



Sociocracy - democracy as it could be



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What does Sociocracy mean?

... presented by Barbara Strauch

Democracy means rule by the people

while ***Sociocracy*** means governance by the associates.

We decide together - every voice matters

Everyone involved in an issue has a say and is given the space to speak in a forum in a constructive manner.

This requires strong principles and a clear structure.

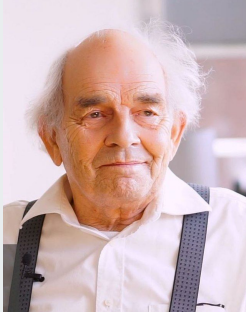
A short history of Sociocracy



Auguste Comte created the word **Sociocracy** in 1853.



Kees Boeke first practiced consent in his school in 1926 and called it **Sociocracy**



Gerard Endenburg was student in Boeke's school and created the **Sociocratic Circle-organisation Method SCM** in 1970 in the Netherlands - shortly called **Sociocracy**

SCM - the Sociocratic Circle-organisation Method

This model for governance and self-organisation follows
4 basic principles:

1. Consent principle - decision-making with consent
2. Circle principle - semi-autonomous circles
3. Double linking - always 2 people connect the circles
4. Open elections - elect people for tasks and roles by consent



Consent principle - decision-making by consent

The process led by the facilitator:

1. Picture-forming - all questions for comprehension are answered
2. Opinion-forming - 1st round for reactions, 2nd round for new learnings
3. Facilitator summarizes the proposal and asks for objections
4. Facilitator integrates objections

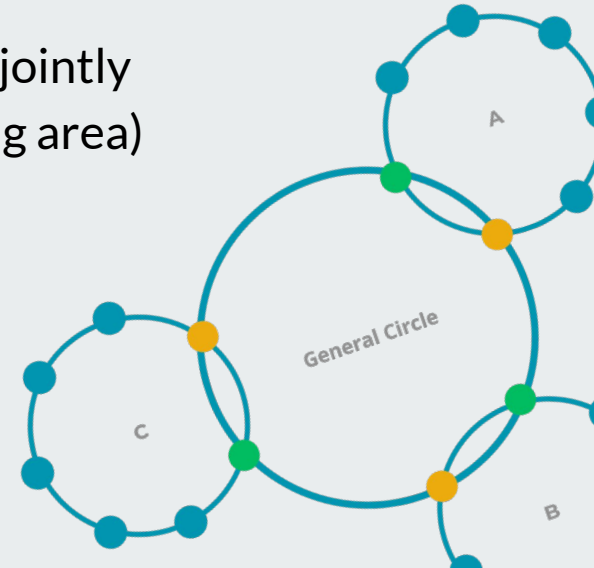


A decision is made when no one in the team has a paramount objection in sense of our common goal.

Circle principle - semi-autonomous circles as an organisational structure



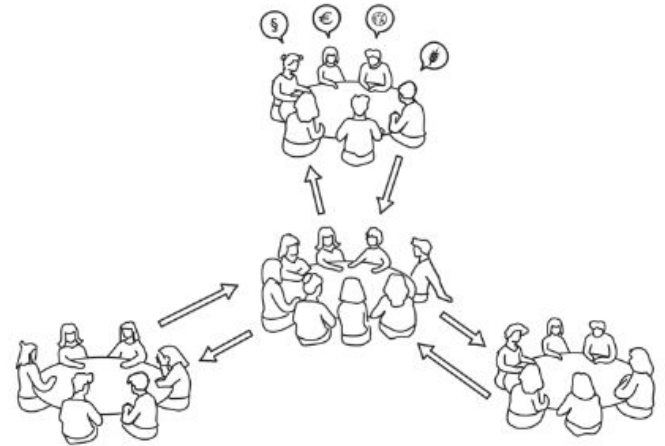
Semi-autonomous teams have their jointly determined domain (decision-making area) and reach their aim self-organised.



Double linking - always two people connect the circles



The circle-leader and the circle's delegate (representative) both are members of the two connected circles.



