

# European Capital of Democracy

## Frequently asked questions

### Which Cities are covered by the ECoD Call?

This Call is open to Cities with a population of over 100,000 within the member states of the Council of Europe enjoying full rights of representation (currently Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom), and Kosovo.

### What is the definition of a City?

A local administrative unit with forms of legal self-determination and budgetary autonomy and an elected or democratically appointed executive leadership, including metropolitan areas and conurbations. Special cases need to be evaluated on an individual basis. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

### What are the benefits of applying for the ECoD title?

When applying for the ECoD title, cities are joining a new and unique Network of Cities to strengthen deliberative and participatory democracy in Europe. By applying for the ECoD title, Cities will share their most innovative best practice and expertise.

### What benefits does the ECoD Network offer?

All cities joining the European Capital of Democracy network will profit from mutual exchange of knowledge and experience, access to international expertise and cooperation. Member Cities share their experiences and best practices in the most relevant fields of democracy and participation, inspiring each other and multiplying the reach and impact of their innovative projects. Cooperation with universities and think tanks carrying out research into democratic activities and projects is fostered under the umbrella of the initiative.

### What awaits the designated European Capital of Democracy?

A City holding this title will enjoy a wide range of benefits, such as an enhanced international reputation as a centre of education and innovation, the chance to host international events and meetings of leading European politicians, and of course a boost to civic pride. The media coverage will focus on democratic best practice.

### How can the city benefit from programmes of the Innovation and Politics Institute?

The Innovation in Politics Institute GmbH will complement the City's Projects with established events like the Innovation in Politics Awards, the ACT NOW Mayors' Conference, and more, which will guarantee international attention, additional visitors and a Europe-wide impact. New formats like the Art of Democracy or Truth, Lies & Democracy will be prepared to be launched during the first Programme Year.

## What requirements do I have to fulfil to apply?

If your City is eligible to participate in the Call (see “Which Cities are covered by the ECoD Call?”) and you don’t have scheduled municipal elections from September 2023 to August 2024, you need to complete a Democracy and Prerequisites self-evaluation (see ECoD Call Document). The ECoD team will assess how well the City’s infrastructure can cope with set maximum visitor numbers with respect to transportation and accommodation during given time frames

## Does my city need to meet a minimum number of residents?

This Call is open to Cities with a population of over 100,000. In individual cases worthy of special consideration, ECoD NPO may also admit cities with a population of just under 100,000 to the Call.

## What do I need to apply for the ECoD title?

In the first phase, the Declaration of Intent has to be signed by the highest City representative, including online self-evaluations of the Technical and organisational Prerequisites and Democracy Prerequisites, to be submitted by June 2022. In the second phase, after the pre-screening by the ECoD NPO, the submission of a mission statement, including an executive summary, current and completed projects and project ideas (in a predefined form and structure) has to be completed by September 2022. Additionally, a City Council resolution (or similar) for participating in the ECoD Call has to be adopted, and a contact person or office as well as a project team established.

## Is it possible for cities to apply with projects related to emerging crises, e.g. taking care of refugees from Ukraine?

Yes, taking care of people in need and citizens fleeing the Ukrainian war is without doubt understood as a democracy project, covered by the Dimensions of Democracy. Initiating such support in the short-term shows the high level of the city's resilience, engagement for human rights and social cohesion.

## What are the most important deadlines for the application?

<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Milestone</b>
June 2022	End of Declaration of Intent phase for Interested Cities
Sept 2022	End of Submission phase for Interested Cities
Nov 2022	Presentation of the Nominee Cities’ Shortlist by the Experts’ Jury
Dec 2022	Selection of the first European Capital of Democracy by the Citizens’ Jury
Jan 2023	Announcement of the City-Designate for European Capital of Democracy
Aug 2023	Completion of the ECoD Programme Year preparations by the Steering Board
Sept 2023	Opening ceremony of the very first European Capital of Democracy

## When can I apply for ECoD?

The Application phase lasts from March to June 2022.



### **Is there a price or grant to be awarded with the title?**

There is no member fee for joining the ECoD Network and participating in the ECoD Call, nor does winning the title generate any prize money. The costs associated with application and participation in the ECoD Call are covered by the City, while the Innovation in Politics Institute additionally brings in well established and financially already covered event formats such as the Innovation in Politics Awards and ACT NOW Mayors' Conference.

