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Executive Summary

The following document represents the SHAPEDEM-EU project's common understandings of its essential terms. SHAPEDEM-EU's goal is to rethink, reshape and review the EU's support for democratic politics in its Eastern and Southern Neighbourhoods. The diverse and multi-perspective constellation of SHAPEDEM-EU's partners, objectives and activities require a unified set of concepts to contextualize the ongoing work. Over the course of the project's first 8 months, its partners collaborated to define the concepts listed below. This document serves as a guiding manual for users to familiarize themselves with how SHAPEDEM-EU perceives democracy support and its related concepts.

The manual's inception and final output were directed by Michelle Pace and Christian Achrainer from Roskilde University. Through a series of meetings, deliberations, feedback and proof-reading phases, as well as final touches, the contributing authors and editors collectively prepared this conceptual manual. However, while much effort has been put into defining and agreeing upon these key terms, our understandings, as well as the understandings of our target audiences, are of course not stagnant. Thus, the concepts may be subject to change as SHAPEDEM-EU engages with key stakeholders to learn more about local democratic knowledge and practices of democracy support.

We hope you enjoy our understanding of these vital concepts and stay connected for any updates and further publications within the SHAPEDEM-EU project.

Agency

drafted by JUK with input from CIDOB & RUC

Agency signifies an **ability of a given entity to act on its own volition, with a certain intent and an ability to reflect on its actions and adapt them according to circumstances**. According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, agency can mean "**the capacity, condition, or state of acting or of exerting power [and/or] a person or thing through which power is exerted or an end is achieved**." Entities that possess agency are agents. At times, these agents act on behalf of other agents (principals), which are higher in internal institutional hierarchies. The discussion whether entities have an independent agency is connected to the existence of structural constrains. While some argue that structures determine what actors do, thus downplaying agency, others claim that actors shape structures, thus highlighting agency.

SHAPEDEM-EU considers a large variety of agents from the macro- to the micro-level, including those who have been denied agency in the field of democracy support in the past. By and large, this comprises agents at the **state level** (e.g., EU member states, Neighbourhood countries, other global and regional powers), **non-state agents** (e.g., organised civil society, social grassroots movements, individual citizens), and **international and regional organisations** (e.g., the EU, the UN). All these agents can be promoters and/or contesters of democracy and democracy support (in and through practices).

There has been a long-lasting debate, whether the EU, being a supranational entity, can have independent agency. Some argue that the EU is solely an agent of the member states (the principals), from whom it derives all its authority and competences. Others point out that (at the latest) since the Treaty of Lisbon, the EU has developed its own agency, which has gone through a substantial and progressive process of consolidation by ways of Europeanisation. They argue that the EU by its mere existence exerts influence beyond its borders, and that it has certain independent capabilities and instruments to act.

Key texts

Carlsnaes, Walter (2016): Actors, Structures, and Foreign Policy Analysis. In Steve Smith, Amelia Hadfield, Tim Dunne (Eds.): *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 113-129.

Giddens, Anthony (1984): *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Royo, Joseph (2012): *Agency and International Relations: An Alternative Lens*. E-International Relations. Available online at https://www.e-ir.info/pdf/26000, last accessed on 20/12/2022.

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Authoritarian Learning

drafted by JUK with input from RUC

Authoritarian learning is the **process of knowledge and skills acquisition that aims to sustain or strengthen authoritarian rule**. Authoritarian regimes observe and analyse developments from other times/other places and adapt the latter according to their goals. It can be implemented through **'lesson drawing'** (also called **'learning by example'**) both from its own domestic past events and from other regimes' experiences regarding their survival strategies and practices (particularly the negative ones). 'Learning by example' allows for the shaping and/or reshaping of decision-making processes about the timing and choice of particular strategies; it usually occurs without direct contact between actors.

The practices of authoritarian learning are increasingly embedded in regional and international cooperation. **'Learning through exchange'** embraces various linkage forms of authoritarian regimes: sharing of ideas on new ways to repress, subvert and co-opt threats to their rule; providing each other with technical and material support; protecting each other and their style of ruling at the international level through cooperation in international organisations; providing each other with direct personal advice on how to cope with insurgent forces.

In the **era of new technologies of information and communication**, authoritarian learning occurs more rapidly and is much more effective. The internet provides a useful platform for spreading authoritarian propaganda, and for undermining democratic regimes abroad as well as their democracy support policies. What is more, it enables nondemocratic regimes to provide digital tools in order to survey, repress, and manipulate domestic and foreign populations (**'digital authoritarianism'**).

Key texts

Bank, André; Edel, Mirjam (2015): Authoritarian Regime Learning: Comparative Insights from the Arab Uprisings. GIGA Working Papers 274. Available online at https://pure.giga-hamburg.de/ws/files/21213102/wp274_bank_edel.pdf, last accessed on 20/12/2022.

Erdmann, Gero; Bank, André; Hoffmann, Bert; Richter, Thomas (2013): International Cooperation of Authoritarian Regimes: Toward a Conceptual Framework. GIGA Working Papers 229. Available online at https://pure.giga-hamburg.de/ws/files/21213778/wp229_erdmann_bank_hoffmann_richter.pdf, last accessed on 20/12/2022.

