

Workshop „The limits of limiting democracy“

Mannheim, 2./3.6.2025

Barockschloss Mannheim, Raum EO 145

Democracy has an ambivalent reputation: Plato described it as the most free and the most unstable of governments. Historically, both in the 20th century and in the longer sweep, democracies have collapsed not just from oligarchic excess or aggression from without, but also from instability and, perhaps, democratic excess within. For this (and for other) reasons, there exists a philosophical & legal case to limit democracy. But how far can we limit democracy before it loses its democratic nature? And how can we make sure that decisions made in the past remain open to revision and adaptation in the future? What are the limits of limiting democracy?

In transformational times, these questions become more relevant than ever. Climate change, (trade) wars and demographic change put pressure on fiscal balances and inflation. Both in fiscal and monetary policy, the intellectual and institutional architectures built over the last generation – often in pursuit of depoliticisation and constitutionalisation of political questions – are under pressure and already evolving. Where are the limits of limiting democracy in (economic) practice? Where should they lie in the areas of fiscal and monetary policy?

Organisers:

Professor Dr Michael W. Müller, Chair for Public Law, European Economic Law, and Legal Philosophy, University of Mannheim

Dr Max Krahé, Research Director, Dezernat Zukunft – Institute for Macrofinance, Berlin

Please register until May 15th: ls.mueller@uni-mannheim.de

Draft programme

Monday, June 2nd – Foundations

- 14:00-14:30 Introduction; *Michael Müller, Max Krahé*
- 14:30-16:00 Democratic theory: what principles – liberal, democratic, or other – justify (what) limits on democracy?; *Jonathan White, Tobias Müller; Chair: Stefanie Middendorf*
- 16:00-16:30 Break
- 16:30-18:00 Constitutional perspective: how are limits to democracy best integrated in different constitutional traditions and what are the limits of constitutionalising political decisions? *Stefanie Egidy, Tim Wihl; Chair: Max Krahé*
- 19:00 Dinner: Dachgarten, O5, 68161 Mannheim

Tuesday, June 3rd – Limits in practice: Limits on fiscal policy and their limitation

- 09:00-10:30 Reversibility of Fiscal Policy in Germany and the EU: *Ruth Weber, Philip Orphal; Chair: Florian Schuster-Johnson*
- 10:30-11:00 Break
- 11:00-12:45 Constitutional Limitations on Fiscal Policy from the Perspectives of History, Political Theory, and Constitutional Law: *Alec Walker, Philip Manow, Stefan Koriath; Chair: Philippa Sigl-Glöckner*
- 12:45-13:00 Closing reflections; *Michael Müller, Max Krahé*
- 13.00 Lunch