

Expert Round table
Social movements as alternative arenas of political participation
Mobilising citizens in the re-creation of trust and distrust

20 June 2022

16:00 – 17:30

Online meeting

Round table with stakeholders from civil society, MEPs, governance actors, scientists who will discuss findings from the [EnTrust](#) project Integrated Report on the role of social movements. Its aim was to analyse the role that social movements, as alternative arenas of political participation, could have in creating and reproducing trust and distrust. The report gathered information on the interaction and possible interplay between two recent and growing trends: citizens' withdrawal from institutional political arenas and the rise of contemporary contentious politics manifested as increased participation of citizens in new social movement practices in the following countries: Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland and Serbia, covering diverse mobilisations on democracy, environment, right to housing, rights of women and of minorities. The report provides better understanding of the social movements' alternative visions of Europe – as a political and social space – and alternative ways of (re)building trust in its institutions. We also gathered insights into the way these social movements interrelate with more established mainstream civil society organisations (CSOs) and political parties and about their understanding of democracy.

The Expert round table will look into the relationship between mistrust in governance and collective mobilization through social movements, as well as on the effects of social movements on trust-building. The rise of new social movements that mistrust institutional politics, but develop “critical trust” through alternative conceptions of democracy and democratic spaces, in fact could be seen as an answer to the problem of the decline of political trust found in contemporary democracies. This debate is particularly timely in the context of the rise of new social movements within the political, social and environmental crisis that Europe is facing, and in the perspective of the follow up of the Conference on the Future of Europe and debates on increasing citizen's participation. The debate will help us to fine-tune and improve our recommendations.

We would like to explore the following questions as regards to the findings of the report: - What should be the response of Governments at the local, national and EU level? What lessons learnt for civil society: towards an increased decentralised, inclusive governance? What role for academics and scientists in decision making processes?



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Agenda:

1. Welcome and introduction to the roundtable by:

Prof. Christian Lahusen, University of Siegen, Germany

2. Presentation of the report on the role of democratic social movements in the formation of trust and distrust:

Irena Fiket, Institute of Philosophy and Social Theory of the University of Belgrade, Serbia

3. Panel Discussion with:

Helmut Scholz, Member of the European Parliament, Observer to the Executive Board of the Conference on the Future of Europe

Anelia Stefanova, Energy Transformation Strategic Leader, CEE Bankwatch Network, Bankwatch CEE

Gordana Rammert, Council Member of the City of Bielefeld, CoR Young Elected Politicians Programme

Adrien Licha, Coordinator of the Brussels Office of ALDA, the European Association for Local Democracy

Alexandrina Najmowicz, Secretary General of the European Civic Forum

Gazela Pudar Draško, Institute of Philosophy and Social Theory of the University of Belgrade, Serbia

Moderated by ***Carlotta Besozzi***, Coordinator of Civil Society Europe

4. Closing and final discussion on lessons to be drawn:

Prof. Christian Lahusen, University of Siegen, Germany