Schedler, Andreas (2002): The Menu of Manipulation. In *Journal of Democracy* 13 (2), pp. 36-50.

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Authoritarianism

drafted by JUK with input from RUC

Authoritarianism is an **undemocratic conception or practice of power, in which non-elected individuals and/or (interest) groups hold and exercise power instead of the people and/or its elected representatives**. Typical characteristics are the primacy of the executive above legislative and judicial branches and the restriction of civil and political rights. Authoritarianism is situated between two poles: democracy, based on the free alternation of majorities, and totalitarianism, which imposes its vision of the world through the systematic and total control of the political sphere as well as both the public and private life of all citizens.

According to Juan Linz (2000), an authoritarian regime possesses four attributes: (1) **limited political pluralism**, realised with constraints on the legislature, political parties, and interest groups; (2) **political legitimacy based upon appeals to emotion**, and identification of the regime as a necessary evil to combat "easily recognizable societal problems, such as underdevelopment, and insurgency"; (3) **minimal political mobilisation** and suppression of anti-regime activities; 4) **formally ill-defined executive powers**, often vague and shifting, which extends the power of the executive. According to the extent of these attributes, the regime can take the form of either a full authoritarianism or a partial/competitive one.

Full (consolidated) authoritarianism refers to a regime in which no viable channels exist for opposition to concur or contest legally for executive power. This category includes hegemonic regimes in which democratic institutions exist formally but are reduced to façade status in practice. **Competitive authoritarianism** is a hybrid regime (also referred to as a semi-democratic regime), equipped with constitutional channels through which opposition groups compete for legislative and executive power. Elections are held regularly, and opposition parties are not legally prevented from competing, even though their position is usually weakened by the lack of free, independent media and constrained civil society.

Key texts

Levitsky, Steven; Way, Lucan A. (2002): The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism. In *Journal of Democracy* 13 (2), pp. 51-65.

Linz, Juan J. (2000): *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.

Schedler, Andreas (2006): *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*. London: Lynne Rienner.

Community of Practice

drafted by RUC

A Community of Practice (CoP) is "a **group of people who routinely share a practice of doing something they see as socially meaningful, with tools that they consider appropriate for the task**" (Bicchi 2016: 465). According to Wenger (1998), three sources of coherence bind CoP members together: 1) **High degree of ongoing mutual engagement**: Members constantly interact with each other; 2) **Sense of joint enterprise**: Members collectively develop an understanding of what the CoP is about; 3) **Shared repertoire of communal resources**: Members produce a heterogeneous set of tools, which can include terminology and language, narratives and stories, gestures and symbols, routines and concepts.

These three criteria are closely related to and can be subsumed under the fact that **CoPs share and apply tacit background knowledge**. Background knowledge is "the knowledge that actors 'think from' rather than 'think about'. [It is] the kind of knowledge that actors often acquire over time through lived everyday experiences, and therefore it tends to be intuitive and inarticulate" (Bremberg and Danielson 2022: 45). When **new members join, they learn the background knowledge of the CoP and base their practices on it**, which effectively means adapting to the ways of doing things within a specific CoP. This specific form of learning is a key element of CoPs, because "individuals acquire their knowledge when they learn to participate in the knowledge of others" (Adler 2008: 201).

Background knowledge is non-reflexive. Individuals acquire it without taking a critical standpoint, and once knowledge is internalised, they perform practices largely unconsciously. Learning within a CoP is not primarily concerned with information gathering (know that) but with generating practical knowledge (know how). New members learn how to perform practices according to established background knowledge of the CoP, but **members and the CoP do not learn how to change and improve practices over time**. Consequently, background knowledge and practices hardly ever change but are constantly reproduced.

Key texts

Adler, Emanuel (2008): The Spread of Security Communities: Communities of Practice, Self-Restraint, and NATO's Post-Cold War Transformation. In *European Journal of International Relations* 14 (2), pp. 195-230.

Bicchi, Federica (2016): Europe under Occupation: The European Diplomatic Community of Practice in the Jerusalem Area. In *European Security* 25 (4), pp. 461-477.

Bremberg, Niklas; Danielson, August (2022): Communities of Practice and the Everyday Making of EU Foreign and Security Policy. In Niklas Bremberg, August Danielson, Elsa Hedling (Eds.): *The Everyday Making of EU Foreign and Security Policy: Practices, Socialization and the Management of Dissent*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, pp. 37-55.

Wenger, Etienne (1998): *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning and Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Contestation

drafted by UoW with input from JLU & RUC

Contestation is defined as a "**social practice [that] entails objection to specific issues that matter to people. In international relations contestation by and large involves the range of social practices, which discursively [and/or behaviourally] express disapproval of norms**" (Wiener 2014: 1). Norms, which Wiener defines as principles, rules and/or values, require regular contestation to work. Accordingly, contestation is an important – even necessary – element in resilience-related processes of reflection, adaptation, and renewal. The mode of contestation, that is the way contestation is displayed in practice, depends on the respective environment in which it takes place. Contestation is constitutive of social change, for it always involves a critical redress of norms – the rules of the game. It can hence help to "establish which norm is appropriate and how to implement it" or add to the "re-/construction of normative meaning" (Wiener 2014: 19).