### **Which is the official language to be used for the ECoD Call, for the submission and the related documents?**

English is the official language to be used in all documents and correspondence.

### **When will the Call submissions be evaluated?**

Your Call application has to be submitted until the end of September. After receiving your submission, ECoD NPO will check the formal correctness and completeness of the submission. From October to November, the Experts' Jury will evaluate your submission and decide whether your City is going to be a Nominee City.

### **When will I know the result of my application for joining the ECoD Network?**

That depends on which phase of the process your City is in. After submitting your Declaration of Intent you will be notified by 15 July 2022 at the latest whether you are eligible to enter the Application phase. You can find the current timeline on our [website](#).

### **Are there contact details for individual enquiries?**

For further information or if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us via the contact form.

### **Who is the operating entity of the ECoD initiative?**

The European Capital of Democracy is a Europe-wide initiative of ECoD gemeinnützige GmbH, a non-profit limited liability company established under Austrian Federal Law and registered under FN 568933t in the Commercial Register of the Commercial Court of Vienna, supported by The Innovation in Politics Institute GmbH.

### **Is there a medium that regularly informs me about the ECoD initiative?**

We are publishing a newsletter, keeping you informed about news and updates related to the European Capital of Democracy. You can subscribe to it on our [website](#).

### **What costs does a City have to cover?**

Only the current and completed democracy projects as laid out in the City's Call submission have to be financed, organised and implemented by the City.

## How is ECoD NPO financed?

The European Capital of Democracy Initiative is run by ECoD gemeinnützige GmbH. This non-profit organisation was founded by The Innovation in Politics Institute GmbH. The necessary financial resources are raised through income from business activities (especially events, consulting and other services), subsidies from public institutions as well as private individuals, income from sponsoring, donations and other contributions.

## Who are the Experts' Jury members?

The Experts' Jury Members are:

- Jamie Just – CCRE/CEMR
- Bruno Kaufmann – Democracy International
- Robert Krimmer – Skytte Institute at University of Tartu
- Amina Krvavac – Child Warhood Museum
- Antonella Valmorbida – ALDA Europe / European Partnership for Democracy

For more information, please refer to “How to apply to become the European Capital of Democracy” on our [website](#).

## I would like to support the ECoD initiative, how can I get involved?

Please use the [Contact form](#) to get in touch.

## Which resources are required from the Cities?

European Capital in Democracy has been designed to provide a level playing field for all Cities over 100,000 inhabitants, asking for a minimum of resources while offering a maximum of benefits. There is no membership fee, only the commitment of a certain level of involvement (time) and resources for the presentation of the City's own democracy projects. As for the application process, we estimate 1-2 days for the Declaration of Intent until the end of June 2022 and 1-3 weeks between July and September 2022 for the Call submission. All member Cities are invited to join activities of and contribute to the ECoD City Network with their expertise, which will convene up to twice a year for 1-2 days, with (peer) exchange, collaboration, and capacity building options in between. The designated European Capital of Democracy will be asked to participate in monthly Steering Board meetings between February and August 2023 to prepare the Programme Year. The two to four shortlisted Cities might be invited to give feedback/inputs. During the ECoD Programme Year in the title-holding City, representatives of all member Cities can present themselves and their democracy projects in various events and formats. The level of involvement is up to each City.

## Municipal elections are planned for the ECoD programme year. Can our City still apply?

All Cities that have successfully completed their Declaration of Intent by 30 June 2022 and have provided a complete ECoD application as defined in the Call document (including mission statement, democracy projects and project ideas) by 30 September 2022 will be accepted as a member of the ECoD City Network.

In principle, all member Cities are expected to compete for the title of European Capital of Democracy. An exception can be made if the date for the next municipal elections of a City has not been set yet, but might fall into the first Programme Year (September 2023 to August 2024).

In this case, the City can still be considered to be potentially added to the Shortlist by the Experts' Jury until the middle of November 2022. If the election date has not been set by then, the City might not be included in the shortlist, but can stay a member of the ECoD City Network and participate in the next edition of the ECoD Call, 2024/25.

**We're concerned about the confidentiality clause. Does it mean that we can't publicly announce our participation in the ECoD initiative?**

The confidentiality clause means that the European Capital of Democracy NPO doesn't announce the names of the cities after the Declaration of Intent has been submitted. We only announce the names of cities after the full application has been submitted. Cities are free to publicly announce their participation in the ECoD initiative.