



Innovating democracy: What can we contribute? An international perspective and dialogue



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25.Jun 2025

Cod. G06-25

Mod.:

Face-to-face

Edition

2025

Activity type

Summer course

Date

25.Jun 2025

Location

Arantzazulab, Gandiaga Topagunea

Languages

Basque English

Academic Validity

10 hours

Organising Committee

Fundación
BBVA



Description

We are living in a concerning time characterized by a growing authoritarian wave that challenges liberal democracies worldwide. Discussions about a crisis of democracy have emerged, reflected in different aspects within Western countries: widespread distrust of democratic institutions, political dissatisfaction, civic disengagement, rise of totalitarian and individualistic attitudes, and inability of public institutions to address social challenges with their current structures and tools.

At a time when democracy is increasingly under threat, there is also a strong commitment to reaffirm it and delve into democratic culture. On the one hand, there is a clear and notable commitment in our country's institutions to strengthening democracy (an uncommon effort nowadays, by the way). Various strategies have been launched to promote political innovation and new forms of governance within government structures, political parties, and public institutions, with the support of different social actors. The Basque context, with its strong tradition, institutional leadership, ongoing research efforts, and initiatives led by various social actors and democratic innovation groups, including institutions like Arantzazulab, has drawn international attention. At the same time, many individuals, organisations, and progressive governments worldwide are working to study democracy in more detail and develop innovative responses to its challenges.

This UPV/EHU Summer Course aims to bring together these perspectives, highlighting the contributions that our own value system can make to global debates on democratic innovation. To this end, internationally renowned experts will take part and will provide a comparative perspective on the contributions seeking to do in this field.

Ultimately, this course aims to identify key insights for qualitative advances in democratic renewal and governance transformation.

Objectives

Explore the strategies and initiatives of local institutions and key actors in fostering democratic culture and community building.

Delve more deeply our contribution to global debates on democracy innovation from our value system and engage in dialogue with local and international experts.

Gain insights from international experts on strengthening democratic practices.

Highlight the importance of deepening democratic culture in Basque society, bringing it into public debate, and encouraging institutional engagement in these dialogues.

Organised by



In collaboration with



Program

25-06-2025

09:00 - 09:30	Erregistroa / Registro
09:30 - 09:45	<p>Presentation by the Director of the activity</p> <p>Naiara Goia Imaz Arantzazulab - Directora general / Zuzendari nagusia Ione Ardaiz Osacar Arantzazulab - Dirección de proyectos / Proiektuen arduraduna</p>
09:45 - 10:40	<p>“Merkatua, foroa eta epaimahaia: demokraziaren ereduak berrikusten / El mercado, el foro y el jurado: revisitando los modelos de democracia / The market, the forum, and the jury: revisiting models of democracy”</p> <p>Hélène Landemore Yale unibertsitatea, Estatu Batuak / Universidad de Yale, Estados Unidos / University of Yale, United States - Zientzia politikoetan irakaslea eta ikerlaria / Profesora e investigadora de ciencia política / Political science professor and researcher</p>
10:40 - 11:35	<p>“Challenges of Democratic Design”</p> <p>Michael Saward Warwick-eko Unibertsitatea, Erresuma batua / Universidad de Warwick, Reino Unido / University of Warwick, United Kingdom - Zientzia politikoetan eta nazioarteko ikasketetan irakaslea eta ikerlaria / Profesor e investigador de ciencias políticas y estudios internacionales / Professor and researcher in Politics and International Studies</p>
11:35 - 12:00	Atsedena eta kafea / Descanso y café
12:00 - 12:45	<p>Round table: “Tokiko erakundeen estrategiak eta esperientziak kultura demokratikoan sakontzeko eta komunitate-zentzua indartzeko / Estrategias y experiencias de las entidades locales para profundizar en la cultura democrática y reforzar el sentido de comunidad”</p> <p>Xabier Otxandiano Eusko Jaurlaritza / Gobierno Vasco, Gobernantza - Departamento de Gobernanza Pública, Autogobierno y Administración Digital - Viceconsejero de Relaciones Institucionales / Administrazio Digital eta Autogobernu Saila; Erakunde Harremanetarako Sailburuordea Yosu Arraiz Aramburu Gipuzkoako Foru Aldundia / Diputación Foral de Gipuzkoa - Director de Estrategia / Estrategia zuzendaria Ainhoa Arrona Etxaniz Orkestra - Directora General / Zuzendari nagusia Naiara Goia Imaz Arantzazulab - Directora General / Zuzendari nagusia Asier Aranbarri Urzelai Eusko Jaurlaritza / Gobierno Vasco - Director de Innovación Social y Agenda 2030 / Berrikuntza Sozialaren eta 2030 Agendaren zuzendaria</p>
12:45 - 13:30	<p>Round table: “Demokraziaren aldaerak, agertokiak eta aukerak XXI. Mendean. Arantzazulab-k sustatuko Ikerketako eta Esperimentazioko egitasmoen arduradunen arteko elkarrizketa / Variantes, escenarios y oportunidades de la democracia en el siglo XXI. Diálogo entre responsables de iniciativas de investigación y experimentación promovidas por Arantzazulab”</p> <p>Andoni Eizagirre Eizagirre Mondragon Unibertsitatea Arantxa Mendiharat Deliberativa Julen Mendoza Perez Kogarri Maria Ajuria Hernandez Farapi Beatriz Belmonte Better Public Services Ione Ardaiz Osacar Arantzazulab - Proiektuen arduraduna</p>
13:30 - 14:00	Itxiera / Cierre
14:00 - 15:00	Bazkaria Gandiaga Topaguneko Hallean (partaideek elkarrekin hitz egiteko cocktail eran) / Comida en el hall de Gandiaga topagunea (oportunidad para que los/as participantes conecten con una comida de picote)