Thus, contestation can be seen as a **positive dynamic of reflection**, and it must be part of any healthy democratic process. It permits an often-necessary identification of problems such as undemocratic practices or out-of-date institutions, encouraging them to change and reform so that they can remain "fit for purpose" (Flockhart 2020). Through peoples' contestation, lawmakers/those in power/governments are challenged to critically reflect and re-evaluate their decisions and policies. However, **contestation can equally challenge democracy and democracy support**. In recent years, particular forms of contestation (e.g., populism, alternative facts and fake news) have somewhat escalated to the level of more fundamental litigation of norms of democracy as such, both within the EU and in the Neighbourhoods.

Key texts

Biedenkopf, Katja; Costa, Oriol; Góra, Magdalena (2021): Introduction: Shades of Contestation and Politicisation of CFSP. In *European Security* 30 (3), pp. 325-343.

Flockhart, Trine (2020): The Liberal International Order and Peaceful Change: Spillover and the Importance of Values, Visions, and Passions. In *Ethics & International Affairs* 34 (4), pp. 521-533.

Wiener, Antje (2014): *A Theory of Contestation*. Heidelberg: Springer.

Decolonisation

drafted by RUC with input from IAI

Decolonisation refers to the **process of dismantling colonial structures and thinking, which are based on a particular mindset and result in concrete actions and forms of engagement**. It describes the struggle for independence and its outcome, and it refers to the transition from a colony to a self-governing entity based on the consent of the population (self-determination) and with its political and economic fortunes under its own direction (albeit not necessarily control).

In recent years, decolonisation has increasingly denoted a primarily academic and cultural movement, influenced by the decolonial turn promoted by Latin American thinkers including Anibal Quijano and Walter D. Mignolo, who take aim at the supposed universality of 'Western knowledge'. In essence, decolonisation necessitates a **rejection of the Eurocentric Weltanschauung** (a particular view of the world) and its lingering influence among the colonised in favour of 'indigenous knowledge systems'. Decolonisation is hence about having the mindset to take seriously the works of thinkers outside of the Euro-American canon, which means taking seriously the principles of subjectivity, self-direction, and self-ownership.

In terms of democracy and democracy support practices, decolonisation refers to **real self-determination and making space for the agency of the (formerly) colonised**. Legacies of colonialism have generally been overlooked in theories of democracy. Yet, it must be acknowledged that colonialism and the historical context of the colonial era played important roles in the very emergence of (liberal) democracy in Europe. Moreover, decolonisation has somewhat become a catch-all trope, which is often used for contemporary morality and authenticity claims but has nothing substantial to contribute to intellectual thought. Using the label for reactionary and/or self-righteous reasons must be avoided – otherwise the use of the concept can become a post-colonial practice in itself.

Key texts

Mignolo, Walter D. (2009): Epistemic Disobedience, Independent Thought and Decolonial Freedom. In *Theory, Culture & Society* 26 (7-8), pp. 159-181.

Quijano, Aníbal (2000): Coloniality of Power and Eurocentrism in Latin America. In *International Sociology* 15 (2), pp. 215-232.

Táíwò, Olúfẹ́mi (2022): *Against Decolonisation: Taking African Agency Seriously*. London: Hurst Publishers.

Democracy

drafted by RUC with input from JLU

SHAPEDEM-EU conceptualises democracy broadly. It not only necessitates an **adequate institutional arrangement**, but it also comprises **social elements**. After all, "political problems can only be addressed at the personal or community level through inclusion and social empowerment. The meaning of democracy [must therefore be] transformed [...] to democracy as a mode of being or a mode of life" (Chandler 2014). Accordingly, **democracy materialises and manifests itself in and through practices which are based on local systems of democratic knowledge**.

Meaningful participation is a core element of democracy because it empowers communities to retain control over their wellbeing. This must be based on inclusivity, which means to give real agency to everyone. Here, the concept of **deep democracy** adds value, as it stresses that all voices must be considered in decision-making and that particular attention should be paid to divergent points of view (Mindell 1992). Accordingly, any **healthy democracy must make room for practices of contestation,** as stressed in concepts such as radical and aversive democracy. Democratic norms require regular contestation to work, and contestation is a necessary element in processes of reflection, adaptation, and renewal. Thus, contestation permits the identification of undemocratic practices, and it drives decisionmakers to re-evaluate their decisions and policies. However, contestation can, of course, equally challenge democratic norms and democratic knowledge as such.

Resorting to this conceptualisation, SHAPEDEM-EU avoids a prescriptive notion of democracy. Yet, any form of democracy must rely on basic principles. For a rough guideline, the **concept of embedded democracy** can be used (Merkel 2004). It argues that five partial regimes stand at the core of a democracy: 1) democratic elections; 2) political liberties; 3) civil rights; 4) horizontal accountability; 5) effective power to govern. These five partial regimes are interrelated and influence each other (**internal embeddedness**), and they are embedded in an environment which encompasses, enables and stabilises the democratic regime, and includes civil society, social justice and stateness (**external embeddedness**).

Key texts

Chandler, David (2014): Democracy Unbound? Non-Linear Politics and the Politicization of Everyday Life. In *European Journal of Social Theory* 17 (1), pp. 42-59.

Merkel, Wolfgang (2004): Embedded and Defective Democracy. In *Democratization* 11 (5), pp. 33-58.

