



2020 | DEMOCRACY INTERNATIONAL ANNUAL REPORT



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OUR JOURNEY IN 2020



25 FEBRUARY 2020

Democracy International co-organises European Citizens' Initiative Day.

16 MARCH 2020

Our entire team starts to work from home due to the pandemic.

18 MARCH 2020

We ask German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas to call for a more democratic UN at the UN's 75th anniversary celebrations in September.

26 MARCH 2020

For our first „Democracy in Crisis – Online Jam“ we meet digitally with German, Austrian and Swiss democracy experts.

9 MAY 2020

The first event of the Citizens Take Over Europe coalition kicks-off on Europe Day

11 MAY 2020

We have our First virtual European Public Sphere Dome Talk with the project Connect Europe.

IN 2020...

DEMOCRACY INTERNATIONAL HOSTED
8 INTERNS



62
ORGANISATIONS
CONTRIBUTED TO
THE ONLINE FORUM
ON MODERN DIRECT
DEMOCRACY



8 WE WERE JOINED BY
VOLUNTEERS

235 ←
ORGANISATIONS
SIGNED
ONTO THE
UNWCI
CAMPAIGN

THE ECI FORUM
WAS VISITED BY OVER

8000
PEOPLE
PER MONTH



WE HELPED
42 ECI ORGANISERS
WITH LEGAL AND CAMPAIGN ADVISE

276 JOINED THE
INTERNATIONAL
DEMOCRACY
COMMUNITY
PEOPLE



WE HELD **26** ←
DOME TALKS

OVER **1800**
LEGAL DESIGNS ARE IN THE
DIRECT DEMOCRACY
NAVIGATOR



17

NATIONAL REFERENDUMS
WERE ORGANISED



WE
HAD
153
ONLINE
TEAM MEETINGS



3665 PEOPLE
JOINED US FOR AN ONLINE EVENT

WE CROWDFUNDED
10.003 EUROS FOR OUR
SAX IT UP! TOUR



11 EUROPEAN
CITIZENS'
INITIATIVES
WERE REGISTERED

BUT...



21

NATIONAL VOTES
WERE HELD
OUTSIDE OF
ANY LEGAL
MECHANISM

9 PLEBISCITES
WERE HELD



DEAR FRIENDS

We don't have to tell you that 2020 has been a challenging year. Wherever you are on the planet, we know it has been the same for you. Like you, we have had to adapt our plans for this year and like you, we have had to find creative ways to face up to a challenge that we had not imagined possible in January.

So instead, let us look at some of the positive evolutions that we have seen. Yes, 2020 has been difficult, but it has also been a testament to the resilience and imaginativeness of humans everywhere.

In many countries, votes went ahead with extended remote polling options in place, providing a much-needed update for democracy and making the necessity of digital democracy tools abundantly clear. Mail-in voting in the US elections, which included over 120 ballot initiatives, led to a record turnout, proving citizens want to shape their societies. They just need the right tools.

Citizens' assemblies on climate in France and the UK were able to continue their work online and present their tremendously important conclusions to their respective parliaments. In fact, we are living through a veritable renaissance for citizens' assemblies, with randomly selected citizens contributing to decision-making in France, the UK, Germany, Denmark and East-Belgium. Even the much-anticipated Conference on the Future of Europe will include citizen panels. We have worked hard this year to guarantee that this participation is meaningful, impactful and leads to binding outcomes.

Protest movements around the world have embraced direct democracy and citizen participation as their natural allies. Environmental activists everywhere are using democracy tools to achieve their goals: Extinction Rebellion is calling for climate citizens' assemblies, Fridays for Future has launched a European

Citizens' Initiative and activists all over Germany are using local initiatives to enforce more sustainable urban planning.

Social justice movements have succeeded at converting popular outrage into structural change, signed off on by the whole population. In Algeria, citizens approved a new constitution in the wake of the Hirak protests and citizens in Chile have decided that the new constitution will be drafted by the people themselves in a gender balanced assembly. And while these votes were plebiscites, we cannot underestimate their importance in ushering in a new era.

