



DEMOCRACY INTERNATIONAL

2018

ANNUAL
REPORT



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(eingetragener Verein - e.V.) - Amtsgericht köln: VR-Nr. 17139

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A year in votes:



United States

In the mid-term elections, ballot measures on democratic reforms garner success. Anti-gerrymandering proposals pass in Colorado, Michigan, Missouri & Utah. Florida restores voting rights for 1.4 million people who had been convicted of a felony.

Ireland

As recommended by a Citizens' Assembly, voters decide on two constitutional amendments, leading to the legalisation of abortion and the decriminalisation of blasphemy.

Taiwan

The first referendum under the new regulation takes place - 10 questions are on the ballot.

Peru

Voters approve three measures to combat corruption: the implementation of term limits in parliament, stricter campaign financing rules and an overhaul of the council that appoints judges. They rejected a bicameral parliament.

Ethiopia

Newly elected Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed signs a long-awaited peace deal with Eritrea, lifts the martial law and launches ambitious democratic reforms.

In 2018...

1

new co-worker
joined our team

Democracy International
gained

2

new Board Members

Our European Public
Sphere travelled to

20

different cities

800+

people registered for
the **Global Forum
on Modern Direct
Democracy**

Democracy International
hosted

5

interns

1200

people participated in

211

HomeParliaments

400+

people **participated**
in a **European Public
Sphere discussion**

4

cities committed to
greater democracy

The number of citizens
who **signed an ECI**
reached
9.000.000

We worked with over
120
organisations
worldwide

35
national
referendums were
organised globally

but...

14
countries held
plebiscites

89
organisations joined
our **#EPForgetUsNot**
campaign

We decided to move:
50667
is the postal code of
our **new office**

115
countries worldwide
now have **direct**
democracy
instruments

1
country decided to
abolish the right to
hold a referendum

THIS WAS 2018 FOR US

18 February 2018:
Democracy
International's
Council meeting
in Cologne

1 March 2018:
We can announce that the 2019
Global Forum on Modern Direct
Democracy will take place from
2-5 October in Taichung, Taiwan

1 April 2018:
Anne Hardt joins
Democracy International
as Campaigning &
Fundraising Manager

9 - 11 March 2018:
Direct democracy
experts meet for the
Political Culture & Active
Citizenship Conference

22 April 2018:
The European
Public Sphere
travels to Spain

**Browse our interactive
timeline
online:**
[bit.ly/
2CPtOut](https://bit.ly/2CPtOut)



DEAR FRIENDS,

At Democracy International, we've had an exciting 12 months: we hosted a record edition of the Global Forum on Modern Direct Democracy, showing that the democracy community is more vibrant and combative than ever. Cities of the world committed to more direct democracy in a historic Magna Charta. We've launched numerous exciting new projects this year. And with a revision coming to a close, the European Citizens' Initiative finally seems to be headed for improvement.

But 2018 has also been a challenging year for citizen participation and democracy in general. With the March 2019 Brexit deadline rapidly approaching, a final deal still has not been decided on. What's more, it seems that citizens will not get a final say on the decision and the government even tries to circumvent their elected representatives. After a Brexit plebiscite marked by disinformation and obscure

intentions, citizens should at the very least be allowed to have a real say on a final deal.

2018 has also been marked by the hollowing out of democratic institutions. Voter suppression was rampant in the run-up to the US mid-term elections, depriving citizens of their most basic right to participate in political life. In Poland, efforts to politicise the Supreme Court were reversed by an order from the European Union Court of Justice, but only after a three-year game of 'Chicken'. And the president-elect of Brazil, the world's fourth-largest democracy, scoffs at indigenous rights and glorifies extra-judicial killings.