Mindell, Arnold (1992): *The Leader as Martial Artist: An Introduction to Deep Democracy*. San Francisco: Harper San Francisco.

Democracy Learning Loop

drafted by JLU with input from RUC

The continual process of **mutual learning** within a learning loop is guided by the desire to collectively assemble the available knowledge from all stakeholders on a given issue. This necessitates that all participants are ready to 1) acknowledge that a process of de-learning and un-learning may be necessary to free ourselves from mental mappings; 2) actively listen and take all other participants seriously; 3) be aware that knowledges attained are informed by and infused with culturally embedded understandings; 4) be aware that the social context influences practices of learning; and 5) invest sufficient time and capacities.

Hence, the **democracy learning loop** is defined by a fundamental motivation to be responsive to lessons learned regarding pluralised, localised and contextualised practices of democracy both within the EU and in the Neighbourhoods. It must be **inclusive** both regarding actors involved and ideas considered. All stakeholders must be heard and be equal participants in the loop, and a prescriptive notion of democracy must be avoided. Thus, the loop must be **open to local experiences and democratic practices**. In this way, scepticism of the EU and democracy can be met with an open-mindedness.

By applying such a loop, stakeholders must understand democracy support as an open-ended journey in which all actors contribute to and benefit from an ongoing learning process – acknowledging that this journey may experience setbacks. Central to this exercise is a de-centring of predominantly Western European accounts of "core norms" related to peace, liberty, rule of law and civil rights. Thereby, the EU, as well as other external democracy supporters, can move beyond previous binary approaches to democracy support and can overcome the hierarchical relationship between "democratisers" (the EU) and "democratisees" (Neighbourhood countries). Of course, respective de- or un-learning can be challenging as creating new intellectual nodes requires the rejection of previous baseline assumptions.

Key texts

Huber, Daniela; Kamel, Lorenzo (2022): *Decolonising (Knowledge on) Euro–Mediterranean Relations: Insights on Shared Histories and Futures*. IAI Research Studies 7. Rome: Edizioni Nuova Cultura.

Sawyer, R. Keith (2022): *The Cambridge Handbook of the Learning Sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sadiki, Larbi; Saleh, Layla (2021): On EU–Arab Democratization: Towards a Democratic 'Learning Loop'. In Dimitris Bouris, Daniela Huber, Michelle Pace (Eds.): *Routledge Handbook of EU-Middle East Relations*. New York: Routledge, pp. 253-264.

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Democracy Support

drafted by IAI and RUC

Democracy support can be defined as **discursive or behavioural practices of interaction supporting democratisation**, and EU democracy support in the Neighbourhoods is conceptualised as **practices performed within a complex constellation of communities of practice** (CoP). The community of **insiders stands at the core of this constellation**, consisting of three sub-CoPs: the deciders within EU institutions, supporters within EU member states and local supporters in the Neighbourhoods (the latter two include NGOs, implementation agencies, think tanks, etc.). The insiders act in an environment consisting of at least **three groupings of outsider CoPs who all contest the insiders' practices** in one way or the other: outsiders contesting democracy support malpractices (those who advocate for good practices instead), outsiders contesting EU democracy support as such (those who do not want the Neighbourhoods to democratise), and outsiders contesting EU democracy support by performing contradicting practices in other foreign policy areas (those EU actors who engage with the Neighbourhoods in questions of energy, migration, security, and trade).

Due to lacking exchange between CoPs within the constellation and the way in which CoPs function, the insiders perform practices solely based on their own community's background knowledge. However, they do not critically reflect on past malpractices and thus do not learn how to change and improve them. Therefore, EU democracy support is not meeting two principles which should guide respective practices:

1) **social embeddedness**: external (democracy support) practices can be pursued at the institutional/macro, the civil society/meso, and the individual/micro level; they should not be exclusive and top-down (at the macro level only and involving only some selected actors) but inclusive and transparent (involving various actors on the meso and micro level as well).

2) **social empowerment**: external (democracy support) practices should not promote a Eurocentric model of democracy in an asymmetric donor-recipient/sender-receiver relationship but support local demands and imaginaries of democracy, taking seriously the diverse historical, socio-economic and cultural circumstances in which democracy grows.

Key texts

Achrainer, Christian; Pace, Michelle (2023): *Working Paper on Democracy and Democracy Support*. Deliverable D1.1 of SHAPEDEM-EU.

Chandler, David (2014): Democracy Unbound? Non-Linear Politics and the Politicization of Everyday Life. In *European Journal of Social Theory* 17 (1), pp. 42-59.

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Digital Transformation

drafted by NaUKMA with input from CIDOB and RUC

In the context of politics and for the purpose of SHAPEDEM-EU, digital transformation (DT) refers to **adaptation and implementation of digital technologies into political and social processes**. Recognizing its multidimensional and complex nature, DT first and foremost points to enhancing democratic procedures by incorporating new digital possibilities for citizens participation in political acts. Thereby, more sustainable practices for maintaining operational, transparent, and accountable democratic institutions can be implemented.

