESC Co-rapporteur