

## WORKSHOP 3

### 3. Why Electoral Reform? The Determinants, Policy and Politics of Changing Electoral Systems

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This workshop seeks to shed light on the causes and determinants of electoral reform. In other words, why does the debate on electoral reform occur at all, when does it happen and what forms does it take?

Electoral reform is a growing phenomenon that requires explanation but is still uncharted territory in political science. Outside the vast literature on electoral systems and their political consequences, little attention has been devoted to why electoral systems have recently undergone substantial change in several advanced liberal democracies, while in other countries the topic has been placed on the national agenda or is seriously being discussed beyond academic circles. Why has a change of the democratic rules of the game become acceptable after decades of treating electoral systems as fixed elements in stable democracies?

We are interested in papers dealing with empirical research into the actual reasons for the (debate on) electoral reform and the question of who took the initiative. Where does the initiative come from – parliament, government, NGOs, citizens? Is there a relation between party family and certain reforms? Do reforms expand the influence of citizens? Can we explain the current wave of having a group of randomly selected citizens come up with a plan for reform? We welcome theoretical papers linking electoral reform to different ideas on democracy, such as representative, direct, participatory or deliberative, or relating them to different views on representation. Another type of paper may focus on the discourse of E-democracy, and more specifically the role of ICT in promoting electoral reform and/or defining the alternatives.