Thus, in democratic states, DT aims to improve existing institutional, interpersonal, organisational, political, and societal systems and structures, thus **enhancing participatory democratic practices, representation, and decision-making**. In other words, DT has the potential to positively impact the level of transparency and accountability of the state, thereby increasing trust in its institutions. It has the potential to empower citizens to engage with/in the political system in more direct and approachable ways, thereby enhancing meaningful participation. In the field of politics and public life within democratic societies, scholarly work usually focuses on the role of DT in governance, public service delivery, engagement with civil society, and other aspects that enhance democracies (CDDG 2021).

However, leaders of non-democratic states closely monitor digital innovations and new technologies, with the aim of using these to their own advantage. For example, **authoritarian rulers use DT for online censorship, digital surveillance, spreading false information and particular ideologies, and collecting citizens' personal data**, wherever they may be in the world. Accordingly, scholars refer to the rise of "**digital authoritarianism**" (Jones 2022), pointing to autocrats using DT within an increasing information warfare and adapting to digital communication. Thus, DT can not only enhance democracy, but it can equally be a powerful tool for contesting democratic norms and practices.

Key texts

European Committee on Democracy and Governance, CDDG (2021): Study on the Impact of Digital Transformation on Democracy and Good Governance. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. Available online at https://rm.coe.int/study-on-the-impact-of-digital-transformation-on-democracy-and-good-go/1680a3b9f9.%20Retrieved%20March%209,%202023,%20from%20https:/rm.coe.int/study-on-the-impact-of-digital-transformation-on-democracy-and-good-go/1680a3b9f9, last accessed on 25/03/2023.

Jones, Marc Owen (2022): *Digital Authoritarianism in the Middle East*: *Deception, Disinformation and Social Media*. London: Hurst Publishers.

Vial, Gregory (2019): Understanding Digital Transformation: A Review and a Research Agenda. In *The Journal of Strategic Information Systems* 28 (2), pp. 118-144.

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Gender and Sex

drafted by JLU with input from JUK & RUC

In the late 1970s, scholars of feminist theory developed the concept of **gender referring to socially constructed ideas and norms associated with masculinity and femininity** in a specific cultural context. Within social science based theoretical approaches 'gender' is often treated as distinct from **'sex', to be understood as biological and physiological differences between men and women**. A binary conception of gender as well as the naturalisation of 'sex' is challenged by Gender Studies scholars and most post-structural and postmodern feminists, who critically point out that gender and sex are both dynamic.

Many social scientists emphasise the inherent power hierarchy in the characteristics assigned to different genders, where traits portrayed as positive are connected to an ideal type of masculinity as the societal norm. While concepts of **'hegemonic masculinity'** change over time and vary between different cultural settings, Tickner (2001: 16) resumes that empirically gender relations "are almost always unequal; therefore, gender in the structural sense is a primary way of signifying relationships of power". Through normalisation of alleged gender differences and allocation of characteristics, gender norms "reinforce the power of dominant groups" (Tickner 2001: 15).

Yet, it is important to not overlook that discrimination can, and in reality very often is, based on girls' and women's biological sex, and not gender. This holds true for all societies in the world, and it is especially relevant for females in those (Global South) countries in which a patriarchal culture results in male violence, abuse, restrictions and marginalisation. In these social contexts, girls and women face **discrimination due to their biological sex** as such and not primarily due to particular gender norms and/or role conceptions.

Key texts

Griffin, Gabriele (2017): *A Dictionary of Gender Studies.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Evans, Mary; Williams, Carolin H. (2013): *Gender. The Key Concepts*. New York: Routledge.

Tickner, Judith Ann (2001): *Gendering World Politics. Issues and Approaches in the Post-Cold War Era.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Gender Equality

drafted by JLU with input from JUK & RUC

Gender equality can be defined as entailing **“equal rights for women and men, girls and boys, as well as the same visibility, empowerment, responsibility and participation, in all spheres of public and private life. It also implies equal access to and distribution of resources between women and men”** (Council of Europe 2018: 5). The respective instruments may take more specific shapes when including LGBTIQ equality (i.e., legal protection against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, sex or gender reassignment).

Pilcher and Whelehan (2015: 41-43) distinguish three perspectives on gender equality: In an **equality perspective** gender must not play a role in the allocation of legal rights and privileges. In contrast, the **difference perspective** advocates for “the recognition of and valuing of difference” and challenges the idea that women must conform to the masculine norm. The **diversity perspective** proposes “a conception of citizenship that combines elements of the gender-neutral and gender-differentiated approaches, employed strategically, whilst at the same time remaining sensitive to the differences that exist between women”.

Gender mainstreaming is a two-fold concept where **gender perspectives are included into all relevant policy areas and asymmetries of representation are addressed**. The European Institute for Gender Studies (2022) defines this as encompassing “the integration of a gender perspective into the preparation, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, regulatory measures and spending programmes, with a view to promoting equality between women and men, and combating discrimination.” Lombardo (2013) distinguishes between integrating gender equality into existing policies (integrationist approach) and changes in “decision-making structures and processes, prioritizing gender objectives among competing issues, and reorienting the mainstream political agenda from a gender perspective” (agenda-setting approach).

Key texts

Council of Europe (2018): Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023. Available online at https://rm.coe.int/prems-093618-gbr-gender-equality-strategy-2023-web-a5/16808b47e1, checked on 20/12/2022.

European Institute for Gender Studies (2022): What is Gender Mainstreaming? Available online at https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/what-is-gender-mainstreaming, checked on 20/12/2022.

