

# EVALUATION OF DEMOCRACY RESEARCH GROUP



## Co-directors :

### Emiliano GROSSMAN



Associate Professor at Sciences Po, working at the Center for European studies and Comparative Politics and member of LIEPP. His research focuses on comparative political institutions and agenda-setting processes, the media and the economic regulation of European Union countries.

### Julia CAGÉ



Associate Professor at Sciences Po, working at the Department of Economics, member of the Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR) and of LIEPP. Her research focuses on political economy, industrial organization and economic history. She is particularly interested in the media economy and in the funding of democracy.

## Affiliated members:

- Laurie BOUSSAGUET
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- Hortense DE PADIRAC
- Edgard DEWITTE
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- Florence FAUCHER
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- Olivier GERGAUD
- Annabelle LEVER
- Elisa MOUGIN
- Jan ROVNY
- Lou SAFRA
- Cyrille THIEBAUT
- Camille URVOY
- Paulus WAGNER

## Ongoing projects:

- Public opinion, democratic accountability and evaluation of defence: towards a new comparative research agenda (OPIDEF)
- The mechanics and determinants of anti-science attitudes : a literature review
- A study of the characteristics of candidates in UK general elections since 1918

Advanced democracies are all facing major political crises and a decline in democratic legitimacy. Evaluation practices are widely used to account for the democratic systems that condition the implementation of public policies. The research group 'Evaluation of democracy' (EvalDem) aims to provide an interdisciplinary, comparative and innovative evaluation of the democratic character of public policy production processes. The research group is organised around three themes: **1) Anti-science attitudes and the crisis of democracy.** The implementation of public policies can be made more difficult by the growing mistrust of citizens. Anti-science attitudes are seen as a symptom of a broader political malaise. In order to understand their roots, it is necessary to study the institutional and intellectual environment of individuals (populist discourse, role of the media, losers of globalisation). **2) Political participation and the financing of democracy.** The crisis of political representation in representative democracies highlights the importance of studying the modalities of political participation. Improving knowledge of the characteristics of candidates and the evolution of their representativeness over time contributes to examining the functioning of a democracy and the perceptions of citizens. **3) New forms of media financing, which also contribute to the financing of democracy.** The research group aims to study the extent to which different capital and governance structures affect the information produced by the media, the electoral participation and to evaluate the effectiveness of media regulations in guaranteeing their independence.

### Anti-science attitudes

Following on from previous work on the rejection of politics, this new project seeks to **better identify and explain the growing rejection of science and expertise.** The starting point is the observation that this growing rejection could have serious consequences, particularly in critical areas of public policy such as health or the environment.

This project is in its early stages, but a series of research are underway. A literature review is being finalised and will be published this year. In addition, we have started indexing the survey data available in France and in the world. Some of these activities are carried out jointly with the environmental and health policies research groups.

**The aim is to better understand the processes that encourage the rejection of science to think about ways to prevent or combat this rejection.**

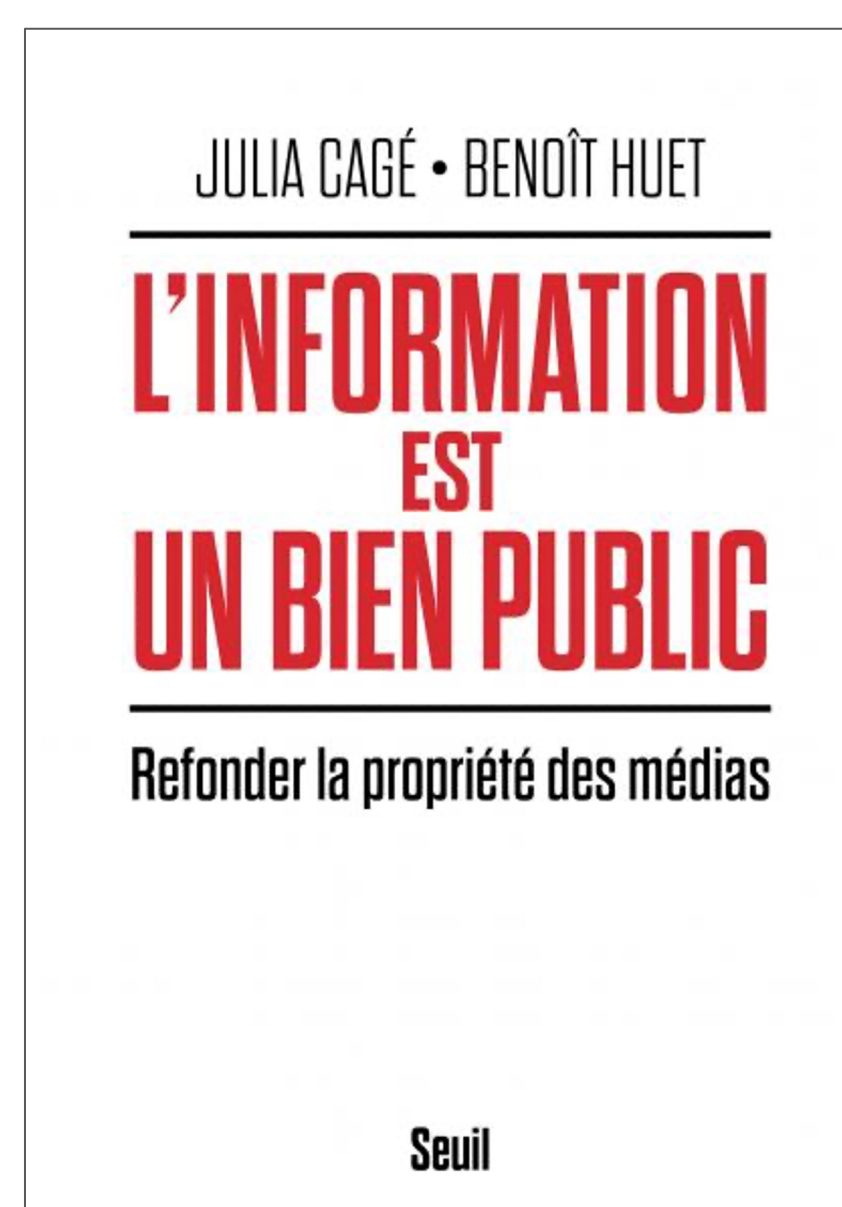
Four complementary avenues are to be explored. The first concerns the individual factors that encourage adherence to scientific theses, or even the rejection of science. The second concerns the dissemination of these theses in the public arena and therefore the role of the traditional media and social networks. A third direction concerns the mobilisation or endorsement of these theses in the sphere of political competition, understanding which political movements are most likely to champion them. Finally, we must also try to understand the place of science, communication and scientific learning in society.