Especially worrying to us is the global trend of shrinking civic space, with civil society organisations facing increasing threats to their work everywhere. In Hungary, a draconian



A EUROPE IN TURMOIL

One of Democracy International's fundamental drivers has always been the development of a social and democratic Europe that involves citizens at the core of its decision-making. 2018 has been an exceptionally challenging year, with right-wing populism rising and distrust between citizens and politics flaring high. Against this background, a revision of the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) is drawing to a close and preparations for the 2019 parliamentary elections are ongoing.

The European Citizens' Initiative – In it for the long haul

The ECI, the first and only transnational tool of direct democracy worldwide, turned six this year and is set to undergo some considerable changes. A thorough revision of the instrument was announced last year and kicked off an intense period of campaigning for Democracy International in 2018.

This year came with some positive ECI news: the Minority SafePack initiative managed to become the fifth ever to reach the required one million signatures. They intend to hand in their proposals once the new Commission takes office. At ECI Day in April this year, Frans Timmermans, First Vice-President of the European Commission, launched a new public awareness campaign to promote the ECI called "EU Take the Initiative", following up on the Commission's promise to invest in making the tool more visible.

5 May 2018:
The European
Public Sphere kicks
off its German tour

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But what about the actual reform? Keeping up with the institutions' proposals and negotiations has taken us on a rollercoaster year. In a proposal released late last year, the Commission seemed to be willing to agree with civil society on several ways to improve the ECI. However, it did not include the stronger policy response to successful ECIs we lack today and which we have consistently called for over the last years. At the same time, the Constitutional Affairs Committee (AFCO) of the European Parliament was preparing its own report on the ECI, which still left potential to reinforce the political impact of successful ECIs.

With all eyes on AFCO, Democracy International and our partner The ECI Campaign contacted all Members of European Parliament, asking that they oblige themselves to debate and vote on successful ECIs in the plenary. Our open letter to the Parliament was supported by a wide coalition of civil society actors: it was signed by 70 organisations and ECIs, including all five successful ECIs. We reminded the Parliament of the nine million citizens who have signed an ECI and distributed our open letter along with forget-me-not flowers at the European Parliament in Brussels.

However, the AFCO Committee ignored our call to take greater ownership of the ECI, undermining the ECI as a tool and eroding confidence among civil society and citizens that the EU is responsive to their concerns.



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On 18 June, we handed out forget-me-not flowers to Members of the European Parliament to remind them of their duty to the 9.000.000 citizens who have signed an ECI



When the time came for the entire European Parliament to vote on the AFCO report, we launched a second open letter, urging them not to adopt the report until it explicitly included an increased role of the Parliament in the follow-up to successful ECIs. We wanted to generate maximum public pressure. By the end we gathered the support of nearly 90 civil society organisations for our campaign, which ran under the name #EPForgetUsNot and for which Democracy International and The ECI Campaign were named NGO of the Year by The Good Lobby Awards.

While the European Parliament decided to approve the report despite our opposition, our campaign was successful in obtaining a stronger parliamentary follow-up. In December, the AFCO Committee at the initiative of the ECI rapporteur, voted to amend the Rules of Procedure, obliging the Parliament to hold a plenary debate on successful ECIs. This decision will be put to a final vote in Parliament early next year.

Since then, the European Council has communicated its own position on the ECI's revision. In it, the member states take a big step back on

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two issues the Commission had included in their proposal: allowing citizens from 16 years old to sign initiatives and limiting the choice of ECI organisers to use their own online signature collection system. This leaves ECI organisers with only the Commission's outdated collection system and no clear indication of how the Commission plans to improve it. It would be a huge step back in the technical user-friendliness of the ECI, but it also presents an opportunity for the Commission to take a revision of its own Commission-run system seriously and adopt the campaigner-friendly features of the existing alternative software.

As our annual report went to press, final negotiations between all three institutions were underway and appear to be at least in part headed in the right direction, with more flexibility for organisers in launching their ECI and harmonised data requirements for signing an initiative. But until successful ECIs receive a response that does justice to the demands put on organisers, public interest in the tool will remain low. European citizens deserve a real say in the policies that shape their lives!

