



DEMOCRACY INTERNATIONAL

Newsletter: Travelling for the cause of direct democracy

07 December 2012

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Dear members and friends of Democracy International,

Yesterday, on the day of Santa Clause, my colleague Klaus Hofmann arrived back in our office after travelling Ecuador, Peru, Chile, Uruguay and Brazil for two months. He visited South America to learn about the current state of politics and direct democracy in these countries.

On a European scale and for a much shorter time, I am back from a three-day-conference in Toulouse, France. There I was the only one who spoke out for direct democracy, while others talked about representative democracy during the crisis and citizens' inclusion in the budgetary planning of municipalities in France, Germany and Great Britain. The conference on "Participation and Democracy" was organized by the Goethe-Institut Toulouse.

The conference demonstrated that the topic of "participation" is en vogue at the moment, though this does not necessarily mean more direct democracy. In Europe there need to be more bottom-up initiatives of direct democracy, this is also one of the conclusions Klaus Hofmann drew from his journey through South America.

All this shows the importance of steering our ideas into the mainstream of political thinking and to continue our work in 2013. In the meantime the board and staff of Democracy International wish you a good Christmas time and peaceful festivities.

Best regards,
Cora Pfafferott

1. Impressions from South America - Interview with Dr. Hofmann

From 28 September until 29 November 2012 Dr. Klaus Hofmann, editor of the Direct Democracy Navigator, travelled South America to learn about the political practice in Ecuador, Peru, Chile, Uruguay and Brazil. On the first day of his return, we have asked him about the experiences that he made.

www.democracy-international.org/interview-klaus-hofmann.html

2. "Citoyens indignés, réclamez la démocratie directe!"

On Friday, 30 November, our spokesperson Cora Pfafferott participated in a panel discussion on the topic "Social protests in the 21st century" at the Goethe-Institut in Toulouse, France. The other guests on the panel were the Tunisian human rights defender Sihem Bensedrine and the Spanish journalist of El País, José María Martí Font. Here you can read her speech.

www.democracy-international.org/presentation-toulouse.html

3. Montevideo Declaration on Modern Direct Democracy

From 14 to 16 November people from all walks of life and from all corners of the world met at the 2012 Global Forum on Modern Direct Democracy in Montevideo, Uruguay. Scholars, journalists, activists, petition and initiative organizers, philanthropists, elected officials, election administrators, NGO leaders, lawyers, businesspeople and farmers attended the three-day-long conference.

www.democracy-international.org/declaration-globalforum2012.html

4. Book Review: "Intelligent Governance for the 21st Century"

On Thursday, 8th November 2012, Maureen Childs, a London UK and member of Democracy International, attended a talk given by Nicolas Berggruen and Nathan Gardels, at the RSA in London, entitled 'How to Govern Intelligently in the 21st century'.

www.democracy-international.org/review-intelligentgovernance.html

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