But we need to remain vigilant. Around the world, we have seen autocrats and dictators make misuse of emergency laws to curtail people power. In Hungary, Russia, Hong Kong and too many other places citizens were dispossessed of their democratic rights. And we need to stand in international solidarity with protesters in Thailand, Poland, Belarus and Lebanon to make sure that their commitment to democracy is not denied.

This year, more than ever we have all felt how much we need community – how much democracy needs community. Therefore, in our work we have invested greatly in building these communities across borders and despite the limitations: we organised online conferences attended by thousands of democracy activists and experts, we have created new online spaces for organisers to convene such as the ECI Forum and the International Democracy Community and we are closer to realising our goal of opening an Initiative House for Human Rights and Democracy in our hometown of Cologne.

As you read through this annual report, know that our work would not be possible without your help. You keep us going! So, thank you for your continuous support and please know that our accomplishments are also yours!

The Democracy International team



CITIZENS AT THE CENTRE

The aim to put citizens at the heart of decision-making in Europe has always been at the core of our work at Democracy International. With the Conference on the Future of Europe on the horizon, this is now more important than ever. In the meantime, a quickly unfolding Coronavirus crisis reinforced our emphasis on digital tools.

CITIZENS TAKE OVER EUROPE

As a response to the delayed and unclearly defined Conference on the Future of Europe, in early spring this year Democracy International helped found the Citizens Take Over Europe coalition. The alliance calls for a citizen-centred European Union with a democratic, transparent and participatory Conference on the Future of Europe as its starting point. Together with now 50 organisations (and counting!), we have organised three online conferences, published an open letter to German Chancellor Angela Merkel and the EU

institutions, drafted principles for running a citizens' conference and submitted an official petition to the European Parliament followed by a self-organised public hearing. Within the alliance, Democracy International moderates the internal working group on policy and advocacy. Our goal is to monitor the political development of the Conference on the Future of Europe and explore official and unofficial advocacy tools to maximise civil society's role in designing and implementing the Conference.

We want to ensure that citizens hold a central role in the Conference as equal partners alongside politicians. We want to make sure that the outcomes of the Conference are followed up, including by launching a process of EU treaty change, if necessary.

Ahead of the European elections in 2019, Democracy International called for more citizen participation in EU decision-making under the header Now The Citizens. One of our main demands was the introduction of randomly-selected citizens' assemblies to develop concrete suggestions on Europe's democratic future. There is a real opportunity that the Conference on the Future of Europe will include this, and as part of the Citizens Take Over Europe coalition, we are following this closely to ensure that a Europe for the citizens becomes a reality. More info: www.citizenstakeover.eu



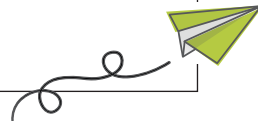
With the Citizens Take Over Europe coalition we organized three online conferences this year.

2 JUNE 2020

First of seven webinars on the effects of Coronavirus measures on democracy.

5 JUNE 2020

European Public Sphere has the first of five workshops with Fridays for Future in Vienna.



THE ECI FORUM - A SERVICE TO INITIATIVE ORGANISERS

For years, Democracy International has called for a platform where current and future organisers of European Citizens' Initiatives can meet, exchange best practices and expand their networks. Europe needs a place where a real community can be built around the ECI.

The new regulation of the ECI that went into effect at the beginning of this year promised improvement on that front, with a collaborative website on the books. Finally, after a pilot platform in 2019, the ECI Forum is live and accessible to all interested in the ECI! The Forum acts as a help desk for campaigners, a platform to discuss ideas and as a way to connect organisers and initiatives.

