



Distinguished Lecture
**"IS THERE HOPE?
Polarisation and the Crisis of Democracy:
Causes and Possible Remedies"**

Conversation with Professor Manuel Castells

Tuesday, 21 May 2024

18:00-19:30

CaixaForum Macaya

Pg. de St. Joan, 108, 08037 Barcelona, Spain

As 2024 unfolds, it stands as a pivotal year for democracy, marked by significant global elections, including the highly anticipated European elections in June.

On the 21st of May 2024, Re-Imagine Europa, the Social Observatory of "la Caixa" Foundation, and the European League of Economic Cooperation (LECE) are delighted to organize a conversation with Professor Manuel Castells, who will explore the current status of modern democracies, understanding the effects of polarization, and identifying possible solutions.

In our increasingly polarized, fractured, and contentious world, the political landscape in Europe is characterized by fragile majorities, minority governments, or uneasy coalitions. This environment complicates the pursuit of innovative and practical solutions to the pressing issues facing citizens in the 21st century. With trust diminishing globally and emotions like fear, anger, and nostalgia becoming more prevalent, the dialogue seeks to address the critical question: *How can we bridge the political and social divides in Europe for a more resilient and inclusive democracy?*

Building on the insights from the "Future4Citizens" Dialogues, organized during the Spanish Presidency and hosted at CaixaForum Macaya in October 2023, and the "Cycle of Distrust" analysis developed by Re-Imagine Europa, this conversation aims to delve into the dynamics shaping our era. Through a thought-provoking examination of shifting power dynamics and the role of communication in democratic processes, the discussion will explore the possibilities of transcending the current status quo. The goal is to empower citizens to actively participate in crafting the future they envision, fostering a more engaged, informed, and hopeful democratic society.

Programme

07/05/2024

- 17:50-18:00 Welcome
Salón de Actos, Floor -1
- 18:00-18:10 Welcome Address
Mr. López-Burniol, LaCaixa Vicepresident
- 18:10-18:45 Keynote Lecture
Professor Manuel Castells, Sociologist and former Minister of University of the Spanish Government, and member of the Advisory Board of Re-Imagine Europa
- 18:45-19:30 Open conversation with
Álex Rodríguez, La Vanguardia Deputy Director
- Q&A