

Learning schools for democracy?

Young People, Politics and Civic Education

Workshop

22 November 2021, Brussels, Belgium

Call for papers

The relationship between young people and politics is allegedly under pressure. Young people are increasingly indifferent to politics, sceptical of politicians, and even less supportive of democratic institutions (Blais & Rubenson, 2013; Dalton, 2004; Foa & Mounk, 2016; Henn, Weinstein, & Forrest, 2005). At the same time, youths have been more invested in political action that is less closely related to the electoral arena, including protest activities and political consumerism (Sloam, 2007). Scholars disagree whether these findings indicate the growing discontent of young people with democracy, or whether they simply indicate a shift in patterns of political participation among younger people (Ekman & Amnå, 2012). Regardless of where the grains of truth lie, it is clear that young people's engagement with formal politics is under pressure.

The workshop will deal with these issues from two angles:

- **Political socialization:** On the one hand, we will look at processes of political socialization of young people. In two sessions, we will analyze the complex relationship between youths and politics: Is there a problem, and what exactly constitutes the problem? How has young people's engagement with politics changed over time? How can we reduce young people's political alienation? What can be the role of institutional innovations (youth parliaments, youth councils, democratic innovations...) in bridging the gap between young people and politics?
- **Civic education:** On the other hand, we will focus on processes of civic education. In two sessions, we will analyze whether civic education can create mutual rapprochement between young people and politics. How should civic education practices be organized? What are innovative political education practices? How do teachers handle civic education in class? And what should be the goals of these practices?

Expected contributions

We invite papers dealing with the issue of young people, political socialization and civic education. The workshop welcomes original empirical work, but also theoretical papers, and is open to papers from all methodological traditions.

Paper proposals (abstracts of 500 words, with name and affiliation of the author(s)) should be emailed to robin.lebrun@ulb.be by June 21st, 2021. Paper proposals, as well as the accepted papers, can be submitted and presented in English, French or Dutch. The notification of acceptance will be announced by June 30th, 2021.

Updated Timeline

- 21/06/2021: Deadline for paper proposal
- 30/06/2021: Notification of acceptance
- 1/11/2021: Submission of final paper
- 22/11/2021: Paper presentation in Brussels

Organizing committee

- Didier Caluwaerts – Vrije Universiteit Brussel
- Bernard Delvaux – Université catholique de Louvain
- Emilie van Haute – Université libre de Bruxelles

The workshop is organized in the framework of the Innoviris Anticipate research project 'Jeunes&Politiek', in collaboration with the Brussels Parliament.