Our partner organisation European Citizen Action Service (ECAS) operates the Forum on behalf of the European Commission. At Democracy International we were subcontracted by ECAS to

manage some of the features of the Forum. We organise regular stakeholder consultations on the ECI, help publicise the Forum and offer tailor-made campaigning and fundraising advice to organisers. Even though the Forum is an official website of the



Democracy International helped organise ECI Day this year, where we looked at citizen participation globally and the future of the ECI.

European Union, NGOs are fully involved behind the scenes: in charge of content management and offering round-the-clock support to ECI organisers.

Just in its first year, many successes have already been achieved: four webinars and five consultations have been organised. We have seen a 30% increase in Forum subscribers from the beginning of the year and answered 42 enquiries by ECI organisers on legislation, campaigning and fundraising. All



At ECI Day 2020, we presented our work for more citizen participation in Europe and our proposal for a UN World Citizens' Initiative.

of this has resulted in about 8,000 unique visitors to the website per month. While the Forum is still young, the first year's successes already have us looking forward to the Forum's development in 2021.

Visit the ECI Forum:
www.democracy-international.org/european-citizens-initiative-forum

21 JUNE 2020

The French Citizens' Convention on the Climate votes on its final set of anti-climate-change measures.

12 JULY 2020

Start of our Sax it Up!-Crowdfunding Campaign. Raising more than 10,000€ for our European Public Sphere tour in Saxony next year.



TAKING THE EUROPEAN PUBLIC SPHERE ONLINE

2020 was set to be a record-breaking year for the European Public Sphere. We were ready to host our partners from the Connect Europe project under the dome in Cologne in May, we had planned a White Nights Tour through at least three Scandinavian countries in June together with IG EuroVision and we had successfully applied to take part in the Artlake festival, meaning that we would spend four days in August in the former lignite mines in Eastern Germany.

However, when Corona hit the world, we quickly realised that 2020 was not going to be the year for travelling around Europe. While in June, IG EuroVision hosted the first three „masked“ discussions in Vienna at Fridays For Future’s Camp For Future, Democracy International kicked off the season with the first-ever online European Public Sphere! Together with our six partners from Connect Europe, other experts, and 60 participants from all across Europe, we discussed the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights online.



This year, our European Public Sphere held several walk-in discussions in the Austrian provinces of Pinzgau and Pongau.

As we truly enjoyed the concept, together with the Alfred Töpfer Foundation, we developed it into a full Europe 2.0 tour. With seven sessions specially for young Europeans we made the European



In June, we hosted three European Public Sphere discussions at Fridays For Future's Camp For Future in Vienna.

Public Sphere more accessible and diverse than ever. Our Europe 2.0 Dome Talks started in September at Democracy International's Online Forum on Modern Direct Democracy with a session on

participation. Since then, we have covered topics suggested by young Europeans themselves: Climate, Democracy, Migration, Minorities, Social Justice, Digitalisation, European Integration, Identities and Gender. All ideas will be presented to the European Commission in 2021.

While traveling the online world, we also realised an opportunity for the European Public Sphere in the local context. In the run-up to the municipal elections in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany on 12 September, first-time voters from the diverse district Cologne Mülheim gathered under the Europe Dome twice. Together with civil society and political representatives, they talked about their opportunities to participate in democracy – and as the name of the tour „TREAT YOURSELF TO DEMOCRACY“ says, hopefully were mobilised to exercise their right to vote!

A third Dome Talk had to be postponed to November, after the local elections. But democracy also happens in between elections and our participants were just as motivated. At the finissage in December, the

young participants could engage with civil society, political representatives, Fridays For Future activists and a stand-up comedian. The project was realised in close collaboration with our partner NGO Engagierte Zivilgesellschaft in NRW e.V. and supported by the Förderfonds Demokratie and the Doris-Wuppermann-Foundation.