Open election - we select people for tasks and roles by consent

The election-process led by the facilitator



1. The circle clarifies the role with consent
2. Every member votes for a person and express the arguments
3. In a second round everybody can change their mind because of new arguments
4. The facilitator suggest for the most suitable person and ask for consent

Additional

Processes and tools

- Common aim
- Logbook-System
- Helping-circles
- Development-talk
- Aim-realisation-process
- ... and more

Four roles in a circle

1. Circle-leader
2. Facilitator
3. Delegate / Representative
4. Secretary / Logbook-keeper

All tools are adapted to the specific needs of the organisation without leaving the principles.

Support is provided from:

the [Sociocracy Centers](#), [SoFA - Sociocracy for All](#) and [ISCB](#)

All people are different and Sociocracy can deal with that well.



**We need good cooperation
in the face of so many crises**

Qualities of sociocractic cooperation (1)

Diversity of Thought

- Embracing a wide range of perspectives. Finding common ground among differing views.

Power With - not Power Over

- Provide collaborative leadership rather than hierarchical control. Not creating winners and losers.

Common Aims

- Work together and focus on a common goals.

Inclusive Decision-Making

- Ensure that everyone's voice is heard. Find new answers / solutions together.

Empowerment

- Enable individuals to contribute meaningfully and have effect.

Transparency

- Provide clear and open processes and communication.

Qualities of sociocractic cooperation (2)

Effective Meetings

- Ensure everyone's input is valued and discussions are productive

Safe Spaces

- Create environments where everyone can express themselves without fear.

Building Trust

- Build stronger relationships and mutual confidence

Respectful and Appreciative Interaction

- Engage with one another in a way that honors each person's contributions.

Co-Responsibility

- Share the responsibility for outcomes and decisions.

Citizenship Competences

- Develop skills for active and informed participation.

Examples of Sociocracy approach in towns

- The sociocratic Youth Council of the Municipality of **Thermi** was supported by Naya Tselepi and Sofia Kyprianidou - both partner in SONEC and founder of **ElKeSo - Elliniko Kentro Sociokratias, GR**
- Nachbarschaftsrat (Neighbourhood-Council) in **Vienna** was supported by Florian Bauernfeind - **SoZeAT - Sociocracy Center Austria**
- SONEC-concept was developed by an Erasmus+partnership led by SoZeAT together with Pia Haertinger and Maria Brandenstein, who implemented it in **Augsburg** - through **SoZe-Augsburg, DE**
- **Utrechtse-Heuvelrug**'s participation-process was supported by **SCN - Sociocratisch Centrum NL**. The case-study is presented by, Rita Mayrhofer

Youth Council of the Municipality of Thermi GR

Introduction & Context

Presenter: Naya Tselepi

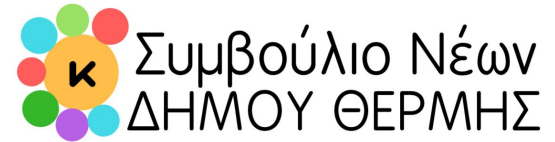
Member from the YCMT: Konstantinos Pavlakis

<http://www.youthermi.eu/>

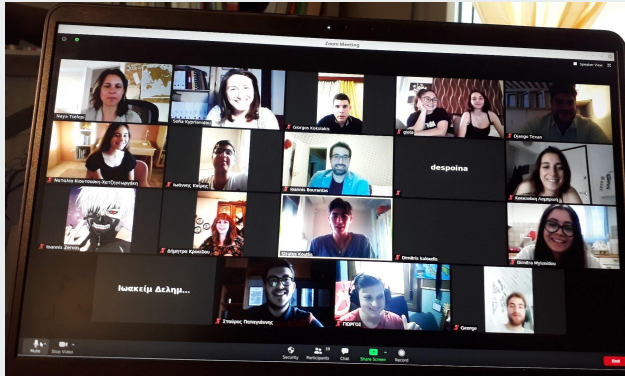
fb: @youthcouncilmunicipalityofthermi

instagram: @youth_municipalityofthermi

email: youthofthermi@gmail.com



Youth Council of the Municipality of Thermi Making off...