Lombardo, Emanuela (2013): Gender Mainstreaming. In: Mary Evans, Carolin H. Williams (Eds.): *Gender. The Key Concepts*. New York: Routledge, pp. 112-117.

Pilcher, Jane; Whelehan, Imelda (2015): *Key Concepts in Gender Studies*. London: SAGE.

SHAPEDEM-EU

Knowledge

drafted by JLU with input from RUC

Knowledge is a multi-faceted concept which is subject to debates in logic, the philosophy of science, educational studies, linguistics, and social sciences. While no universally accepted definition exists, knowledge can by and large be understood as **facts, information and skills acquired through experience or education and/or the theoretical or practical understanding of a subject**.

One widely used philosophical definition regards knowledge as 'justified true belief'. Others argue that knowledge is identified with the stock of expert opinions – the idea of 'objective truth condition'. These approaches attribute a **property or possession quality to knowledge** and locate it within the minds of individuals. Foucault (1976), in turn, highlights that knowledge is always an exercise of power and power always a function of knowledge, thus referring to the **relational dimension of knowledge.** Some approaches in educational studies also point to this relational aspect arguing that knowledge is produced within and through relations. Carlgren (2020), for example, shows that the production of knowledge as well as its usage is always performed in and through practices.

In practice research, the concept of **practical knowledge** is widely used. According to Kustermans (2016: 185), "[p]ractical knowledge is a skill acquired through experience. It ensures that we know how to go on, it enables us to handle situations. Practical knowledge is social to the extent that it is acquired through an irreducibly social process (often of mimesis, that is an imitative representation of the real world, for example in art and literature) and within an irreducibly social environment, but individual to the extent that it accrues to people." In that sense, practical knowledge is the capital humans can use to, inter alia, shape their social image, navigate a social milieu, safeguard a dominant position of power, or to work skilfully in a particular field, such as democracy support.

Key texts

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Multi-Order World

drafted by CIDOB with input from IAI & RUC

The concept of multi-order world emerged in the context of intense debates about transformation(s) of the international system. It not solely focuses on the decline of the so-called liberal international order, built and led by the US and based on liberal ideals, rules and principles. It also suggests that **new international orders are emerging, resulting in an international system structured by different types of orders simultaneously**.

While the concept recognises that the current system is marked by the decline of the West and the rise of the 'Rest', it contrasts with three (competing) narratives about the emerging order. Firstly, the **multipolar future** thesis holds that the unipolar moment is coming to an end, and that the rise of new powers will lead to an international system shaped by several poles. Secondly, the **multi-partner future** view focuses on the need for partnership diplomacy, soft power and reform of existing institutions to adapt to an international system in which the liberal order will no longer be hegemonic. Thirdly, the **multi-cultural future** perspective looks at the gradual replacement of the US-led order by an increasingly de-centred global order structured by old and new powers and by regional institutions.

The concept of multi-order world, in turn, considers **order as "a cluster of sovereign states or nations with shared values, norms and interests"** (Flockhart 2016: 14) constituted by four interlinked variables: (1) power; (2) identity; (3) primary institutions; (4) secondary institutions. From this perspective, the international system will take the shape of **several coexisting clusters of states formed around different leading states**. Relationships occur both within each international order and between them. These relations can be inter-organisational, transnational or supranational, and regional institutions are likely to gain power and relevance. While most states seem to converge economically, united by a shared belief in neoliberalism and capitalism, ideological divergence (e.g., political or religious) is likely to increase as identity is expected to become a defining feature of these orders in the making.

Key texts

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SHAPEDEM-EU

Neighbourhoods

drafted by NaUKMA with input from RUC

The EU's Eastern and Southern Neighbourhoods are two areas of countries sharing either an overland or marine border with the EU. The concept originates from the idea of **good neighbourliness** which arose after WW2 (Hilz 2020). According to the Treaty of the EU (Art. 8), the "Union shall develop a special relationship with neighbouring countries, aiming to establish an area of prosperity and good neighbourliness, founded on the values of the Union and characterised by close and peaceful relations based on cooperation."

In 2004, the EU established the **European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) as a framework for its bilateral relations with its neighbours**. The ENP is based on the premise that the EU serves as the model, as well as on the principle of conditionality. In theory, it is aimed at supporting democratisation; in practice, however, conditionality has hardly ever been applied, and stabilisation has been prioritised. With the 2015 ENP review, the EU acknowledges that neighbouring countries' interests and values differ, and it now openly prioritises "security interests over values in increasingly transactional partnerships" (Blockmans 2017: 139). Therefore, the discrepancy between the EU's rhetoric of democratisation and its actual practices has often laid bare the organised hypocrisy of the EU's approach.

The ENP is complemented by two regional/multilateral dimensions: the **Eastern Partnership (EaP)** launched in 2009 and **the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)** launched in 2008 which succeeded the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) from 1995. However, since all the main instruments are "bilateral between the EU and individual partner countries, little space has been provided for more regional perspectives" (Browning & Joenniemi 2008: 535). Steven Blockmans (2017: 25) criticises the "artificial clustering of neighbouring countries that have little more in common than a geographic proximity to the European Union" and concludes that "the regional approach to the ENP has clearly met with limited results".