Another big first for the European Public Sphere this year was the Sax it Up!-crowdfunding campaign in July and August. In less than five weeks, we raised more than 10,000€! With the donations we will fund a tour through the German state of Saxony in 2021. The campaign was supported by the MITWIRKEN Matching-Fonds of the Hertie Foundation, meaning that for every donation they added 25% from their fund. Since so many of you donated (again, many, many thanks!) we were among the ten projects with the most supporters and were awarded another 2,000€. Saxony, here we come!

Lastly, in December we kicked off our project „Remember“ with an online planning meeting with our five partners from Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Poland, and Romania. The project is supported by the European Commission programme “Europe for Citizens”. In the summer of 2021, each partner organisation will host a Public Sphere in a local place of remembrance. Inspired by the past, we will look for new ideas for the future.

29 AUGUST 2020

Belated start of our project „Women on Boards“ in cooperation with VEZ. First of nine monthly workshops preparing women for leadership positions in NGOs.

18 AUGUST 2020

Travelling the Austrian provinces Pinzgau and Pongau on the European Public Sphere's second „Crossing“ tour.





CONNECT EUROPE

Over the past two years, as project partners of the pan-European project Connect Europe we discussed and celebrated our fundamental rights as EU citizens. Seven citizens' meetings organised by each of the partners in different corners of Europe brought the conversation about the EU to the individual European.

For our event, Democracy International had the opportunity to organise the first-ever online European Public Sphere, in the context of the Connect Europe project. The discussion was held on 11 May 2020, celebrating 20 years of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. Together with Marie Jünemann from Mehr Demokratie, Member of the European Parliament Daniel Freund, Helen Darbishire from Access Info Europe, and 60 more participants, we debated the importance of citizens' rights, transparency, and accountability in Europe as envisioned in the Charter.

LOOKING FORWARD

The Conference on the Future of Europe may be a rare opportunity for citizens to discuss proposals for Europe's future with top EU politicians as equal partners. Once launched, the Conference will run for two years and may be the catalyst for launching an EU treaty change process. For now, we're still waiting for the new dates to be announced.

For the European Public Sphere 2021 is shaping up to be a highlight – we are fully booked. In May our crowdfunded tour Sax it Up! will take us to ten places in the German state of Saxony. During the summer, the Europe Dome will visit places of remembrance in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Poland, and Romania, where inspired by the past, we will look for new ideas for the future. And with the volunteering programme ASA, two German and two Ukrainian young professionals will organise a tour with ten stops in Ukraine with the support of our two local partners. All plans remain adaptable, just in case.



THE SCIENCE OF DEMOCRACY

Activism is not possible without knowledge. This is why we see scientific research and exchange as one of the cornerstones of our work at Democracy International. This year, we saw the continuation of some of our flagship projects as well as the introduction of a new one.

TEN YEARS DIRECT DEMOCRACY NAVIGATOR: OVER 1800 INSTRUMENTS OF DIRECT DEMOCRACY INDEXED

This year we celebrated ten years of Direct Democracy Navigator! When the Navigator set out, its ambitious goal was to record and analyse all national legislation on direct democracy. Since then, the Navigator's research has expanded to also include regional legislation within the individual states, so that today you can also find the autonomous regions of Canada, the USA, Mexico,

Brazil, Spain, Germany and many more in the Navigator. How important this regional level is, was recently demonstrated in the US. According to reporting by Ballotpedia, Americans in 32 states voted on 120 ballot measures, alongside the presidential election on 3 November!

Currently, we are working on adding the Italian regions to the database. And of course, we continuously check and update the laws on direct democracy already recorded in the Navigator.

Looking back on the past decade, unfortunately the number of democracies in which citizens can formulate and decide on laws themselves has not increased. Switzerland remains a world leader in referendums triggered by the people, but recently Taiwan eased its direct democratic legislation. And it seems to want to catch up!

New legislation is underway in several states, such as for example Ukraine. Recently, the citizens of Chile have also decided in a plebiscite to draft a new constitution. Perhaps as a result, this new constitution will give people the instruments necessary to influence their own future directly.

