



22-23 June  
2023

A Conference  
at the Collège  
de France, Paris

# Democratic Representation in and by International Organizations

COLLÈGE  
DE FRANCE

—1530—

CHAIRE DROIT  
INTERNATIONAL  
DES INSTITUTIONS  
Samantha Besson



22-23 JUNE 2023

Amphithéâtre Maurice Halbwachs

# Democratic Representation in and by International Organizations

Organization: [Samantha Besson, Chaire Droit international des institutions](#)

With the financial support of the [Fondation du Collège de France](#)

Contact: [Sylvie Sportouch](#)

## SPEAKERS:

**Jochen von Bernstorff** (University of Tübingen)

**Samantha Besson** (Collège de France)

**Francis Cheneval** (University of Zurich)

**Edouard Dubout** (University Paris-Panthéon-Assas)

**Melissa J. Durkee** (University of Georgia)

**Jacob Katz Cogan** (University of Cincinnati)

**Evelyne Lagrange** (University Paris 1-Panthéon-Sorbonne)

**Marieke Louis** (Centre Marc Bloch, Berlin)

**Terry Macdonald** (University of Melbourne)

**José Luis Martí** (University Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona)

**Anne Peters** (Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law, Heidelberg)

**Philip Pettit** (University of Princeton  
and Australian National University, Canberra)

**Dominique Ritleng** (University of Strasbourg)

**Pierre Rosanvallon** (Collège de France)

**Marie-Clotilde Runavot** (University of Perpignan Via Domitia)

## COMMENTATORS:

**Olivier de Frouville** (University Paris-Panthéon-Assas)

**Charles Girard** (University Jean Moulin Lyon 3)

**Franck Petiteville** (Sciences Po Grenoble)

**Yves Sintomer** (University Paris 8-Vincennes-Saint-Denis)

International organizations (IOs) play a central role in contemporary international law-making: they institutionalize many of the processes through which international law is adopted today, be it through international law-making conferences, international courts or IO secondary law. Yet, the question of democratic representation (by Member States and/or other public or private institutions or persons involved such as non-governmental organizations, multinational corporations, trade unions, employers' associations, cities, regions or religious groups) in IOs, but also by IOs when they become members of other IOs or intervene as participants in other international law-making processes remains difficult, to say the least. It is one of the many dimensions of the deficit in democratic legitimacy of international law, but one that is rarely addressed as such today –although it has not always been the case and not with respect to all IOs equally. There are many reasons for the contemporary side-lining of the question of democratic representation both in international organizations' law and in international democratic theory. It suffices to mention two of them here: one is the vexed relationship between IOs and "politics" (not to mention democratic politics), and another lies in the (over)emphasis on civil society "participation" and other forms of "stakeholder" inclusion.

The conference's aims will be to discuss those issues, but also to examine how IOs could be designed and organized under international law in the future so as to ensure sufficient democratic representation of all those they claim to bind legally, either directly or through their Member States. Various specialists of representation in both IOs' law and democratic theory have been invited to explore those issues and many others at the conference. The conference is organized around three sets of issues: representation inside IOs (i.e. the different types of public and private representatives and their articulation in different IO deliberation and decision-making processes) (i), through IOs (i.e. the contribution of those forms of public and private representation within IOs to the institutionalization and organization of the relevant public and private representative institutions as such) (ii) and by IOs (i.e. when they become members of other IOs or participate in external international law-making processes) (iii).

8.30-8.50

***Democratic Representation in, through and by International Organizations, An Introduction***

Prof. Samantha Besson, Collège de France

8.50-9.30

***Renouveau ou crépuscule de la notion de représentation***

Prof. Pierre Rosanvallon, Collège de France

9.30-13.15

**PANEL 1: Representation in International Organizations**

09.30-10.00

***International Representation: Some General Principles***

Prof. Philip Pettit, University of Princeton  
and Australian National University, Canberra

10.00-10.30

***Democratic Representation in International Organizations***

Prof. Francis Cheneval, University of Zurich

10.30-11.00 Coffee break

11.00-11.30

***The Four Modes of Representation in International Organizations***

Prof. Jacob Katz Cogan, University of Cincinnati

11.30-12.00

***Représentation démocratique et parlementarisation des organisations internationales : entre faux-amis et faux-semblants***

Prof. Marie-Clotilde Runavot, University of Perpignan Via Domitia

12.00-12.15 Comment

Prof. Franck Petiteville, Sciences Po Grenoble

12.15-13.15 Panel Discussion – All panellists

13.15-14.30 Lunch break

14.30-18.15

**PANEL 2: Representation through International Organizations**

14.30-15.00

***Organisations internationales et représentation du secteur privé : quels dilemmes démocratiques ?***

Dr Marieke Louis, Centre Marc Bloch, Berlin

15.00-15.30

***The Ambivalent Logics of Business Representation in International Organizations***

Prof. Melissa J. Durkee, University of Georgia

15.30-16.00

***Representation in and by International Organizations: A Case Study of the World Organization of Animal Health***

Prof. Anne Peters, Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law, Heidelberg

16.00-16.30 Coffee break

16.30-17.00

***Making Silent Majorities Vocal in Times of Planetary Crisis: Coalitions of the Most Affected in International Institutional Law***

Prof. Jochen von Bernstorff, University of Tübingen

17.00-17.15 Comment

Prof. Yves Sintomer, University Paris 8-Vincennes-Saint-Denis

17.15-18.15 Panel Discussion – All panellists

9.30-13.15

**PANEL 3: Representation by International Organizations**

09.30-10.00

*International Organizations as Orchestrators of Represented Constituencies: The Case of the Global Compact on Refugees*

Prof. Terry Macdonald, University of Melbourne

10.00-10.30

*Améliorer la délibération dans, entre et sur les organisations internationales : le potentiel des organes subsidiaires consultatifs*

Prof. Evelyne Lagrange, University Paris 1-Panthéon-Sorbonne

10.30-11.00

*La représentation démocratique dans l'Union européenne : démocratiser la démocratie ?*

Prof. Edouard Dubout, University Paris-Panthéon-Assas

Prof. Dominique Ritleng, University of Strasbourg

11.00-11.30 Coffee break

11.30-12.00

*No International Democratic Representation without Sovereignty - Lifting the Democratic Veil of Functionalist, Incorporation and Agency Theories of Representation by International Organizations*

Prof. Samantha Besson, Collège de France

Prof. José Luis Martí, Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona

12.00-12.15 Comment

Charles Girard, University Jean Moulin Lyon 3

12.15-13.15 Panel Discussion – All panellists

13.15-14.30 Lunch break

14.30-16.00

**PANEL 4: General Conclusions and Discussion**

14.30-15.00

**General Conclusions**

Prof. Olivier de Frouville, University Paris-Panthéon-Assas

15.00-16.00

**General Discussion**

All participants

16.00-16.15

**Concluding Remarks**

Prof. Samantha Besson, Collège de France

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Le colloque se tiendra en anglais (à l'exception de quelques interventions en français) et sans traduction simultanée.

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