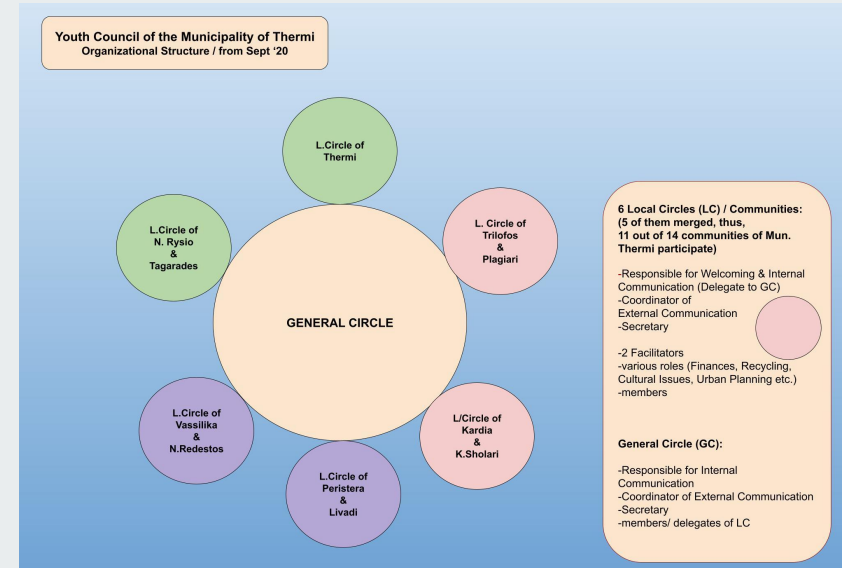
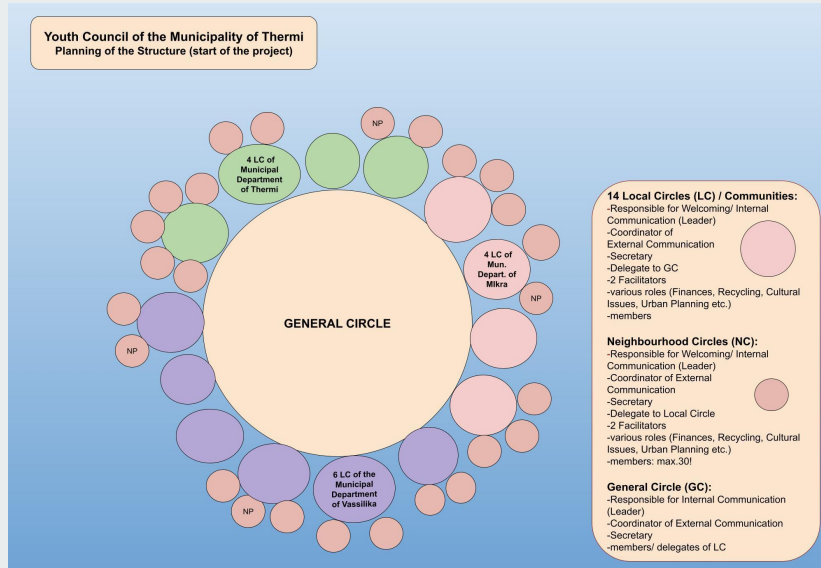
Κάνε
τη φωνή σου
ν' ακουστεί.
ΕΛΑ ΜΑΖΙ ΜΑΣ.
ΔΗΛΩΣΕ ΣΥΜΜΕΤΟΧΗ
στο link που σου δίνεται.
15 - 29 χρονών



Κ Συμβούλιο Νέων
ΔΗΜΟΥ ΘΕΡΜΗΣ



Youth Council of the Municipality of Thermi Organogram



Youth Council of the Municipality of Thermi Actions



**ΜΕΝΟΥΜΕ ΣΠΙΤΙ
ΜΕΝΟΥΜΕ ΑΣΦΑΛΕΙΣ;**
Η ενδοοικογενειακή βία στην
περίοδο της πανδημίας

Διαδικτυακή εκδήλωση σε
συνεργασία με τη δράση
"Λύσε τη Σιωπή"

Κυριακή 20 Δεκεμβρίου
19:00-21:00



Κύκλος Τριλόφου-Πλαγιαρίου

Εκδήλωση:
**THERMI'S
NEXT TOP MODEL
CITIZEN**

Προβολή ταινίας μικρού μήκους
και συζήτηση

Σάββατο 19/12/2020
20:00-22:00



Youth Council of the Municipality of Thermi GR

Challenges, Learnings

- Covid-19 & online meetings.
- Municipality's projects, disbelief and low rates of attraction for new members.
- Young people leave the place cause of studies, work, army etc.; thus, not many stay in the Council for long.
- No circle structure now, participants work under General Assembly & are working on their new structure.