Remarkable this year are the votes in Bougainville and New Caledonia: they are examples of a special form of plebiscites, used as part of a peace process or as the result of an agreement on independence. This topic has piqued our interest and for next year the Navigator is planning a scientific conference on this topic.

5 SEPTEMBER 2020

First event of our Initiative House for Human Rights and Democracy with a political panel ahead of the local elections in Cologne.

8 SEPTEMBER 2020

First of three Dome Talks for first-time voters in the run-up to the local elections in Cologne.





PROFESSIONALISING DEMOCRACY

In 2020, political and social developments all over the world have demonstrated that our democracies need to be able to adapt to new, global challenges more quickly. However, it is imperative that this happens in a transparent, participatory and democratic way. With the Academy for a Learning Democracy, this year we focused on the establishment of a more effective crisis governance. Because even after the pandemic passes, we still have momentous challenges ahead, such as climate change or digitalisation. A permanent improvement of our democratic systems is required: re-thinking the way we identify and work on common challenges is more important than ever.

The main goal of the Academy is to professionalise democracy development. We need to establish a culture geared at continuously modernising federal interactions - across movements and parties, milieus and religions, sectors and levels - in an agile and participatory way.

In several online seminars, a Summer Academy and training sessions for administration, parliaments and government representatives, we were able to present these ideas and garner more support for our demands.

This year, we put the issue on the agenda of the Enquete Commission „Strengthening Democracy“ of the North Rhine-Westphalian State Parliament, where Academy Director Dr. Raban Fuhrmann was invited as an expert.

In 2020, the Academy was also actively involved in developing the European HomeParliaments further. Together with „openPetition“, we developed and launched a new digital platform for the organisation of HomeParliaments.

For more information on the Academy please visit:
www.democracy-international.org/learning-democracy



DEMOCRACY IN TIMES OF COVID-19

The Coronavirus crisis laid bare a lot of the underlying issues in our societies and the functioning of our democracies itself is no exception. We quickly realised how important it is to keep tabs on how emergency decisions are made, which freedoms they curtail and how they impact citizen access to decision-making processes.

In March, we started weekly monitoring calls with activists from all over the world to help us determine what was needed and point us in the direction of problematic democracy developments. We collected these experiences from around the world in articles, videos and podcasts, learning for example how citizens' initiative organisers in many countries were facing problems collecting signatures due to lockdown measures or how countries like Hungary misused state of emergency regulations to pass laws unrelated to the health crisis.

We gathered these stories alongside a Corona Rules Monitor on our International Democracy Community, counting on contributions from our network to log corona-related measures around the globe.

Based on the information we collected, we were able to organise a series of seven webinars over the summer, looking at how elections, direct democracy, data security, separation of powers, press freedom, transparency and citizen participation respectively were impacted by Covid-19 and related measures.

As the pandemic raged on, we realised the need for structural academic follow-up and have lent our support to two scientific projects dedicated to analysing the effects of Corona-related measures on democracy.

In her book “Crisis Democracy: Seven lessons from the Coronavirus Crisis”, researcher Tamara Ehs evaluates the Austrian government’s response to the first wave and formulates recommendations to prevent direct democratic backsliding. Democracy International supported her research with a financial contribution.

In order to determine the long-term effects of the pandemic on democratic culture in Europe, we joined the EXCEPTIUS academic project as the civil society partner. This coalition of researchers aims to make an empirical analysis of the emergency decisions that were made in European countries, how they evolved over time and how they impacted democratic practice. The goal is to make our democracies more resilient in the long run. The results of this research will be made available via an open online platform and will be presented at the Global Forum on Modern Direct Democracy.



In a series of webinars, we examined the effects of the pandemic on citizens' democratic rights globally.



A GLOBAL NETWORK TO OVERCOME GLOBAL PROBLEMS

If 2020 has taught us anything it is that in a globalised world, issues are never confined to a single space and we depend on international cooperation to address them. With travel limited, we concentrated strongly on digital tools for our global activities this year, while at the same time making them more accessible than ever.