Directed by



Naiara Goia Imaz

Arantzazulab, Managing Director

Naiara Goia is currently the Managing Director of Arantzazulab, a leading democracy innovation lab and reference centre for collaborative governance in the Basque Country. Since 2020, she has been responsible for the design, launch and development of the lab. An expert in innovation, Naiara brings over 20 years of experience in directing complex, strategic public-private initiatives on an international level. Prior to her role at Arantzazulab, she worked for many years at MONDRAGON Corporation (world leader in the cooperative movement and the largest business group in the Basque Country), where she led various initiatives focused on open innovation, promoting technological and social innovation strategies aimed at business transformations in the cooperative sector. Naiara's work is driven by a deep commitment to democratic innovation, fostering collaborative networks and developing comprehensive strategies for systemic governance transformation. She also collaborates with several universities as a lecturer. Naiara holds a Masters in Telecommunications Engineering (UPV/EHU - ENST Bretagne) and an MBA in Business Management. She has had additional training in Collaborative governance, Leadership, Public communication, among others



Ione Ardaiz Osacar

Arantzazulab

Professionally she has developed her experience in various organisations and countries such as Italy, Belgium, Germany, Australia and Spain. At The Australian Centre for Social Innovation, she co-designed services and public policies with government bodies and NGOs. She later joined the Agirre Lehendakaria Center, where she applied a systems change methodology inspired by the Basque Country's transformation process. She is currently Projects Lead at Arantzazulab, where she designs and coordinates democracy innovation initiatives. Her work focuses on systems change, innovation ecosystems, collaborative governance and deliberative democracy. She also lectures at several universities. She holds a Technical Engineering degree in Industrial Design from Mondragon University and a Master's in Product Design from the Polytechnic School of Milan.

Teachers



Maria Ajuria Hernandez

Farapi koop. elkarte

María Ajuria Hernández is a worker-member of the Farapi cooperative. Farapi has over 20 years of experience in developing strategies to address complex social challenges through applied research and participation. She was involved in the creation of the Co-creation Ecosystem promoted by Arantzazulab, and actively contributes to its Experimentation working group. María Ajuria Hernández holds degrees in Economics and Social Anthropology (both from the University of the Basque Country - UPV/EHU), and a Master's in Feminist and Gender Studies (UPV/EHU). She is also trained in group facilitation.



Asier Aranbarri Urzelai

Gobierno Vasco

Asier Aranbarri Urzelai is Director of Social Innovation and the 2030 Agenda at the Basque Government's Presidency, and a lecturer in International Relations at the University of Deusto. He holds a Law degree and a Master's in Political Integration and Economic Union in the EU from the University of the Basque Country (EHU-UPV), and has built a solid career in public policy, governance, and international institutional affairs. Throughout his professional trajectory, he has held various positions of responsibility within the Basque Government, including advisor on Public Governance and Self-Government, as well as in External Action and the General Secretariat for Social Transition and the 2030 Agenda. From 2003 to 2011, he served as Mayor of Azkoitia, an experience that reinforced his commitment to innovation and social transformation from the local level.



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Yosu Arraiz Aramburu

Gipuzkoako Foru Aldundia

- Position: General Manager of Strategy (2025-present). Studies: Graduate in Civil Engineering (UPV/EHU); Master's Degree in Civil Engineering (University of Cantabria); Expert Course in Urban Innovation (MU). - Professional and political career: Director General of Innovation in Administration, Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa (2023-2025); Councillor responsible for Urban Planning, Works and Services, Elgoibar (2015-2023). President of the Community of Municipalities of Debarrena (2019-2023). Vice-President of Gipuzkoako Hondakinen Kontsortzioa (2019-2023).



Ainhoa Arrona Etxaniz

Orkestra

Ainhoa Arrona is a researcher at Orkestra – Basque Institute of Competitiveness. She holds a PhD in Social Sciences from the University of Deusto. Her research focuses on territorial strategies and regional development policies, collaborative governance and organisational change in the public sector, as well as the interaction between research and public policy, and action research. Her work has primarily been centred on research projects related to public policy and the development of governance processes, carried out in collaboration with territorial institutions. She holds a degree in Humanities and Business from the University of Deusto and a Master's in Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility (UJI-UNED). Before entering the field of research, she worked in the private sector and in the field of international development cooperation.



