

## European Capital of Democracy

### Factsheet Consortium

**Title-holding Cities play a very special role within the European Capitals of Democracy (ECoD) initiative and the [European City Network](#) (ECN). Starting with Vienna, Cascais and Brussels, recently announced as ECoD 2027, all future title-holding cities will be members of the ECoD Consortium – a high-level advisory board of representatives from title-holding cities, international organisations and European institutions.**

Besides the City of Vienna and the Municipality of Cascais, current members include Steven Bosacker (Senior Advisor to the President, The Minneapolis Foundation), Cathryn Clüver Ashbrook (Executive Vice President & Senior Advisor for the Program Europe's Future at Bertelsmann Stiftung), and Laura Thornton (Senior Director for Global Democracy Programs at the McCain Institute), and Stefan Sindelar (Head of Office of the State Secretary at the Austrian Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs).

In addition to the long-time patronage and support by the Council of Europe, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities has entered a formal partnership within ECoD NPO in regard to the category “Local Democracy” in The Innovation in Politics Awards. Furthermore, a strategic partnership with the European Parliament has been established in 2024.

#### **Benefits of Consortium members within the European City Network are:**

- Helping secure the legacy of ECoD, especially best practice exchange and collaborations, by constantly growing and renewing the network - together with former, current and designated title-holding cities.
- Joint applications for European fundings, including prestigious and lucrative lead roles in projects
- Optional contribution to physical ECN meetings (held alongside the flagship events)
- Extended access to international experts and organisations
- Selected access to our constantly growing network of the Citizens' Jury (over 5,500 European citizens in all Council of Europe member states and Kosovo)

#### **Benefits of Consortium members with external visibility:**

- Invitation to join events like Democracy Year opening + closing, [The Innovation in Politics Awards](#), [ACT NOW Mayors' Conference](#), etc. and contributions in the form of speeches, best practice presentations etc.)
- Participation of a local/national team at the [Truth, Lies & Democracy](#) game jam
- Being featured as an institutional partner in our communication activities
- Gaining visibility as a partner for democracy
- An active and visible contribution to the further development of the initiative and to supporting the continuous selection of title-holding cities as a lasting legacy
- Joint initiatives to lobby/advocate for cities and push the urban democratic agenda towards European Institutions

#### **Responsibilities of Consortium members**

- Participation in one yearly meeting (hybrid)
- Strategic advice on the further development of the initiative
- Communication partnership for main highlights
- Financial contribution (for institutional members and European Capitals of Democracy)
- Participation in one highlight event per year