A much-needed assistance for ECI organisers

22 May 2018:
Launch of an online
platform to support
ECI organisers

In some good news on the ECI front, the European Commission this year launched a new website to promote the ECI and support organisers, called The ECI Forum. The pilot project is hosted by a consortium between ECAS, European Service Network and CARSA, under contract to the European Commission. The Forum was tested and well-received by participants at this year's ECI day, which next year we will be co-organising.

The platform responds to several demands for which we have long advocated, making the ECI easier to understand and organise. It offers news on ECIs and on the political response. It has an explicit learning mission and offers regular webinars on campaigning, fundraising and signature collecting. So far this year, five educational webinars took place and more are planned for next year. In a discussion forum, citizens can connect with others to finetune their ECI proposals or even to build alliances. But perhaps most importantly, ECI organisers can request free, tailored and quick campaigning, fundraising and legal advice from experts. Democracy International Board Member Daniel Schily supports the platform as the official advisor on fundraising and campaigning. You can consult the site at collab.ec.europa.eu/wiki/eci/.

Transparency

With over 25.000 lobbyists in Brussels, meetings between Members of the European Parliament and those wishing to influence decision-making must be kept in check. It is only by making this information public that there can be no mistake on who our representatives represent.

Big progress was made this December, when the Committee on Constitutional Affairs of the EU Parliament voted to significantly enhance lobby transparency. The proposed provisions would require parliamentarians in special positions, such as rapporteurs and committee chairs to publish their meetings with lobbyists online. Until now, a lobby register of this kind is only voluntary.

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While Democracy International calls on Members of Parliament to reject meeting with lobbyists who refuse to register altogether, this is a good sign that the interinstitutional trilogues on transparency reform that began earlier this year will resume. The Commission had previously frozen talks to put pressure on the European Parliament to improve rules within their own house. This also means that the first time ever the question of transparency rules for the Council could be raised at the highest political level. The proposed change still has to be approved in the European Parliament Plenary and will be voted on in January. Ahead of the vote, we will organise an email drive together with an alliance, including Lobby Control.

Life is analogue - creating a European Public Sphere

Launched last year together with IG Eurovision, our European Public Sphere aims to create a space where citizens of all backgrounds can discuss their ideas for Europe in open and inclusive way. By organising these talks in public spaces, we reach a diverse mix of people, inviting them to step out of their filter bubbles and into the Dome.

We organised three tours, each with a specific focus. First up was Spain, following up on the 2016 Global Forum on Modern Direct Democracy which took place in San Sebastian. In Austria, the dome travelled at the occasion of the EU Council Presidency. In Germany, we discussed the future of Europe on a tour of North Rhine-Westphalia, in partnership with Mehr Demokratie NRW. Under the inquisitive gaze of passers-by, armed



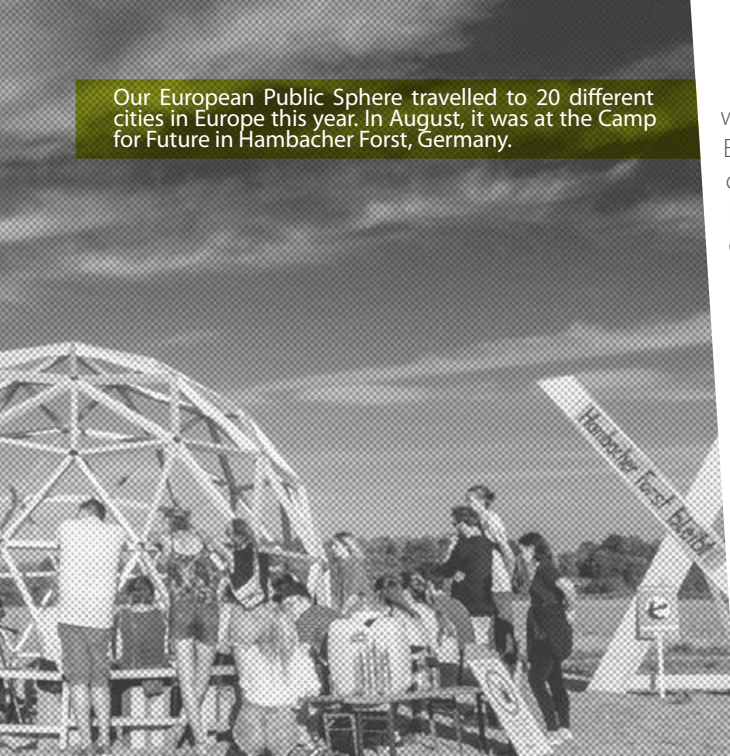
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Our European Public Sphere travelled to 20 different cities in Europe this year. In August, it was at the Camp for Future in Hambacher Forst, Germany.