THE GLOBAL FORUM GOES ONLINE

At the beginning of this year, we were well on track for the Global Forum on Modern Direct Democracy to return to Switzerland, in a way the homebase of the Forum as the very first edition was held in Aarau. However, as it became clear that large events and international travel were not going to be possible in the fall, we decided to postpone the 2020 Global Forum, originally scheduled from 23 until 26 September, to spring 2021.

Because we did not want to leave our network of democracy ac-

tivists without an opportunity to exchange and learn from each other, we decided to organise the first-ever digital edition of the Forum. From 21 until 29 September, we heard from 62 partner organisations in 27 panels and workshops. During the Forum we focused our attention to four thematic tracks: direct democracy practice in Switzerland, how to use citizen participation to protect the environment, democracy innovations and how democratic institutions hold up in times of crisis.

It was a record-breaking edition of the Global Forum. Despite the change in plans, we were joined by over 500 people from 73 countries on five continents. And because all sessions were recorded and live-streamed, the entire event is living a second life online where the sessions have been watched over 2,000 times.

Now it is full steam ahead for the Global Forum on Modern Direct



Behind the scenes of our first-ever Online Forum on Modern Direct Democracy.

Democracy in Bern, Switzerland from 28 April until 1 May 2021. At the 2021 Global Forum, we will look at five specialised tracks: Swiss direct democracy, youth power, citizens'

assemblies, digital democracy and transnational democracy. Given the circumstances, we are doing our best to prepare for a hybrid event with a smaller in-person element that offers many possibilities for digital participation to those who can't travel.

All sessions of the Online Forum can be watched here:

www.democracy.community/global-forum/online

Information and registration for the 2021 Global Forum on Modern Direct Democracy can be found on www.2021globalforum.com

20 SEPTEMBER 2020

Counting the ballots for our Abstimmung21 trial vote ahead of the first, self-organised national referendum in Germany.

21-29 SEPTEMBER 2020

Our first-ever Online Forum on Modern Direct Democracy is attended by over 500 people.





MAPPING DIRECT DEMOCRACY ACROSS THE GLOBE

Last fall we launched our International Democracy Community, an online platform dedicated to direct democracy around the world. The Community provides a unique digital venue for direct democracy activists and experts to present their work to the world, publicise their events and learn from others.

Since its launch, 276 people and organisations have signed onto the hub and 36 direct democracy events were promoted there. To get to know the new members better and to cement the community, we organised several networking events and webinars.

In spring, we hosted weekly Online Democracy Jams to hear from activists and experts around the world what the situation was like in their countries with regards to the Coronavirus and how democratic freedoms were impacted by it. Because of the active contributions of the Community, we were able to compile

detailed overviews of the Corona-related measures that were introduced in 45 countries for our Corona Monitor.

The platform is also dedicated to providing learning opportunities related to direct democracy and citizen participation. Throughout the year, we published over 40 in-depth stories and interviews and we organised several webinars specifically aimed at members of the International Democracy Community. Naturally, our Online Forum on Modern Direct Democracy was completely hosted on the International Democracy Community.

Stay tuned, because next year we're planning a round of technical improvements and many more exciting events!

Sign up for the International Democracy Community:
www.democracy.community



UN WORLD CITIZENS' INITIATIVE

2020 has made it painfully clear that we need international cooperation to address the complex global challenges we face. We are reminded that multilateral institutions such as the United Nations (UN) play an essential role in guaranteeing the health and safety of all humans. At the same time, their work has come under threat like never before and they suffer from a dire democratic deficit.

This is why, together with a large coalition of civil society actors, we are calling for the introduction of a UN World Citizens' Initiative (UNWCI). This tool would allow citizens who have gathered enough signatures in enough different countries to propose resolutions to the General Assembly. Since we launched our We the Peoples campaign end of last year, 235 organisations from 63 countries have signed onto it, including Greenpeace International, Avaaz and Global Justice Now.

