



MINDA DE GUNZBURG CENTER FOR EUROPEAN STUDIES  
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

# WZB

## Harvard in Berlin – CES-WZB Lecture

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für Sozialforschung

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## Critical Citizens Revisited

Pippa Norris, Harvard University

Friday, September 11, 2009

3 p.m., Room A 300

Discussant: **Vivien A. Schmidt, Boston University**

Moderated by **Wolfgang Merkel, WZB**



An accumulating body of longitudinal evidence suggests that in recent decades citizens in many established democracies have grown more distrustful of politicians, doubtful about public sector institutions, and disillusioned with government leaders, although simultaneously endorsing democratic ideals. Cross-national surveys elsewhere – in Latin America as well as Post-Communist states, in Sub-Saharan Africa as well as Asia and the Middle East – suggests that around the globe many citizens express similar sentiments. This phenomenon represents the rise of ‘critical citizens’: those who simultaneously aspire to democratic values or principles as the ideal form of government yet remaining skeptical about the way that political institutions work in practice. Many people worldwide fall into this category.

Why? And what are the implications? Pippa Norris integrates disparate findings about this phenomenon into a more comprehensive theoretical comparative framework, providing new insights into the causes and consequences of the rise of critical citizens.

**Pippa Norris** is the McGuire Lecturer in Comparative Politics at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government. Her research compares elections and public opinion, political communications, and gender politics. She has published more than three-dozen books, including most recently, for Cambridge University Press, *Sacred and Secular* (2004), *Radical Right* (2005), *Driving Democracy* (2008), and *Cosmopolitan Communications* (2009).

**Vivien A. Schmidt** is Jean Monnet Professor of European Integration, Professor of International Relations, and Director of the Center for International Relations at Boston University. Her most recent book is *Democracy in Europe* (2006).

**Wolfgang Merkel** is director of the WZB research unit Democracy: Structures, performance, challenges.

The WZB provides for child care during the lecture. If you are interested, please respond by August 28, 2009, indicating the number of children and their age.

To register, please reply by September 8, 2009, to Marie Unger: [ces-wzb@wzb.eu](mailto:ces-wzb@wzb.eu); Fax: 030-25 49 16 80.