



Join us in creating the first European Capital of Democracy

Every year, a different City will be designated as European Capital of Democracy, selected by a jury of experts and up to 10,000 European citizens. In cooperation with civil society, the title-holding city hosts a wide range of activities and events, designed to improve and strengthen democracy. The first Programme Year starts in September 2023 in Barcelona!

Cities: Incubators of Democracy

Efforts to undermine European democracy have been underway for some time – and it is now literally under attack. Taking a stand for our European values has never been more important. The ECoD Initiative will build a strong Network of Cities that will foster participation.

Cities have long been leading the way in democratic innovation. In recent years, many cities have organised citizens' consultations on issues such as the process of immigrant integration, traffic-free zones, the preservation of cultural heritage, and improving public transport. Cities both large and small throughout Europe serve as laboratories for new ideas and incubators for democracy.

That's why we've created the European Capital of Democracy — to celebrate democratic innovation, and to bring together like-minded cities who can share their best practices and learn from one another. Together, they will help shape the future of European democracy.

What are the benefits?

- ▶ The title-holding European Capital of Democracy is highly visible as a beacon of European best practice.
- ▶ The citizens of Europe enjoy hands-on involvement in developing new forms of democratic politics: as jury members, as participants in exchange conferences, and as visitors.
- ▶ Politicians in Europe can draw inspiration from best practices. They will participate in an open, personal network of political innovators beyond party lines, across borders, and at all levels of policy-making.

What will happen?

The European Capital of Democracy is a year-long Programme of events hosted by the title-holding City, which puts citizens' participation at the heart of its activities.

- ▶ The Programme Year begins with opening festivities inviting all inhabitants of the city, giving them a chance to learn about the year's activities and find out more about how they can get involved.
- ▶ Throughout the year, members of the ECoD City Network engage in a fruitful exchange with citizens, civil society and international visitors.
- ▶ Member Cities showcase the very best new projects from all over Europe, providing inspiration to politicians from throughout Europe.
- ▶ Citizens are invited to play a hands-on role in developing new forms of democratic politics.
- ▶ The title-holding City hosts a range of established events, including the annual Innovation in Politics Awards and the ActNOW International Mayors' Conference.

The Selection Process

How does a City become a European Capital of Democracy?

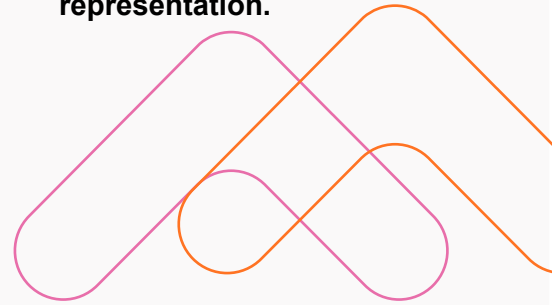
- PHASE 1 Cities apply for the title, presenting a portfolio of their best democratic practices and new project ideas
- PHASE 2 An Experts' Jury evaluates the projects and decides on a shortlist of three to five Cities
- PHASE 3 Finally, a jury of up to 10,000 European citizens selects the City to carry the title European Capital of Democracy

Cities that submit a full application will be admitted to the ECoD Network.

The Network offers best practice exchange, access to experts, the possibility of participating and showcasing in the ECoD Programme Year, and access to

- exchange & peer-learning
- tailored programmes, trainings & capacity building
- project cooperation as partners of the ECoD

The ECoD Call for submissions is open from February to June 2023 to Cities over 100,000 inhabitants from all Council of Europe member states enjoying full rights of representation.



Register Now!

Whether you represent a City you think deserves the title of European Capital of Democracy, or you are an engaged citizen who wants to get involved in helping shape the future of European democracy, we want to hear from you:

- [Apply as a City to join our City Network and compete for the title](#)
- [Register as a Citizens' Juror to select the next European Capital of Democracy](#)

To find out more, and to sign up for regular updates, visit: <https://capitalofdemocracy.eu/>

Who we are

European Capital of Democracy is organised by ECoD gemeinnützige GmbH, a non-profit organisation, founded by The Innovation in Politics Institute GmbH.

Based in Vienna and Berlin, with a network of partner organisations in 15 countries in Europe and beyond, The Innovation in Politics Institute GmbH constitutes a Europe-wide organisation dedicated to improving politics within the democratic spectrum irrespective of party affiliation.

We also present The Innovation in Politics Awards. Since 2017, the Awards have honoured hundreds of people at the forefront of political innovation, giving visibility to the best political minds in Europe, providing them with a platform to present their innovative projects, and facilitating best practice exchange across borders.

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