CRISIS OF DEMOCRACY? THE ROLE OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE YEAR OF GLOBAL ELECTIONS 2024

A roundtable event on the importance of political parties and electoral developments for Global Europe (2024-2029)

Political parties contribute significantly to the consolidation of democracy by serving as crucial intermediaries between the public and the government. They play a crucial role by organizing and representing diverse interests and viewpoints by offering a structured platform for debate and discussion as well as facilitating the development and articulation of policy ideas. By competing in elections, parties provide voters with clear choices and help ensure government accountability. Parties also promote political participation, mobilizing citizens to engage in the democratic process and influencing policy decisions.

However, parties sometimes fail today due to issues such as lack of resources and ideological divergences within party lines, and failure to adapt to changing societal needs such as integrating youth in their structures adequately. This leads to the emergence of new parties that better address contemporary concerns and offer fresh perspectives. To survive cutthroat competition, parties must remain adaptable, responsive to their constituents, and committed to ethical governance.

This roundtable event, organized with a focus on the New EU Commission's commitment to democracy promotion, brings together selected representatives of political parties from around the globe. Against the backdrop of the 2024 elections in the EU, India, Georgia as well as intersting case studies such as Colombia or Nigeria to name some examples, it offers a unique platform for networking and exchanging experiences, fostering a deeper understanding among like-minded political entities. This initiative is crucial for enhancing international party dialogue, promoting collaboration and mutual learning among diverse political groups. Additionally, it signifies a significant step forward for the EU institutions in their efforts to engage with political parties worldwide, strengthening democratic processes and governance globally.

This event underscores the EU's role in facilitating constructive political discourse and cooperation internationally. Through two of moderated topical discussions, participants will explore themes that build on one another. By examining diverse country-specific contexts, participants will identify commonalities, share best practices, and collaborate on innovative solutions to future challenges in terms of democracy promotion and which role political parties can play.

Contributors will be identified and approached by KAS in cooperation with European Network of Political Foundations. In order to foster an open exchange, all meetings will be held under **Chatham House Rule**.

AGENDA

21 November 2024 (TBC)

09.30 h **Welcome to the event and explanation of its goals**

Dr Olaf Wientzek
Director, Multinational Development Policy Dialogue
Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Brussels

09.35 h **Input on "Political Parties and the Crisis of Democracy after the EU Elections 2024"**

Prof Thomas Poguntke
Co-Director of the Institute for German and International Party Law and Party Research (PRUF), Heinrich-Heine-University, Düsseldorf

Dr Wilhelm Hofmeister
Fellow and Lecturer of Political Sciences, Heinrich-Heine-University, Düsseldorf

Topic:

- How do parties contribute to the consolidation of democracy and what are the most common challenges that lead to a crisis in democracy?
- Why do new parties emerge and displace old parties, and what parties need to do in order to survive cutthroat competition?
- What are problems specific to your party in your country context?

10.00 h **Thematic Panel on "What do elections show us about the role that parties play in the development of democracy in various countries around the world?"**

Short 5-minute **input statements** from 2 different authors from Colombia and Nigeria on key topics in their countries for the EU Commission by

Followed by Q&A and Open Discussion

Moderated by **Wilhelm Hofmeister**

12.00 h **Networking Lunch**

14.00 h **Introduction of the new EU-Project on Women and Youth in Democracy (WYDE) and the European Network of Political Foundations (ENoP)**

Mr Gary Klaukka
Executive Director of the European Network of Political Foundations (ENoP)

14.30 h **Introduction on Party Decline and Party Modernization - Lessons from KAS**

Mr Marcel Schepp
Advisor for International Party Dialogue
Democracy, Rule of Law and Political Parties, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Berlin

followed by

Learnings from 2024: „What do the elections results mean for political parties and the EU's approach for democracy promotion?"

Short 5-minute **input statements** from 4 for different representatives of countries with elections in 2024 (Georgia, India, South Korea, Tanzania) the EU Commission

With a focus on the following questions:

- Is the EU aware of the issues surrounding party decline and democratic regression and what can be avenues for the EU institutions to counteract/react to these developments?
- What results do you expect from a strategy on EU democracy promotion in the next 5 years? Where have you seen successes and where is a need for improvements?

Followed by Q&A and Open Discussion

Moderated by **Mr Marcel Schepp**

16.30 h **Coffee Break**

17.00 h **Discussion of Findings and moderated Feedback Round**

Moderated by **Jonas Nitschke**, Programme Manager for Democracy and Governance, KAS MDPD

17.30 h **End of Roundtable followed by reception and a marketplace of the Member Organisations of ENOP**