

## ***Alternatives to parliamentary democracy in Europe.***

Date: June 2-3

Room: 22.0.47

The purpose of this interdisciplinary seminar is to explore the historical developments of the political language of democracy and its impact on the current significance of democracy in Europe. Parliamentary democracy has a pivotal status in the modern understanding of democracy in European countries and is seen as a basic tool to further democratize the European Union. The history of European democracy though cannot merely be seen as a process of democratization. Instead European democratic history and the history of the European Union revolve around of conflicts over different concepts of democracy. Discussions and research on this topic is highly relevant due to the current disputes over legitimacy and democratic procedures with regards to the enduring economic crisis (and the EU's recovery plans) and the escalating challenges in the wake of the European refugee crisis.

The seminar thus invites participants to approach the changing and contested meanings of democracy and reflect on the alternatives to representative electoral democracy. By exploring such cases we wish to shed light on the constant negotiation on what is accepted as democratic. Such alternative concepts of democracy harbour the potential of guiding further democratization both in the nation states, but also in the EU. Thus a look at the historical alternatives to the current democratic practices might offer us a better understanding of *exactly* these practices.

The seminar will be organized jointly by the EURECO research network represented by Jesper Vestermark Køber (PhD student, Saxo, University of Copenhagen), and Ilkka Käryllä, (PhD student, Department of Political and Economic Studies, University of Helsinki); Gaard Kets (PhD student, Political Science, Radboud University); Ditte Maria Brasso Sørensen (PhD student, Department of Political Science, University of Copenhagen).

The aim is to establish a network of younger scholars from various disciplines working on topics related to the study of democracy, in Europe and in the EU. The seminar especially invites PhD students from history and political science to present papers with the aim of expanding the knowledge on the conceptualization of Democracy in 20<sup>th</sup> century Europe.