

Newsletter: Europe not without the people

30 January 2007

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o) Editorial: Europe not without the people

by Ronald Pabst

It is high time to give the European citizens more influence in the European Union. Currently the German government is holding the EU Presidency. The German officials still hope to revive the EU Constitution - in spite of the clear rejection by the Dutch and French voters. So it is high time to develop alternatives. Democracy International calls with more than 110 supporting associations for an immediate introduction of the European Citizens' Initiative. But this would only be a very first step towards direct democracy. In March we will organize a conference in Berlin to stipulate the exchange of ideas between representatives of the civil society. The results will be presented publicly as the "Berlin declaration". The title of the event is "Europe not without the people". Hopefully we have the pleasure to welcome you.

1) Conference in Berlin

The present Heads of State and Heads of Government of the European Union will meet in Berlin to debate about the future of Europe. But they have not shown sufficient interest in the values, ambitions and expectations of European citizens. We are holding a conference on The Future of Europe on 23 – 25 March 2007 in Berlin to develop new solutions for old questions: How to create a democratic Europe of the citizens? How can we achieve and safeguard real subsidiarity, democratic control, transparency and direct citizen participation?

More information and registration

www.berlin2007.org

2) Study: European Citizens' Initiative

Dr. Michael Efler examines the legal possibilities to implement the European Citizens ' Initiative below the constitutional level.

democracy-international.org/eci-study.html

3) Citizens' Initiative in Italy

The Italian Constitution enables its citizens to launch non-binding initiatives. This tool is quite similar to the European Citizens' Initiative as proposed in the European Constitution. Therefore, the usage of this tool in Italy is worth looking at. Our report offers detailed information about this. It is available in German and English.

democracy-international.org/italian-initiative.html

4) Hamburg: Fighting against the backlash

In Hamburg, the regulations concerning direct democracy were cut back seriously by the parliament. Beforehand, the frequent use of direct democracy was unique in Germany. Now the struggle against the backlash has begun. From 13 February until 5 March the citizens of Hamburg can sign a submission aiming to introduce fair regulations again.

democracy-international.org/hamburg-backlash.html

Ronald Pabst / Stefan Wolf

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