We were also happy to see the UNWCI gaining traction: Dr Livingstone Sewanyana, the UN Independent Expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order, has voiced strong support for the idea in his report to the UN Human Rights Council. Our idea was also included in the Foundation for European Progressive Studies' report "Renewing Multilateralism for the 21st Century".

This year was strategically important as we celebrated the 75th birthday of the United Nations. To put democratisation of the UN on the Agenda of the Member States, we asked our network to contact their Ministry of foreign affairs and call for a UNWCI. Here in Germany, we wrote to Foreign Minister Heiko Maas along with our German partners. With the support of Mehr Demokratie, we were also able to publish a German version of our study on the feasibility of a UNWCI. More information on our We the Peoples campaign can be found on www.worldcitizensinitiative.org



PARTNERING FOR MORE DEMOCRACY

We are firm believers that our strength lies in our allies. This is why every year we carry out many projects together with partner organisations all around the world and lend our support where we can, from the local to the global level.

COLOGNE TAKES THE INITIATIVE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

Spaces and venues to promote a living democracy and to strengthen human rights already exist in many cities around the world. Together with an alliance of other NGOs, Democracy International is working to establish such an “Initiative House for Human Rights and Democracy” in our hometown of Cologne, Germany.

We are convinced that civic engagement, literally, needs space where people can come together to work on democracy and

human rights. Ahead of the local elections in September 2020, we presented our plans at a public event with a political panel. And we are happy to report that all democratic parties in Cologne’s city council voted in favour of the project.

In 2021, we want to come a big step closer to our dream and find a suitable location for our „Initiative House“.

Stay tuned: www.initiativenhaus.de



DEMOCRACY STARTS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

Focusing on the fields of culture, education and social affairs, the Association for Active Civil Society in North Rhine-Westphalia (Verband Engagierte Zivilgesellschaft) this year has become a reliable partner for our democracy work.

In 2020, we collaborated closely for the European Public Sphere project TREAT YOURSELF TO DEMOCRACY, to encourage first-time voters from diverse neighbourhoods to vote. We also worked towards strengthening the participation of Muslim women in leadership roles in NGOs with our joint project „Women on the boards“.

With the support of the Robert Bosch Foundation, we will continue to offer a total of eight one-day seminars on topics such as democratic rights, (female) leadership or project management.

CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY GERMANY

The use of citizens' assemblies to complement representative democracy has known a true boom in 2020, with examples popping up all around the world.

In Germany, the Bundestag has commissioned an official citizens' assembly for the first time ever, which will see randomly selected citizens discuss „Germany's role in the world“ and come up with legislative proposals.

Our partner Mehr Demokratie is running point on implementing the citizens' assembly, while Democracy International will support the international communications and PR.

More info on: www.deutschlands-rolle.buergerrat.de

A SELF-ORGANISED NATIONAL REFERENDUM

Direct democracy in Germany exists at the local and regional level, but not at the national level. This is why Democracy International, together with Mehr Demokratie, Omnibus für direkte Demokratie and Change.org, has launched the project Abstimmung21. Parallel to the federal elections in Germany in 2021, we want to hold the first self-organised referendum at national level. The questions on

the ballot will include climate protection and direct democracy. To prepare for next year, we organised a trial referendum in two municipalities, where over 42,000 people took part. The vote was a great success and it motivates us to campaign for the 2021 vote, in which one million people are expected to participate. The campaign will start in January.



Counting ballots for the Abstimmung21 trial vote, ahead of the first self-organised national referendum in Germany next year.