Youth Council of the Municipality of Thermi GR

Impact

- The first Youth Council in Europe to work with Sociocracy
- Adoption of the Sociocratic Rules of Operation by the City Council
- Networking & Participation in European Projects
- Good practise!
- New project in Municipal schools connecting school councils with YC
- Innovator Council in Greece; meetings in Youth Forum



Vienna AT - 10th district Sonnwendviertel

Sociocratic Neighbourhood Council

presented by Florian Bauernfeind



Vienna AT - 10th district Sonnwendviertel



- New part of the city, for 5500 households, near the Central Train Station
- We startet 2021 with first prototype
- Currently in the 2nd cycle, planning for the 3rd

Vienna AT - 10th district Sonnwendviertel



PROZESS

1. IDEENSAMMLUNG
2. VOTING
3. NACHBARSCHAFTSFORUM
4. NACHBARSCHAFTSRAT

...



Nachbarschaftsrat
Sonnwendviertel

Process stages :

1. Activation and issue/idea collection
2. Voting / prioritization
3. Public Neighborhood Forum
4. Council Meetings - 1 year cycle



Vienna AT - 10th district Sonnwendviertel

Within a one-year cycle, the elected council...

- works with the sociocratic principles, facilitated by the process-team
- is working together on the top-issues and objectives
- develops and publishes joint statements and positions to address issues
- address and seek cooperation with district-level politicians, city administration, or other actors
- start self-organized projects, take action
- ... and more

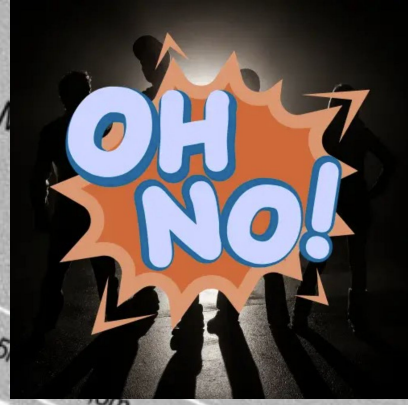


Vienna AT - 10th district Sonnwendviertel

Challenges and Learnings:

- Reach is still limited - lot of effort to reach harder to reach groups.
- Funding is needed for sustainability.
- Cooperation and our good relations to district institutions and actors is very helpful.
- No use of Sociocracy in the low threshold stages of the process (1-3)





Meetings with city-admin and head of district

More Trees in the area were planted

Improved infrastructure for bikes

Dialogue to moderate troubles with youth-groups

Sonnwendviertel Festival



Vienna AT - 10th district Sonnwendviertel

Benefits and Impact for society:

- Enabling effective citizen participation as an important complement to the representative democratic system at the local level.
- Create safe spaces for the exchange of opinions and ideas, forming a basis for transparent and fair decision-making processes.
- Opportunities to learn and practice political action, social competence, solidarity, values, and knowledge exchange.

Augsburg DE - SoNeC - Sociocratic Neighbourhood Circle “Am Bogen”

Presented by
Pia Haertinger

Her guest from Augsburg
“Am Bogen”
Carmen Sanchez Piva

www.sonec.org



Context

- Congress „Sociocracy & Politics“, Salzburg, 2019 with pioneers of Indian children-& neighborhood parliaments
- EU-project Erasmus Plus „SoNeC“ with 9 partner organizations of 7 European countries
- Case study „SoNeC “ in Augsburg with support of City of Augsburg
- 1. SoNeC in Augsburg at (former) playground „Am Bogen“, district Jakobervorstadt Nord