with cordless screwdrivers, safety helmets and ladders, we erected the Europe Dome in 20 towns this year, hosting over 400 participants in 40 one-and-a-half hour long 'Dome Talks' in total. The culmination of our Europe tour was the Dome's presence on the Capitoline Hill in Rome during the Global Forum on Modern Direct Democracy in September.

Discussion topics of these talks range from social justice to the European institutional reform and the results are collected and processed in videos and a blog posts to be fed into the virtual sphere. By moving from the analogue to the digital, these discussions can reach and involve even more people. They surmount the local and construct a European-wide conversation on our common future.

Our ultimate goal is to take the voices of these citizens out of the market square and into the European Parliament. The results from our Dome Talks will be presented to the new Parliament in the fall of 2019, with the call to use them as the basis of a new European Convention.



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In 2019, our Europe Dome will continue its tour. Planned are stops in Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxemburg and hopefully some countries in Eastern Europe. An educational tour focused on involving youth is also in the making.

Our European Public Sphere project was met with incredibly positive reactions this year, even making it to the finals of the European Citizenship Awards. This overwhelming response shows one thing: a renewal of Europe is emerging, and its starting point are the people themselves. If you want to learn more or participate, go to www.publicsphere.eu.

Looking forward – The European Parliament of Change

European politics this year were decidedly marked by the looming parliamentary elections that will take place 23-26 May 2019. At Democracy International, we have several actions planned in the run-up. Firstly, to kick off the year of European elections and to encourage young people to vote, we will be partnering with AEGEE Dusseldorf for the Y Vote project and will host two workshops at a conference under this heading in February 2019.

Secondly, Democracy International plans to make use of the elections to firmly advocate for a new, democratic European Convention. It is long overdue! Citizens feel more disconnected from EU decision-making than ever before. If we want to save the European project, we need a democratic relaunch that involves citizens in the shaping the Union they wish for themselves.

A European Convention, as specified in Article 48 of the Lisbon Treaty, is the only legally available procedure to trigger a treaty change and offers an excellent opportunity to meaningfully involve citizens and civil society in fundamental discussions on the future of the EU.

As we did during the elections of 2014, together with Meer Democratie Netherlands, we will contact as many candidates for the European Parliament as possible, asking them to commit to calling for a democratic European Convention if elected. To guide them in the Convention process, we will build on the results of our European Public Sphere discussions. These will be recast in a roadmap to a European Convention for the incoming parliamentarians.

Finally, the process of appointing a European Commission President was made moderately more transparent in the run-up to the last European elections by the introduction of the Spitzenkandidaten process. Several parties have confirmed their candidates so far: Manfred Weber will head up the European People's Party, Frans Timmermans for the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats, Jan Zahradil will lead the Alliance of Conservatives and Reformists and Ska Keller and Bas Eickhout took up shared candidacy for the Greens-European Free Alliance. Other parties will decide on their Spitzenkandidaten early next year. Within the framework of our new HomeParliaments project, we plan on working together with some of these representatives, thematically matching them up with a European-wide round of citizen discussions. More on our HomeParliaments project is coming up on page 18.

