

Montenegrin Political Science Association (MoPSA) invites you to its first annual conference to be held in cooperation with the Faculty of Political Science University of Montenegro on May 29–30th 2025:

DEMOCRATIC RESILIENCE IN CHALLENGING TIMES:

Insights from Political Science
and Beyond

conference

May 29—30th 2025
Podgorica, Montenegro

THE STATE OF DEMOCRATIC RESILIENCE WORLDWIDE IS FACING SIGNIFICANT STRAIN, WITH MANY COUNTRIES EXPERIENCING A DECLINE IN DEMOCRATIC FREEDOMS, RULE OF LAW, AND POLITICAL ACCOUNTABILITY. ACCORDING TO RECENT REPORTS, GLOBAL DEMOCRATIC BACKSLIDING CONTINUES AS AUTHORITARIAN TENDENCIES RISE, AND CIVIC SPACES SHRINK. EVEN ESTABLISHED DEMOCRACIES ARE NOT IMMUNE, GRAPPLING WITH CHALLENGES LIKE POLITICAL POLARIZATION AND WEAKENED PUBLIC TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS.

IN THE WESTERN BALKANS AND CENTRAL-EASTERN EUROPE, DEMOCRATIC RESILIENCE IS PARTICULARLY FRAGILE. COUNTRIES IN THIS REGION STRUGGLE WITH ENTRENCHED WEAK RULE OF LAW, ETHNIC TENSIONS AND CHALLENGES TO MEDIA FREEDOM AND THE OVERALL REGION'S TRAJECTORY REMAINS UNCERTAIN. POLITICAL INSTABILITY, POLARIZATION AND DEMOCRATIC BACKSLIDING IN SOME STATES UNDERMINE EFFORTS FOR EU INTEGRATION AND LONG-TERM DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION. THE RESILIENCE OF DEMOCRACY IN THE WESTERN BALKANS IS TESTED BY BOTH INTERNAL DYNAMICS AND EXTERNAL PRESSURES, MAKING THE NEED FOR REFORMS AND STRENGTHENED DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES ALL THE MORE URGENT.

The conference seeks to examine the overarching theme of democratic resilience from the perspectives of political science and related disciplines and welcomes papers that offer valuable contributions to this topic.

The paper proposals should include a title, abstract (300-350 words), keywords (4-5) and information about the author(s). Proposals, in a Word document, should be sent to mopsa.mne@gmail.com with the subject line "MoPSA 2025."

The deadline for abstract submission is February 15th and the authors can expect the decision on acceptance by March 15th, 2025.

The conference will be opened by keynote address by Professor **WOLFGANG MERKEL** (Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung Berlin WZB and Democracy Institute of the Central European University CEU in Budapest): *What is democratic resilience and how to strengthen it* and feature the guest lectures by Professor **RUTH DASSONNEVILLE** (Université de Montréal) and Professor **JAN ZIELONKA** (University of Oxford).

Montenegrin Political Science Association invites political scientists and scientists from other disciplines to submit their work and take part in critical discussion about the state of democratic resilience in both global and regional contexts. We encourage submissions that explore the factors contributing to the decline or strengthening of democracy, with a particular focus on political behavior, rule of law, information and media freedom, ethnic relations, and institutional reforms. The conference aims to foster an interdisciplinary dialogue that addresses the complex challenges facing democratic governance today, while also offering potential pathways for revitalizing democratic practices in fragile contexts like the Western Balkans and beyond.



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