



## DEMOCRACY INTERNATIONAL

### **Newsletter: ABC – Democracy International in the first month of 2013**

04 February 2013

---

#### **Content:**

1. Direct Democracy takes off at European level - ECI “Water is a human right”
  2. Bulgarian referendum on nuclear energy: Low threshold necessary for valid results
  3. Austrians ready for real direct democracy: People’s consultation on military service
  4. Press conference and monitoring report on the people’s consultation
  5. European Year of Citizens: Call for an EU Convention instead of non-binding debates
- 

Dear Members and Friends of Democracy International,

I hope 2013 has begun well for you. For Democracy International, the New Year has started like the alphabet:

**A for Austria:** Two weeks ago my colleague Ronald Pabst and myself went to Vienna to monitor the people’s consultation on military service. Two days later we presented the results at a press conference with our partner organisations mehr demokratie! österreich and Mehr Demokratie Deutschland. We called for binding referenda initiated by the citizens.

**B for Bulgaria:** One week ago Democracy International sent a mission to observe the referendum in Bulgaria on the future of nuclear energy. Unlike Austria and Germany, Bulgaria has binding, citizen-initiated referenda. However, the threshold of 60 % was far too high. Due to a turnout of 20 % the referendum was invalid.

**C for citizens’ initiative:** The European Citizens’ Initiative on “Water is a human right” most likely is to become the first ECI to reach one million signatures. We will keep a close eye on the ongoing European Citizens’ Initiatives and naturally we will inform you when the first citizen proposal has reached the necessary amount to be submitted to the European Commission.

Actually, these letters make up D for Democracy International. In 2013 we will continue our mission to strengthen direct democracy within the nations, in Europe and the world. Doing so, we will need your support from everywhere around the globe as we are an independent membership organization. We will count on you.

Best wishes from Cologne,  
Cora Pfafferott

## **1. Direct Democracy takes off at European level**

With more than 800 000 signatures collected by 30 January 2013, the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) 'Water is a Human Right' most likely is to become the first European Citizens' Initiative to reach one million signatures.

[www.democracy-international.org/eci-water-humanright.html](http://www.democracy-international.org/eci-water-humanright.html)

---

## **2. Bulgarian referendum on nuclear energy: Low threshold necessary for valid results**

At the referendum on the future of nuclear energy held on 27 January, 61 % of Bulgarian voters opted in favour of further developing nuclear energy in the country.

[www.democracy-international.org/referendum-nuclear-energy-bg.html](http://www.democracy-international.org/referendum-nuclear-energy-bg.html)

---

## **3. Austrians ready for real direct democracy**

On 20 January 60 % of Austrian voters opted for maintaining the current system of military conscription and a mandatory civilian service in Austria. The turnout was high at 50 %.

[www.democracy-international.org/military-consultation-austria.html](http://www.democracy-international.org/military-consultation-austria.html)

---

## **4. Press conference on people's consultation in Austria**

On 22 January we held a press conference with mehr demokratie! österreich and Mehr Demokratie Deutschland. We presented our monitoring of the people's consultation.

Watch us live in action at [ichmachpolitik.at/questions/1870](http://ichmachpolitik.at/questions/1870)

The monitoring report (in German) is available at

[www.democracy-international.org/fileadmin/pdf/2013-01-22-monitoring-volksbefragung-oesterreich.pdf](http://www.democracy-international.org/fileadmin/pdf/2013-01-22-monitoring-volksbefragung-oesterreich.pdf)

---

## **5. European Year of Citizens: Call for an EU Convention instead of non-binding debates**

One day before the official launch of the European Year of Citizens 2013 to take place in Dublin on 10 January 2013, Democracy International demands to convene an official and democratic EU Convention instead of hosting a range of non-binding events across the EU.

<http://www.democracy-international.org/eu-year-citizens-euconvention.htm>