

# First International Forum on Digital and Democracy. Towards A Sustainable Evolution (IFDaD 2020)

## 1. Introduction

The online Forum brings together politicians and academia to address the concern on how Digital Age exploited for political purposes is challenging democracy by threatening the integrity of its institutions and bodies.

Associazione Copernicani together with Re-Imagine Europa promoted the event held under the umbrella of the European Commission, UNESCO, SDSN, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. The forum has received the appraisal of the President of the Italian Republic: Medaglia del Presidente della Repubblica.

The Forum goal is to gain a greater understanding and a shared view of the impact digital transformations are posing to liberal and democratic values with special focus on the impact of a global health pandemic.

The Forum opens with a keynote address by Hon. Věra Jourová, European Vice-President for Values and Transparency, unveiling the European Democracy Action Plan, the European Commission flagship initiative that seeks to strengthen democracy and promote digital literacy. Her intervention will set the scene for the two-day discussions engaging among the others sociologist and Spanish Minister of Universities Manuel Castells, former EU President Romano Prodi; public policy analyst Jeffrey Sachs. Though online, the forum will safeguard the opportunity of direct exchanges between the interveners with on purpose chat rooms. Presented at the Forum also ten unpublished academic papers on the most pressing questions around the impact of AI, blockchain and ADM on political decision, social involvement, functioning of parties, information access and integrity.

The program sessions were organized according to four tracks, namely:

- **TRACK 1 Democracy and political decision:** Analysis from an individual standpoint: develop effective, accountable and transparent Institutions. The role of technology in pursuing such aims. Computer aided policy making, civic artificial intelligence. How artificial intelligence could assist citizens in activating their rights, including information and participation rights. The changing role of institutions based on inclusive voting. How e-voting can help the formulation of parliamentary and assembly proceedings (e.g. critical situation like COVID-19). Balance between representative system and direct or deliberative participation.

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- **TRACK 2 Social involvement and participation:** Analysis from a society standpoint: ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels. How people are engaged and eventually become part of the organization. How people are educated and informed; how the public opinion is formed and can be oriented; how media and platforms should work to promote democracy and human rights (top down flows). Citizen inclusion and digital divide: gender, age, education.
- **TRACK 3 Participation and functioning of parties:** Analysis from a body standpoint: broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance. How people opinion is collected, structured and analyzed; how people self-organize to form political entities; the role of participatory budgeting, e-Consultation, e-Polling, and e-Legislation [citizen assemblies, popular initiatives, petitions (bottom up flows)]. Parties' internal operation: frameworks for a political ERP system.
- **TRACK 4 Information access and integrity:** Analysis from a institution standpoint: ensure public access to sound information and protect fundamental freedoms in accordance with national legislation and international agreements. How people are informed about the work of organizations (including PA). Methods to finance political parties and campaigns; methods for countering corruption; how to address the self-propagation issue in the political class (i.e. people getting in power and then doing whatever it takes to stay there and/or get a private financial gain). Big data, fake news and democracy manipulation: after Cambridge Analytica.

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