NACHBARSCHAFT
AM BOGEN



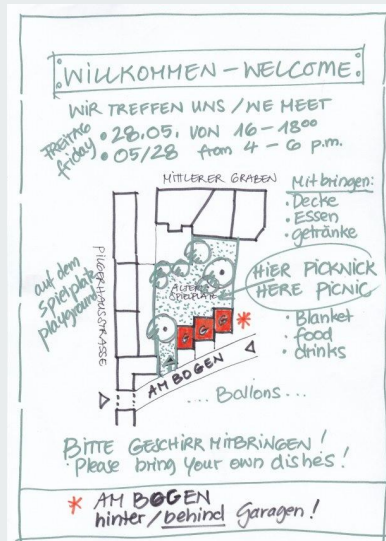
Actions

2021 until inauguration of playground, May 2023

- March 2021: Inviting 130 multicultural households „Am Bogen“ for first SoNeC meeting in April 2021 - flyer & personal
- Small neighborhood circle (online meetings due to Covid) twice a month - with sociocratic facilitation
- Outdoor-activities to get to know each other & community building (collecting garbage, flea market, planting campaigns ...)
- Regular meetings with district management and Green Office Department, City of Augsburg - redesign of playground & green area



Impressions of 2021 & 2022



Lebendige Nachbarschaft am Bogen!

Nachbarschaftstreff: jeden 2. Freitag im Monat 17:30-19:00 Uhr
Müllsammelaktion: jeden 4. Donnerstag im Monat 17:00-18:00 Uhr

Treffpunkt: Quartierladen in der Pilgerhausstr. 21

Fragen an Carmen: AmBogen@online.de

AKTUELL

Donnerstag 24. März: Müllsammelaktion

Freitag 08. April: Planung Ostereieraktion

Donnerstag 28. April: Ostereiersuche "Spielplatz Am Bogen"



Challenges

- Covid 19 / online meeting during first months
- not everyone had access to PC & online meetings
- language barriers
- people were not used to address their neighbors
- SoNeC grew slowly - only few neighbors with strong commitment
- „purpose“ for SoNec weaker after inauguration of playground

Learning

Essentials:

- resources: time, space, skills, funding for material and personal
- coordinators from neighborhood & district management as base for commitment and building of trust
- sociocratic coaching from the very beginning
- cooperation with municipality as (one) key to success and learning platform for political participation
- everyone wants to be seen & heard - principle of equity

Impact

Partizipation & Empowerment

- Reshaping of playground / green area: planting edible & not edible plants
- Inauguration of new public playground: SoNeC as host, City of Augsburg as guest

Social Benefits

- Get to know one's neighbors
- Self organization & self efficacy
- Neighborhood help & inclusion
- Strengthening of responsibility



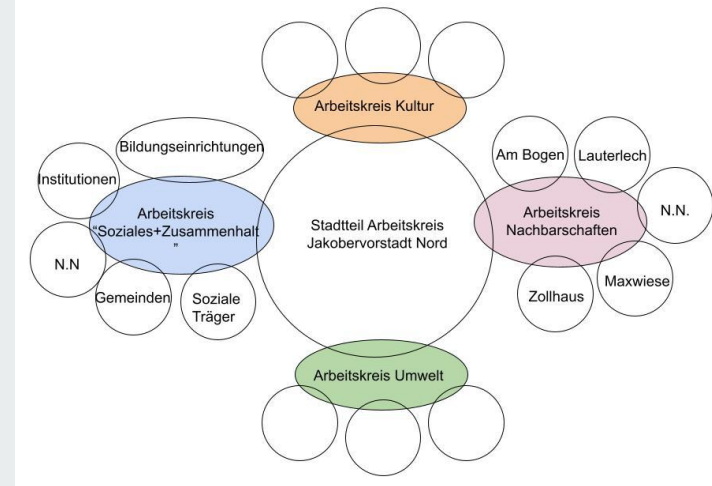
Next steps

In progress:

- 2nd. SoNeC “Am Lauterlech” neighborhood with mainly elderly people
- sociocratic facilitation of “District Working Group” & “Working Group Social Cohesion”

In planning:

- 3rd SoNeC “Maxwiese” - interim use of green area by neighbors
- sociocratic circle structure for networking & cooperation between initiatives, organizations and other district stakeholders



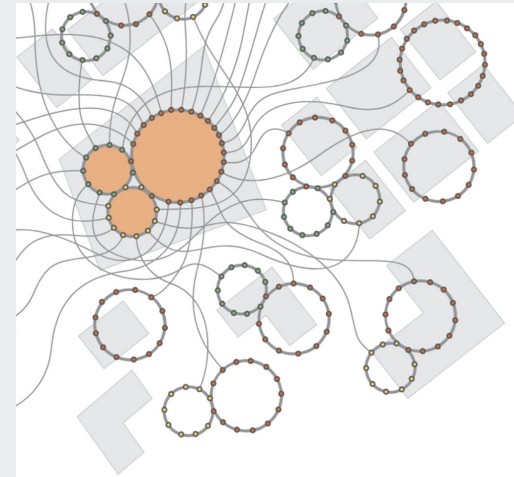
Vision of Power to the People by SoNeC

We are well networked, support each other and live the European values such as human dignity and equality.

Democracy is strengthened & continues to develop.

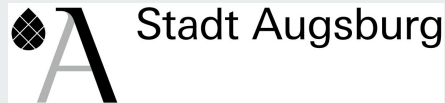
Sociocratic circle structure ensures resilient neighborhoods: self-organized, well-connected residents solving local and global problems together at eye level.

manual: www.sonec.org
contact: sozeaux@soziokratiezentrum.org
with friendly support of:



im Rahmen des Bundesprogramms

Demokratie **leben!**



Utrechtse-Heuvelrug NL

BOB - Consent-decisions in the City Council

presented by
Rita Mayrhofer

<https://www.heuvelrug.nl/gemeenteraad>

First results of Case Study:

<https://soziokratiezentrum.org/heuvelrug/>



Utrechtse-Heuvelrug NL

- A beautiful countryside with 50,000 inhabitants living in 7 villages east of Utrecht
- Low population density and high average educational level
- 29 municipal councillors using socio-democratic decision-making since 2014
- 2006 Merger of five municipalities with considerable difficulties over many years
- Citizens acted as “Bridge-Builders” to support a political transformation process



BOB - Sociocratic consent decision making in a local council

Beeldvorming (picture forming) – councillors speak and citizens speak

Ordeelsvorming (opinion forming) - councillors speak and citizens watch

Besluitvorming (decision making) - councillors speak and citizens watch

Aims: well informed political representatives make better decisions and citizens participate in the most effective way (Information and Consultation during picture forming)

The Challenges for BOB

- The common aim - consent on legislative program from all parties
- Involving citizens - during picture forming and agenda setting
- Transferability - in the NL and abroad

U bevindt zich op: Kalender > Vergadering Gemeenteraad 27-01-2022

Agendapunten

- 1 Opening, berichten van verhind...
- 2 Mededelingen
- 3 Vaststellen van de agenda
- 4 Vragenuur (ex artikel 40 RvO); d...
- 5 Hamerstukken
- 5 15590 Vaststellen bestemmings...
- 5a 15678 Omgevingsvergunning v...

Vergadering Gemeenteraad 27-01-2022

Vergadering Spoor Ruimte 05-09-2024

Export ▾

Datum: donderdag 05 september 2024 [Toevoegen aan Outlook](#)

Starttijd: 20:00

Voorzitter: N. (Nicole) Lolkema-Seifert

Griffier: W. (Walter) Hooghiemstra

Locatie: Online via teams

Zie ook deze links

- Heuvelrug.nl
- archiefweb.eu
- De Raad

Agenda

Beeldvorming

2024-5415 Vaststellen bebouwde komgrenzen voor alle kernen GUH [6](#) ▾

Open Agenda Ruimte

a. De fractie D66 (Lennart van der Burg) stelt vragen stellen over Chaletvisiering ook op de Heuvelrug [1](#) ▾

The Impact of BOB

- Informed decision making
- No majority coalition government and no opposition
- More trust in political representatives
- More political engagement





Sociocracy - democracy as it could be?