8 June 2018:
New members of our team go on a direct democracy briefing tour of Switzerland

RESEARCH, INNOVATION & EDUCATION

Democracy International not only actively pushes for political reform, but also strives to put high quality, scientific information at the disposition of the democracy community and the public. We can only improve our societies by learning from each other and by making the best use of the available research and expertise. One of our main objectives is to offer that expertise with the lowest possible hurdles, making the research as easy as possible to find and understand.

Political habitus as an explanation for variations in citizen participation

The Direct Democracy Navigator is a unique tool that allows users to search the legal bases, procedures and practices of modern direct democracy worldwide at the local, regional, national and transnational levels. At the moment, the Navigator features over 1700 such legal designs across 115 countries. You can consult them on www.direct-democracy-navigator.org.

18 June 2018:
We hand out letters with forget-me-nots to Members of the EU Parliament for our #EPForgetUsNot campaign

The Direct Democracy Navigator is hosted by the Institute for Democracy and Participation Research of the University of Wuppertal in cooperation with Democracy International and the Initiative and Referendum Institute Europe, with the support of Swissinfo and People2power. The most recent legal designs and practices are constantly being added to the platform by Dr. Klaus Hofmann who manages the Navigator. In the last year, 90% of the legal designs already on the platform were updated.

Throughout his research, Dr. Hofmann found that many countries do in fact have instruments that allow citizens to participate in decision-making, but that the way in which they are used varies immensely from one country to the next. To examine how these differences arise, he invited scholars from seven countries to the Political Culture and Active Citizenship symposium at the Bergische Universität Wuppertal last March. Experts from Peru, Uruguay, Ecuador, Slovakia, Hungary, Germany and Switzerland presented their cases, explaining what obstacles and incentives citizens face in order to participate in policy-making. The conference was supported by the Thyssen Stiftung and attended by around 50 participants. A paper based on the conference will be published next year.

Moving towards self-learning democracies

In 2017, Democracy International, Dr. Raban Fuhrmann and the Procedere Verbund founded the Academy for a Learning Democracy. It aims at sparking off a self-educating society that constantly improves its institutions, systems and strategies through participatory processes. By training professional 'democracy developers', the Academy helps administrations and businesses to put in place those processes that improve our democracies.

The Academy for a Learning Democracy hosted multiple events for professionals and experts. In collaboration with the Weltethos Institut and the University of Tübingen, several academic courses were offered throughout the year. And in September, the

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Academy organised a workshop at the Global Forum on Modern Direct Democracy in Rome, introducing the innovative participatory procedure 'HomeParliaments', which was developed by Dr. Raban Fuhrmann.

Next year, the Academy will focus on developing and offering a full curriculum for 'democracy developers'. For more on this, visit www.lernende-demokratie.de.

Between the kitchen table and the minister's desk

Democracy International, Pulse of Europe and the Academy for a Learning Democracy this year launched a pioneer project linking citizens and policymakers under the banner of HomeParliaments. In this new participation format, citizens are invited to develop recommendations and advise politicians on relevant policy issues. In the subsequent public event, a selected political partner responds to the impulses by discussing the recommendations and offering insight into implementable measures.

6 July 2018:
Our European
Public Sphere
sets out on an
Austria tour

A first round of HomeParliaments was organised in Germany by the Academy for a Learning Democracy and Pulse of Europe over the summer, with 211 citizens opening their homes to host a debate, gathering over 1,200 participants in total. They discussed how the EU should react to President Trump's 'America First' policy. German Minister of State Michael Roth responded on 30 October in Berlin. One of the questions on the agenda was if the

EU should have its own army. This proved particularly relevant when French President Macron and German Chancellor Merkel echoed this sentiment this autumn.

The next round will be organised European-wide by Democracy International and Pulse of Europe and involve several of the European elections' Spitzenkandidaten. It is slated to begin early 2019 and will cover the question of EU reform. You can already sign up for the next HomeParliaments round at www.HomeParliaments.eu.

