

Newsletter: A visit from Bhutan

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o) EDITORIAL: A VISIT FROM BHUTAN

by Ronald Pabst

Democratisation from above. Can this work? A few weeks ago a visitor from Bhutan came to Cologne. Kinley Dirji, editor of the newspaper Kuensel, visited Germany. He wanted to learn how the Germans handle democracy. We had the pleasure to welcome him because he wanted to know more about NGOs promoting citizens participation. But we also learned from him:

In the Asian kingdom of Bhutan the king wants to establish a constitution. The population seems mainly reluctant to accept the modernisation. We got interested in the development of this small, mountainous country. Dr. Klaus Hofmann investigated further and wrote a report about the democratisation process.

The IRI Asia offers more information about the practice of direct democracy in other states of the continent.

Additionally, you find information about democratisation from below in Europe. We report about activities in South Tyrol, Brussels and Germany.

1) REPORT: DEMOCRATISATION FROM ABOVE

Bhutan will get a constitution; the king of the country has started this process. It seems, that a majority of the population is reluctant. Find more details here:

www.democracy-international.org/bhutan.html

2) IRI ASIA: REPORT ON DIRECT DEMOCRACY

The website of the Initiative & Referendum Institute Asia is online. Several regional partners started to work on questions of direct democracy in Asia.

www.iri-asia.net

Several publications are already available. We recommend the following guidebook:

Direct Democracy in Asia: A Reference Guide to the Legislation and Practice.

It is available online at:

www.iri-asia.net

3) SOUTH TYROL: STRUGGLE FOR MORE DEMOCRACY

The *Initiative for More Democracy* (Initiative für Mehr Demokratie) prepares a campaign. The aim: an improvement of the regulations introduced in 2005.

democracy-international.org/campaign-south-tyrol.html

4) NEW CONVENTION, NEW SUPPORTERS

In the meantime we spread the call for a new convention. Find updates and a list of our current supporters here:

www.democracy-international.org/new-convention.html

5) ECI: SUPPORTERS WANTED

We seek your support for the preparation of our campaign:
Become a volunteer for the European Citizens' Initiative.

democracy-international.org/eci-support.html

6) GERMANY: FAIR ELECTION LAW

Please find new information about the struggle for an improved election law in Bremen and North-Rhine Westphalia.

democracy-international.org/update-election-law.html

Ronald Pabst / Carsten Berg / Lars Bosselmann

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