Feedback opportunity for the work programme 2025

Cluster 2 - Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society

Destination 1: Innovative Research on Democracy and Governance.

Draft expected impacts:

Proposals for topics under this destination should set out a credible pathway to contributing to the following expected impacts of the Horizon Europe Strategic Plan:

- Democratic governance and rule of law is reinvigorated, societal resilience to internal and external threats to democratic processes is enhanced, and active and inclusive citizenship and protection of fundamental rights is facilitated.

Research and innovation will support European policies for democracy, rule of law and EU citizenship, including relating to free, fair, transparent and inclusive elections, trustworthiness and accountability of institutions and policy-making processes, safeguarding of fundamental rights, freedom of expression and independence of media and the judiciary, fight against polarisation, extremism, and disinformation including foreign information manipulation. The aim is to benefit both EU internal and external policies in these fields.

The expected impact will be achieved through generating new knowledge and understanding, and developing strategies, methods and innovative solutions, as well as policy recommendations under the following three priorities:

- GLOBAL CHALLENGES - Fostering democracy and promoting EU values in times of geopolitical shifts and global poly-crisis,
- RESILIENT DEMOCRACIES – Increasing the resilience of democracy in the face of external and internal threats,
- AGILE INSTITUTIONS & INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES – Modernising democratic institutions and public sector processes for the 21st century.

A special focus will be put on fostering the impacts on policymaking, civic education, and the experimentation with democratic innovations by practitioners and public institutions.

Main expected outcomes:

- A sound understanding of present developments and a meaningful mapping of future pathways are achieved, through empirical analysis, put in social, cultural, historical and global perspectives, in combination with theoretical rigor, experimentation and normative reflection.
- Transparency, responsiveness, accountability, inclusiveness and effectiveness of democratic governance are supported at all levels, by new knowledge and out-of-the-box innovative methods and ideas for evidence-based policy recommendations.
- Help restore trust in governance, through evidence-based approaches and methodologies which help narrow the gap between citizen's perceptions and hopes and reality, and by responding to threats to the electoral processes and democracy overall.

- Enablers, barriers and other key elements for empowering citizens to manage better their personal data, including data created and/or accessed by public administrations, are identified.
- New knowledge on democratic governance challenges and political phenomena supports the implementation of internationally agreed agendas (SDGs, etc.), EU policy priorities, and the promotion of EU core values.
- Compilation and analysis of longitudinal data throughout the topical areas to further improve research outputs and facilitate new innovative approaches and tracing the impact on policy making and democratic governance of past research results and innovations in the field of democracy and rule of law.
- A wider roll-out of science-based innovations in democratic governance is facilitated, as experimentation and testing actions provide a better understanding of the challenges for the up-take of research results in different contexts.