Key texts

Blockmans, Steven (2017): The Obsolescence of the European Neighbourhood Policy. Centre for European Policy Studies. Available online at https://www.ceps.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Blockmans%20-%20Obsolence%20of%20the%20European%20Neighbourhood%20Policy.pdf, last accessed on 16/03/2023.

Browning, Christopher S.; Joenniemi, Pertti (2008): Geostrategies of the European Neighbourhood Policy. In *European Journal of International Relations* 14 (3), pp. 519-551.

Hilz, Wolfram (2020): The EU and its Concept of Neighbourhood. In Wolfram Hilz, Shushanik Minasyan, Maciej Raś (Eds.): *Ambiguities of Europe's Eastern Neighbourhood*. Wiesbaden: Springer VS, pp. 5-15.

(Meaningful) Participation

drafted by NaUKMA with input from RUC

Meaningful participation can be defined as "**taking part in the process of formulation, passage and implementation of public policies**" (Parry et al. 1992). It assumes that individuals can actively participate in political decision-making that directly affects them, thereby empowering communities to retain control over their wellbeing. Thus, citizens are both agents and stakeholders in public policies' and decision-making processes.

Meaningful participation is a **key feature of democracy**, because "a healthy democracy requires that citizens be able to have an impact on the public decisions and governance processes that most affect them" (Lukensmeyer and Brigham 2002). It builds trust by ensuring that decision-making is not perceived as top-down, and people develop a sense of ownership. It is also a powerful tool to ensure legitimacy, accountability and democratic sustainability, and it calls upon authorities to improve the delivery of (public) goods and services.

To ensure meaningful participation, existing asymmetries of power and structures of marginalisation, for example those based on gender, ethnicity or religion, must be abolished. Thus, **meaningful participation emphasises inclusivity** and creates a space where "all participants have an equal footing and where one group is not privileged over the other" (King et al. 1998). Marginalised groups might need specific assistance to participate meaningfully. Participatory channels and processes should also involve training and educational opportunities for communities and citizens.

Meaningful participation stresses **two-way communication between authorities and community members**. This usually takes the form of democratic engagement, which can include, among others, participatory budgets, different forms of public volunteering, participation in committees and/or board meetings, participatory planning, deliberative polling, mediated dialogues, and citizens' juries. It is also important that authorities demonstrate that inputs and perspectives of everyone are valued in decision-making and implementation.

Key texts

King, Cheryl Simrell; Feltey, Kathryn M.; Susel, Bridget O'Neill (1998): The Questions of Participation: Toward Authentic Public Participation in Public Administration. In *Public Administration Review* 58 (4), pp. 317-327.

Lukensmeyer, Carolyn J.; Brigham, Steve (2002): Taking Democracy to Scale: Creating a Town Hall Meeting for the Twenty-First Century. In *National Civic Review* 91 (4), pp. 351-366.

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Peoplehood

drafted by UoW with input from RUC

Peoplehood signifies **the moment of becoming with, when all resources, capacities and visions of the future that give a community a more consolidated quality align with each other to take it to a new level of being together.** Peoplehood is a component of resilience, and it often develops during moments of existential threat and crisis when a community's fledgling foundations are severely challenged. Yet, "[t]he people should be approached not merely as something defined in the exceptional moment, in the act of a political community's foundation, and then inherited as the container within which politics is to unfold. Rather it should be seen in processual terms as that which is created and revisited in ongoing fashion in the context of political conflict" (White/Ypi 2017: 20).

The concept has emerged with **intensifying levels of peoples' engagement in politics**, driven by a strong desire to make their lives more equitable, fair and sustainable. Respective mobilisation was famously captured by the Arab Uprisings. Larbi Sadiki (2016: 339) describes this moment as "*al-harak*", that is, "the essence of the political, social, cultural, and religious people-driven ferment." Other examples include the Revolution of Dignity turning ancient monasteries into battlefield hospitals in Kyiv (from 2014 onwards) and the defiant and pervasive resistance in Belarus post-presidential election in 2020, which saw people not submitting to the oppression of the regime.

In these instances, people reached the moment of becoming with and turned into a qualitatively different political entity, with a sense of dignity (*agaciro*) and self-worth to fight for and protect their future. Peoplehood is **deeply transformative, vehemently powerful, and undeniably political** — seeking to transform the environment rather than adapt to survive. Accordingly, peoplehood is more than society. Sadiki (2016: 339) notes that the rise of peoplehood is an "important watershed" in the life of society: "it partakes of both civil and uncivil manifestations of thought and practice across boundaries of rich diversity and complexity", potentially even "morphing into a transnational phenomenon."

Key texts

Korosteleva, Elena A.; Petrova, Irina (2022): What Makes Communities Resilient in Times of Complexity and Change? In *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 35 (1), pp. 1-21.

Sadiki, Larbi (2016): The Arab Spring: The 'People' in International Relations. In Louise Fawcett (Ed.): *International Relations of the Middle East*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 325-355.

White, Jonathan; Ypi, Lea (2017): The Politics of Peoplehood. In *Political Theory* 45 (4). pp. 439-465.

