



**10th WCSA WORLDWIDE CONFERENCE**  
***SEXY TRENDS for an Emerging Global Governance System***  
**LISBON, APRIL 20<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022**



Picture by Rosângela Fidelis

## **DEMOCRACY AND CRISIS OF RATIONALITY**

Massimiliano Ruzzeddu, *Niccolò Cusano University*

Paolo von Schirach, Global Policy Institute

In the recent years, Western democracies have been facing unprecedented challenges, namely electoral choices that clash with democratic and libertarian values that have characterized so far American and European political structures and identities.

Those challenges can be divided in two categories. One category includes the challenges to the principle of equality, i.e., the endorsement to political forces and leaders that openly support either racial privilege or xenophobia.

The other category includes economic issues, especially those related to the recent financial and health crises. More exactly, the most common explanation for those crises are global and financial élites, and citizens' reaction consist of the electoral success of political forces that promise to stop, or even invert, Globalization. Needless to say, those promises are impossible to keep and, in most cases, where nationalist forces had the occasion of leading an administration, no visible improving of their electoral basis life condition has taken place. In spite of this, nationalists are still mainstream forces.

This panel aims at will explore the hypothesis that the current challenge for democracy is a crisis of rationality: as a matter of fact, contemporary democracies, in America and in Europe, are based upon the Enlightenment philosophy, especially on the assumption that all human beings are equal and free.

This assumption has been the main framework, within which democratic rules and laws have arisen in the last centuries, those rules based upon the assumption that citizens freely pursued their own aims, both in the private (business) and the public domains (politics).

Furthermore, elections and parties are based upon the idea that categories of citizens (lobbies, groups, social classes etc.) defined and defended their own interests through their representatives democratically chosen. Therefore, democracy meant that citizens are able to define their interest and to choose the political force, which best could define their own interests. In short words, democracy also is based upon *rationality*.

As we have seen, though, in the most recent political scenarios, citizens' rationalistic attitude seems to be weakening.

This panel welcomes panels: which focus on

- the rationality crisis in specific social contexts
- the causes of this crisis
- possible new models of rationality that fit with current social structure