Looking forward - Citizen participation from the emerald island to the old continent

In January 2019, Democracy International will organise a study tour of Dublin, Ireland for Mehr Demokratie Germany. German democracy activists will meet with Irish Members of Parliament and Ministry representatives to learn about the Irish Citizens' Assemblies model.

Recommendations of a 2016-2017 Citizens' Assembly led to two highly publicised referendums on abortion and blasphemy in Ireland this year: a success that inspired Mehr Demokratie to advocate for the organisation of a German edition on democratic reform. Throughout the three-day tour, participants will meet with key players: academics, politicians, officials, journalists, civil society, and citizens who were members of the last Citizens' Assembly.

BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

It is only by exchanging experiences and knowledge that we can grow and evolve, and this is no different when it comes to democracy. There is nothing we can accomplish alone! Democracy International is committed to providing a meeting space for people working on direct democracy worldwide. This year Democracy International has been especially focused on extending our service to democracy activists and experts outside of Europe, in order to create a mutually reinforcing global network.

Local democracy globally

Democracy International is one of the key organisers of the Global Forum on Modern Direct Democracy, the largest event on direct democracy worldwide. This year, it took place in Rome, Italy from 26 until 29 September and focused on how we can make our cities more democratic while enabling them to elevate the voices of their citizens onto the global level. Mayor Virginia Raggi of Rome officially opened the Forum and Italian Minister of Direct Democracy Riccardo Fraccaro gave the keynote address.

The 2018 Global Forum was a record-breaking edition in every sense! It was the tenth anniversary of the very first Global Forum in Aarau, Switzerland and over 800 participants from more than 80 countries registered to attend it. But what we are most proud of is that we included activists at the centre. Throughout workshops and practical sessions, we were able to create greater space and visibility for civil society organisations to showcase their work.



From 26 until 29 September the 2018 Global Forum on Modern Direct Democracy took place in Rome, Italy - over 800 people from more than 80 different countries registered.

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We also incorporated more variety in the programme with breakout sessions, but especially through the presence of the European Public Sphere and the German OMNIBUS for Direct Democracy. Both travelled to Rome for the occasion and hosted several workshops and activist storytelling sessions.

Lastly, in a historic closing plenary, world cities committed to working together to protect and expand democracy. To this end, participants of the Forum drafted a Magna Charta answering the question "What does it mean to be a Democracy City?" It will serve as a charter for a new organisation, the International League of Democracy Cities and will travel the world for comments in the next year. So far Rome, Italy; Seoul, Republic of Korea; Taichung, Taiwan and Madrid, Spain have committed to the charter. The final version of the Magna Charta will be approved and signed at next year's Global Forum.

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We are already in the process of organising the 2019 Global Forum on Modern Direct Democracy. It will be held from 2 to 5 October in Taichung, Taiwan. The focus of the 2019 Global Forum will be on the rise of democracy movements in Asia over the last years and on how their demands can now be put into policy. Registration is already open at www.2019globalforum.com.

Connecting the dots

One thing that always becomes clear to us at meetings such as the Global Forum, is that there is a great need for continuous exchange and collaboration between activists, organisations and experts working on direct democracy. Cooperation and networking must take place also in between these meetings and conferences.

We are in awe of the number of passionate, inventive people around the world working to make their societies more democratic. And we want to serve them to the best of our ability. We believe that if we can give this booming community more visibility and foster cooperation, we will all benefit. This is why we decided to launch an interactive online platform, gathering and connecting people and organisations working on modern direct democracy worldwide.

The platform is currently under construction and will allow people active on issues of modern direct democracy to create a profile to showcase their work, to promote upcoming events and to get in touch with experts and others to collaborate. All of this information will be presented on a world map, making it easy to search for initiatives and events globally. The platform will

also host a news section with the latest stories on citizen participation, examples of best practices and background analyses to inspire and nurture initiatives everywhere.