Beatriz Belmonte

Beatriz Belmonte is one of the leading figures in the research on democracy in the digital age promoted by Arantzazulab. She has contributed to digital transformation projects for the public sector, govtech innovation labs, and research and evaluation of public service implementation. She collaborates with the OECD's Observatory of Public Sector Innovation (OPSI) on innovation programmes, and since 2023 she has combined her role at NTT DATA as an Expert Consulting Manager in digital government projects with her work as a public policy design consultant at Better Public Services.



Andoni Eizagirre Eizagirre

Mondragon Unibertsitatea, Irakasle Titularra

Lecturer at Mondragon University. PhD in Philosophy. Currently the director of the initiative Herrigintzaren Berrikuntza (innovation in local community cohesion). Some of his publications are available here: <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Andoni-Eizagirre>



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Naiara Goia is currently the Managing Director of Arantzazulab, a leading democracy innovation lab and reference centre for collaborative governance in the Basque Country. Since 2020, she has been responsible for the design, launch and development of the lab. An expert in innovation, Naiara brings over 20 years of experience in directing complex, strategic public-private initiatives on an international level. Prior to her role at Arantzazulab, she worked for many years at MONDRAGON Corporation (world leader in the cooperative movement and the largest business group in the Basque Country), where she led various initiatives focused on open innovation, promoting technological and social innovation strategies aimed at business transformations in the cooperative sector. Naiara's work is driven by a deep commitment to democratic innovation, fostering collaborative networks and developing comprehensive strategies for systemic governance transformation. She also collaborates with several universities as a

lecturer. Naiara holds a Masters in Telecommunications Engineering (UPV/EHU - ENST Bretagne) and an MBA in Business Management. She has had additional training in Collaborative governance, Leadership, Public communication, among others



Hélène Landemore

Hélène Landemore is a professor of political science at Yale University with a specialization in political theory. Her research and teaching interests include, among other things, democratic theory, political epistemology, and the ethics and politics of artificial intelligence. She is also a fellow at the Ethics in AI Institute at the University of Oxford, and an advisor to the Democratic Inputs to AI program at OpenAI. She served on the Governance Committee of the most recent French Citizens' Convention and is currently undertaking work supported by Schmidt Futures through the AI2050 program.



Arantxa Mendiagarat

Deliberativa

Co-founder with Yago Bermejo of Deliberativa, an organisation that advises governments to design and implement deliberative processes involving citizens chosen through civic lottery, and promotes deliberative democracy. Co-author with Ernesto Ganuza of the book "La democracia es posible. Sorteo cívico y deliberación para rescatar el poder de la ciudadanía" ("Democracy is possible. Civic lottery and deliberation to reclaim the power of citizens" (2020, Ed. Consonni). She is a member of FIDE (Federation for Innovation Democracy - Europe), Democracy R&D, Innovative Citizen Participation Network of the OECD and KNOCA. In a previous life she designed and activated crossovers between the arts and other fields of production. She is still closely following the project she created together with Idoia Zabaleta and Ixiar Rozas, Borradores del futuro (Drafts of the future), a collection of stories that imagine the future of existing alternatives. Graduated in Political Science from the Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Bordeaux (France). Holds a Master's degree in Arts Management from Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh. Lives in Bilbao.



Julen Mendoza Perez

Founder of Ko-garri, a Social Innovation company. Since 2020, he has worked across various fields of social innovation, contributing to territorial development—through the articulation of new governance models—and to organisational transformation processes. He holds a Law degree from the University of the Basque Country, with a specialisation in International Relations. His career began in the field of human rights, working with international organisations. He later spent 16 years (until 2020) in local administrations, serving as a lawyer, technical advisor and ultimately as Mayor of Errenteria. He holds a Senior Ontological Coach certificate from Rafael Echeverría's Newfield Consulting school. Notable work includes guidance in the process of establishing a new governance model in Goierri (Goierri BarNETik), and collaboration with various institutions in Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia (such as Galdakao G2030, Pasaia Klima-Orratz, Mundaka Amestuz, among others).



Xabier Otxandiano



Michael Saward

Michael Saward is Professor of Politics and International Studies at the University of Warwick. Originally from Tasmania, he holds a BA (Hons) from the Australian National University and a PhD from the University of Essex. Before joining Warwick in 2012, he taught at the Open University—where he twice served as Head of Department—and at Royal Holloway, University of London. His research centres on contemporary democratic theory and political representation. His book *The Representative Claim* (OUP, 2010) was awarded the APSA's George H. Hallett Prize in 2020, and *Democratic Design* (OUP, 2021), supported by a Leverhulme Trust Fellowship, received the PSA's W.J.M. Mackenzie Book Prize in 2023. He has co-edited influential volumes such as *Enacting European Citizenship* (CUP, 2013), *The Oxford Handbook of Politics and Performance* (OUP, 2021), and two new 2024 titles on representation and performance. He has held visiting positions in Mexico, Brazil, and Australia, and continues to explore how ideas, performance, and representation shape democratic life.

Registration fees

FACE-TO-FACE	UNTIL 25-06-2025
Free registration	0 EUR

Place

Arantzazulab, Gandiaga Topagunea

Arantzazu Auz., 1, 20567 Oñati

Gipuzkoa