### New forms of media financing

Published by Seuil in 2021, the book « *L'information est un bien public: Refonder la propriété des médias* » ((Information is a public good. Rethinking media property) written by Julia Cagé and Benoît Huet is based on the observation that the media crisis and citizens' distrust of information are growing every day. According to the authors, trust can be regained by addressing the root of the problem: media ownership.

This book aims to arm citizens, journalists and regulators by shedding light on the different forms of media ownership and the limits of existing regulations. Julia Cagé and Benoît Huet propose a law for the democratisation of information, allowing journalists and citizens to regain control of the media. This reflection is part of the continuity of various research projects carried out within the research group around the theme of media funding.

The project "Qui possède les médias? Capital, gouvernance et indépendance" (Who owns the media? Capital, governance and independence), conducted in partnership with Reporters Sans Frontières studied the way in which different capital and governance structures affect, on the one hand, the information produced by the media and, on the other hand, electoral participation. The aim is to assess the effectiveness of different media regulations.



### Scientific events 2021-2022

- 16/06/2022:** "Challenges and innovations in rule of law measurement". Seminar with Alina Mungiu Pippidi (Hertie School of Berlin & visiting at LIEPP)
- 13-14/12/2021 :** Workshop "Economics & Politics 2021"
- 28/09/2021:** Workshop "Anti-science attitudes" (with Environmental and Health Policies research groups)
- 07/06/2021:** "Fake news, complotisme, idéologie des chaînes d'information: pour une approche pluridisciplinaire des médias », Journée d'études LIEPP/Médialab
- 04/06/2021:** "Is journalistic truth dead ?". Seminar Andrea Prat (Columbia University)
- 04/03/2021:** "La démocratie ouverte : principes et exemples". Seminar with Hélène Landemore (Department of Political Sciences, Yale)

### Public perception and policy preferences

Another main objective of the research group focuses on studying the relationship between public opinion and public policy. Special interest is given to the perception of citizens, the effects of public policies as well as the reactivity of public policy to changes in opinion and the impact of public policies on opinion formation.

This helps to explain both the substantive content of policies and the public's satisfaction with government decisions.

The **Baromètre des priorités politiques (Barometer of political priorities)** is the main project in this field. Cofunded by the CEVIPOF, the Government Information Service and LIEPP, the Barometer is a set of quarterly indicators on the evolution of political preferences in French society.

The primary aim of the project is to improve the longitudinal monitoring of French electoral dynamics. Since its creation in June 2014, it has produced four sets of indicators and further data collection will allow for a deeper impact analysis.

The Barometer is, firstly, an attempt to monitor and understand the evolution of citizens' political and public policy preferences. It first examines the perception of the state of France based on a series of indicators and then the perception of the most significant problems in France and changes in six areas. This six areas include taxes, unemployment, prices of goods and services, social inequality, crime and immigration.

Secondly, the Barometer seeks to track citizens' political priorities on three specific issues: policy directions, public spending and taxation. The study is done in terms of the importance attached to these issues and its prioritization. For each issue, the desired development and its importance are measured.

### Publications

- TUFFY, Yasmine, *Revue de littérature sur le scientoscepticisme* (à venir)
- CAGÉ, Julia, and Edgard DEWITTE, "When Does Money Matter for Elections?", *Sciences Po LIEPP Policy Brief* n°58, March 2022.
- ANGELUCCI, Charles, Andrea PRAT. "Is Journalistic Truth Dead? Measuring How Informed Voters Are about Political News", *Sciences Po LIEPP Working Paper* n°128, January 2022.
- TRICAUD, Clémence, "Better Alone? Evidence on the Costs of Intermunicipal Cooperation" *Sciences Po LIEPP Working Paper* n°125, October 2021.
- DELATTE Anne-Laure, Benjamin LEMOINE, *Expertise économique et politique publique : examen critique des propositions sur la dette liée à la pandémie. Note de recherche LIEPP Working Paper* n°118, March 2021
- WICKBERG Sofia, Giulia MUGELLINI The evolving nature of evidence as used within the international anti-corruption community *LIEPP Working Paper* n°117, December 2020
- VISKANIC, Max, Paul VERTIER, Matteo GAMALERIO, "Dismantling the 'Jungle' : Relocation and Extreme Voting in France *LIEPP Working paper* n°110, September 2020