More information here: www.abstimmung21.de

CITIZENS DRAFT CLIMATE LEGISLATION IN FRANCE

With the Citizens' Convention on Climate, France launched a unique democratic experiment: 150 randomly selected citizens deliberated measures to reduce France's greenhouse gas emissions by 40%. They came up with 150 proposals that were then handed over to the French Parliament. The Convention also called for a referendum on several questions, which will likely take place next year. Democracy International assisted the Economic, Social and Environmental Council, the organiser, with its English-language communications. More info: www.conventioncitoyennepourleclimat.fr

DEMOCRACY BEGINS BETWEEN THE KITCHEN SINK AND THE DINNER TABLE

Our friends at Pulse of Europe launched the third round of HomeParliaments this year, based on a concept that was developed by our Academy for a Learning Democracy. The innovative participation process allows citizens to debate concrete proposals for the EU in small groups of friends. This year's edition of course took place online and focused on economic solidarity, social inequality, and climate. Nearly 20 EU politicians, including Commission President Ursula von der Leyen will officially respond to the results. Democracy International helped shape the outreach strategy for this round. More info: www.homeparliaments.eu

26 SEPTEMBER 2020

Kick-off session of our online European Public Sphere project „Europe 2.0“
– In total we were joined by over 75 young Europeans in 7 sessions.

5 OCTOBER 2020

We submitted our first official petition to the European Parliament on behalf of the Citizens Take Over Europe coalition.



VOTERS WITHOUT BORDERS

Democracy International broke its tradition of maintaining neutrality towards ECIs and decided to officially support the ECI Voters Without Borders! The initiative aims to foster transnational European democracy by expanding voting rights for EU citizens living in a different Member State, including voting in referenda. The journey to one million signatures began on 1 September!

To sign and for more information: www.voterswithoutborders.eu

A GROWING FUNDRAISING NETWORK

Europe for Citizens, Robert Bosch Foundation, Alfred Töpfer Foundation, Förderfonds Demokratie, Doris-Wuppermann-Foundation, European Democracy Foundation and Swiss Democracy Foundation - 2020 proved that our funding network is widening and growing stronger. This was also the year of our very first crowdfunding campaign in cooperation with the Hertie Foundation. We are very grateful for the support and the acknowledgement of the need for greater participation and democratic instruments. Many of this year's projects will continue throughout 2021 and hopefully build the ground for further future cooperations! **And one fundraising pillar remains for which we cannot say thank you enough: you, our donors who enable so much of our democratic work around the world!**

1 NOVEMBER 2020

The Direct Democracy Navigator turns ten!

18 NOVEMBER 2020

Democracy International is hosts a session at the first-ever European Citizens' Initiative Week.

27 NOVEMBER 2020

We celebrate ten years since our Mission Statement was drafted in Kortenberg and the official launch of Democracy International kicked-off.



AS FOR US

This year has gone very different than we planned for, with our team working remotely for most of the year and many of our events drastically altered or cancelled. But our passion for this work keeps us going! We've had an eventful year despite many last-minute changes and we were lucky to be able to count on the assistance of so many, especially going into Democracy International's 10th birthday year!

Our team even grew! After interning for the Direct Democracy Navigator last year, Shanne Bouma stayed on temporarily to help prepare a Navigator research project into the role of direct democracy in peacebuilding. We were also joined by PhD student Camille Dobler within the framework of the PLATO project. Focusing on political disenfranchisement in Europe, her work was an excellent complement to ours.

As every year, we welcomed a number of interns and we were especially impressed with the commitment of Sara, Grégory, Hannah, Reiner, Marius, Max, Anna-Lea and Josephine, who were an amazing support to our work even under the most unusual of circumstances. A big thank you also goes out to our volunteers Ulrike, Martin, Leonie, Marie, Mirte, Carolina, Amun, Dana and Felix for their enthusiastic help!

All of this would of course not be possible without you, dear reader. It is your indispensable support that has helped us through this year and that pushes our work forward. We are deeply grateful to have you by our side and are looking forward to continuing our journey for more direct democracy and citizen participation in the next year!

THANK YOU

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

- 10 euros other amount _____ euros
- 20 euros
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- 100 euros Monthly
- 250 euros Yearly

Tick the amount and frequency relevant to you

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