Because we want to deliver the best possible tool, Democracy International is committed to developing the platform with the input of the ultimate users of the platform: you, the people working on direct democracy issues around the world! At the Global Forum on Modern Direct Democracy, we already presented a blueprint of the platform and discussed it with interested participants and community building experts. Throughout the developing process and launch, we will continue to gather input from the platform's users and our partners. It is already possible to sign up to receive news as soon as the platform is launched here: democracy.community.

Looking forward - Global citizens deserve global instruments

This year, Democracy International decided to start working towards a World Citizens' Initiative under the auspices of the United Nations (UN). While the UN is the most important hub of international politics, it remains an exclusive club of representatives of member states, leaving no means for ordinary citizens to have any influence.

In times of extraordinary global challenges, it is unacceptable that citizens don't have a seat at the table when it comes to deciding on matters of international peace, environmental protection and human rights.

26 September 2018:
The Global Forum
on Modern Direct
Democracy starts
in Rome, Italy

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A UN World Citizens' Initiative (UNWCI) based on the experience of the ECI, currently the world's only tool of transnational direct democracy, would give people the power to put something on the agenda of the UN General Assembly.

In partnership with Democracy Without Borders and CIVICUS, we will begin building a broad alliance around this topic in 2019. At the moment, our initiative has already been endorsed by Mehr Demokratie, the World Federalist Movement and World Justice Now.

At this year's Global Forum on Modern Direct Democracy we gathered inputs from participants on what a UNWCI could look like and what we can learn from the ECI experience. Throughout the next year, a detailed academic and legal proposal will be drafted that we can use to advocate for more people power at the UN.

Partnering for citizen power

30 October 2018:
German Minister of State Michael Roth responds to first HomeParliaments round results

We would be nowhere without our network of partners and year in, year out we do our best to foster collaboration and support each other on campaigns and events. This year, we congratulated our German partner organisation Mehr Demokratie on their 30th birthday. Aside from cooperating intensely on our European Public Sphere project, several members of our team also helped Mehr Demokratie in Bremen, gathering over 26.000 signatures for electoral reform.

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Our Belgian partner Democratie.nu not only launched a new website this year, but also led an intensive campaign on local democracy and rebranded the organisation as Meer Democratie. In the run-up to the Belgian municipal elections, they convinced almost 5.500 candidates to commit to introducing direct democracy measures in their towns if they were elected. Almost 600 of those candidates managed to make it into city councils. Meer Democratie will now follow up with them and support them in implementing the reforms.

23 November 2018:
We co-found an association to start the search for a House for Civil Society & Human Rights in Cologne

Our Dutch partner Meer Democratie is involved in a protracted legal battle with the Dutch government, who is trying to abolish the referendum law that is barely three years old. The repeal law has passed both houses and therefore has technically been adopted, but Meer Democratie is trying to assert the right to hold a referendum on the repeal law, which would have been possible under the original referendum legislation. Next year, we plan to partner for our European Elections campaign.

In the run-up to the Global Forum on Modern Direct Democracy, we worked together with several partners. One was the OMNIBUS für Direkte Demokratie, who joined us in Rome, making stops to promote citizen participation in Munich, Brenner-Pass, Bozen, Trento, Vignola, Bologna, Rome, Basel, Stuttgart, Eisenach and Ifta along the way. Johannes Stüttgen of the OMNIBUS even hosted a workshop at the Global Forum. Our partner organisation from Luxemburg, Initiativ fir Demokratie-Erweiterung, launched a new website this year and hosted a session on the link between inner and outer democracy at the Global Forum, while our Austrian partner Mehr Demokratie hosted a session on Citizens' Assemblies.

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New on board

Democracy International's sixth General Assembly was held in the historic setting of Palazzo Senatorio at Piazza del Campidoglio on 29 September 2018 at the Global Forum on Modern Democracy in Rome, Italy. 50 members and guests received a report of Democracy International's activities and plans for the next years. At the Assembly, a new Board was also elected. Eight of the incumbent board members were re-elected Daniela Bozhinova (Bulgaria), Bruno Kaufmann (Switzerland/Sweden), Jung Ok Lee (South Korea), Joe Mathews (USA), Erwin Mayer (Austria), Suresh Nautiyal (India), Arjen Nijeboer (the Netherlands) and Daniel Schily (Germany).

