



The Citizen Perspective on Democracy & Representation

Perceptions, Expectations and Narratives

Workshop
13th – 14th of April 2027

Political representation lies at the heart of modern representative democracies. While traditionally scholars have focused on the actions of representatives, the constructivist turn in representation theory has led us to understand political representation not as a unilateral act, but as a dynamic relationship. From this perspective, it is essential to understand how citizens evaluate, assess and conceptualize representation.

The workshop seeks to explore this citizen perspective on democracy and representation by considering different angles: The citizens' perceptions, the narratives they have been exposed to and the narratives they in turn construct, as well as the expectations they hold with regard to their representation. Furthermore, we want to explore how these expectations relate to perceptions of and satisfaction with democracy to get a better understanding of determinants of democratic resilience.

We welcome research on questions such as: How do citizens assess representation and how/why do subgroups differ? How does “feeling represented” relate to or impact satisfaction with democracy? Which role does representation play in citizens' conceptualizations of democracy? Which expectations and preferences do citizens hold with regard to their representation and how are they formed? How and why do subgroups differ in their conceptualization of democracy and/or representation? We look forward to both quantitative and qualitative empirical contributions from political science and neighboring disciplines but are always open to participants from other disciplines whose research ties in with the workshop's overarching topic.

Abstracts of 300–400 words, along with a brief biographical note, should be submitted to both organisers by **30th of November 2026**. Accepted participants will be notified by 15th of December 2026. We reimburse external participants' travel and accommodation costs.

Logistics: The workshop starts on the 13th of April at 09:00 and ends on the 14th of April at 12:30. As most external participants will probably arrive in Greifswald on the 12th, we will organize an informal get-together in the evening. The workshop will be hosted at the Interdisciplinary Centre for Baltic Sea Region Research (IFZO).

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