SHAPEDEM-EU

Power

drafted by RUC

Two ontologies of power dominate IR scholarship: a) power perceived as **capability**; and b) power perceived as **relations**. Proponents of the former define power by the distribution of assets, such as military and economic capacities (hard power) and/or cultural and ideological dominance (soft power). Scholars adopting a relational perspective, in turn, argue that power is vested in social relations, and that the value of material capabilities is bounded by particular social contexts.

Resorting to practice theory allows SHAPEDEM-EU partners to build a bridge between the two, because it perceives power assets as not solely being pre-determined: **power emerges from interaction and is produced by and works in and through local practices**. Within fields (understood in Bourdieu's sense), capital is the main resource defining practitioners' power positions, and symbolic capital is often the main basis of domination, because it provides legitimacy and the capacity to define what counts as common sense (i.e., the norm). Power primarily emerges in the context of the negotiation of competences, and authority claims and constant contestation are the main areas in which power plays out. Power necessitates social recognition, and exercising power is based on continuous micro-struggles for recognition.

Power in practice works in tandem with material and immaterial assets each actor possesses. In consequence, two forms of resources must be considered when analysing power: a) **endogenous resources** which are locally produced in and through practices; and b) **exogenous resources** which originate from outside the specific social context. While these resources are important factors to consider in the unfolding of power practices because they impact competence claims, they may enable a transformation into influence, and ultimately power, in and through practices. In sum, this conceptualisation offers a broad ontology of power, which acknowledges both capability and relations.

Key texts

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SHAPEDEM-EU

Practices

drafted by RUC with input from JLU

Practices is a contested concept used in a variety of disciplines. In IR, practices are widely understood as **"competent performances. More precisely, practices are socially meaningful patterns of action [which] simultaneously embody, act out, and possibly reify background knowledge and discourse in and on the material world"** (Adler & Pouliot 2011: 4). They are the "raw material" that comprises and organises the social world. Social orders, systems of governance or institutions are neither primarily constituted by material power nor ideational factors, but in and through practices. Social action is not determined by conscious reflection on choices, but it is shaped by "unspoken know-how" (Pouliot 2008: 270) – tacit background knowledge which is "unreflexive and inarticulate through and through" (Pouliot 2008: 265).

Practices have **five main characteristics**. First, practices are **performative** because they are materially mediated through human bodies. Second, practices are **patterned** because they imply regularity and repetition and are reproduced as structured interaction. Third, practices are **based on a shared understanding** of their social meaning and can be recognised as such. Fourth, practices rest on **background knowledge**. Fifth, material and discursive spheres become intertwined through practices, and we can distinguish between **discursive practices** (e.g., essential narratives) and **behavioural practices** (e.g., activities in a specific field of practices).

Practices tend to be stable, but they can equally alter. Thus, they can be a vehicle of reproduction and/or the source of social change. This is related to the fact that practices are often generated by **habitus** which gives actors guidance by defining "rules on how to behave in a specific situation in relation to their social position. A habitus is formed through similar conditions of socialisation in a distinct group or class" (Bueger and Gadinger 2018: 37). Habitus comprises a variety of phenomena, including definition of self, internalised social norms, background assumptions, prejudices, beliefs, expectations and past experiences.

Key texts

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Bueger, Christian; Gadinger, Frank (2018): *International Practice Theory: New Perspectives.* London: Palgrave Pivot.

Pouliot, Vincent (2008): The Logic of Practicality: A Theory of Practice of Security Communities. In *International Organization* 62 (2), pp. 257-288.

Security

drafted by AUB with input from RUC

Traditionally, security had almost exclusively been understood as the privileged domain of the state. What counted was the **security of the state, for the state**. Security Studies, as a result, long reflected conceptions of international relations shaped by (Neo-)Realism: state-centric, military-focused and outward-oriented. Since the 1980s, however, security has become an increasingly contested term. Newer approaches emerged, **adding other referent elements such as the environmental, economic, societal and political**.

Traditional conceptions of security privileged the European experience of world politics as great power competition, marginalizing the experiences of states and societies across the Global South. The emergence of **post-colonial approaches** and **Critical Security Studies (CSS)** in the 1990s challenged state- and Euro-centric perspectives. By questioning how the West produces knowledge of security and dominant discourses, post-colonialism focuses on the **mutual co-constitution** of security and the relational realities of the powerful and the weak, the coloniser and the colonised. CSS refocused attention onto society and individuals as referent objects and introduced the concept of **human security**, raising questions of insecurity of vulnerable or marginalised groups. CSS emphasises that security for some can mean insecurity for others and recognises that the state can threaten the human security of its own citizens.

Also, more **localised understandings of security** have been developed. The Beirut School for Security Studies, for example, conceptualises security as **lived realities and practices** that are often at odds with those embedded and enforced by dominant states or the international community. This allows for considering everyday practices as sites of resistance, amplifying voices around issues such as gender and social justice. Other scholars, including those within the Copenhagen School, have drawn attention to the non-essentialist character of security, approaching it as a **linguistic act that securitises an issue** or as a **discursive formation** constructing social realities and exposing the political work of security.

Key texts

Buzan, Barry; Hansen, Lene (2009): *The Evolution of International Security Studies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Barkawi, Tarek; Leffey, Mark (2006): The Postcolonial Moment in Security Studies. In *Review of International Studies* 32, pp. 392-352.

Bilgin, Pinal (2017): *The International in Security, Security in the International*. London: Routledge.