Two previous board members, Gerald Haefner and Rafael Piñeiro, have decided to step down. We are incredibly grateful to them for their inspired and tireless work for Democracy International over the years. We are also proud to welcome two new members on the board: Mehdi Ben Mimoun from Tunisia and Dane Waters from the USA. Mehdi Ben Mimoun brings the experience of a new and fragile democracy - that of Tunisia - where he served as a member of the local ISIE (high independent election authority) during the first free and fair elections. He has been an active member of Democracy International for many years and organised the 2015 Global Forum on Modern Democracy in Tunis, Tunisia. Dane Waters is a prolific writer on direct democracy and has worked on 60 ballot measure campaigns as well as several presidential and gubernatorial campaigns in the US.

The next General Assembly will take place in 2019 in Taichung, Taiwan, on the sidelines of the Global Forum.

As for us...

We are happy to report that the Democracy International team continues to grow. In 2018, we added two new team members: Anne Hardt and Achim Wölfel. Anne joined us in April as a Campaigning and Fundraising Manager and immediately dove in, joining the European Public Sphere project on an extensive tour. Achim joined our team on a freelance basis in November to assist with the organisation of the study tour to Ireland.

Throughout the entire year, Democracy International hosted interns who helped us with campaigns, public relations and events. We are incredibly grateful to Melissa, Lisa, Estelle, Rebecca and Luisa for their enthusiasm, commitment and support! A special thanks also goes to Edda Dietrich and Markus Wendel who are always ready to capture our moments in action. Without them, we would not be able to share the work we do with all of you.

But a bigger team means bigger offices! This is why after six wonderful years, we will be leaving Cologne-Porz and moving to the city centre, together with Mehr Demokratie NRW. Starting February, you will be able to find us at Gürzenichstraße 21 a-c, 50667 Cologne.


But perhaps even bigger news is the founding of a new association that will head the search for a location for a Civil Society & Human Rights House in Cologne. The organisation is a partnership between Democracy

12 December 2018:
We are named
NGO of the Year by
The Good Lobby for
our #EPForgetUsNot
campaign

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International, Mehr Demokratie NRW and the Kölner Freiwilligen Agentur and has the backing of Cologne Mayor Henriette Reker. The House will serve as place of encounter for both established and emerging initiatives oriented towards the common good and will offer work and event space. Keep an eye on our website for more news on this in the coming year.

But finally, our work would not be possible without the continued and inspiring support we receive from all of you. Our warmest thanks go to you, supporters of democracy worldwide! We look forward to continuing to work with you towards more direct democracy and citizen participation in 2019!



Our Board, General Assembly and team in Rome - Thank you for your support and commitment from all of us!



Yes, I want to support Democracy International e.V.

- 10 euros 100 euros
- 20 euros 250 euros
- 45 euros other amount: [] euros

- One-off Monthly Yearly

> Tick the amount and frequency relevant to you

Name, First Name

Street, Number

Postal Code, City, Country

We will send you your SEPA mandate reference number. The donation is tax-deductible. You can get a tax receipt at the end of the year.

SEPA Direct Debit Mandate

- > By signing the mandate form, you authorise Democracy International to send instructions to your bank to debit your account and your bank to debit your account in accordance with the instructions from the creditor.
- > As a part of your rights, you are entitled to a refund from your bank under the terms and conditions of your agreement with your bank. A refund must be claimed within 8 weeks starting from the date on which your account was credited.

IBAN (International Bank Account Number)

BIC/SWIFT (Bank Identifier Code)

Location and date

Signature

Or donate using our website: 

Fax: +49 2203 59 28 62

Email: contact@democracy-international.org

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