

Abstract for the Impact conference 20-22 May 2013

ROUNDTABLE:

Youth, Religion and Participation. Theoretical and Methodological Approaches

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This roundtable session focus on religious and social change as well as democracy and political culture, starting from the role of youth in these processes. The role of religion in young people's participation is a key theme in the cross-disciplinary network "youth and religion" connected to the Impact program. Participation here includes both citizens' "vertical" capacities to make their voices heard and influence decision-makers in the political system (e.g. via elections or civic organizations and social movements) and their "horizontal" capacities to communicate and cooperate with other people (within society at large or certain associations/communities). The participants of the session will present influential theories and methodologies used to study participation among youth within the research disciplines they represent (i.e. sociology of religion; theology; ethnology; political science). This will be followed by a joint discussion of how these theories and methodologies have approached religious involvement with a particular focus on youth's participation in politics, civil society as well as social media and the internet. The aim of the session is to look for common themes and new issues that can guide contemporary studies of participation in the field of youth and religion. The session is open to conference participants interested in the issues discussed.