

European Capital of Democracy

Factsheet Non-Profit Organisation

ECoD gemeinnützige GmbH (ECoD NPO) was founded in 2021 by The Innovation in Politics Institute GmbH, an independent, non-partisan and mission-driven organisation **dedicated to advancing democracy** in Europe and beyond. The Institute drives practical, results-oriented initiatives to tackle complex challenges that no stakeholder can solve alone.

As a non-profit organisation, ECoD NPO's mission is to **promote democratic governance and to strengthen social cohesion** by fostering and expanding participation and awareness across the Council of Europe member states and Kosovo.

For this purpose, **a European Capital of Democracy is designated every year**, starting with Barcelona in 2023/24, Vienna in 2024/25, Cascais in 2026, and Brussels in 2027. In cooperation with civil society and citizens, the designated city will curate, organise, and implement a Programme Year, featuring a wide range of activities and events. **Visitors from all over Europe are invited to join and to participate.**

To ensure long term societal benefits, ECoD NPO focuses on

- **Participation**
Participation projects enable citizens to play an active role in decision-making processes. This strengthens citizens' sense of identity, as well as society's awareness of and confidence in democratic principles.
- **Future orientation and technology**
Rapidly developing technology and the rise of artificial intelligence in particular is profoundly reshaping the future of democracy, bringing both significant opportunities and serious risks. This is why ECoD NPO focuses on future generations by promoting education, participation and digital and AI literacy among children and young people.
- **Sustainability**
Sustainability projects aim to foster an international discourse, supporting citizens and cities in ensuring that radical climate transformation is a democratic process, and not just a technocratic one.

The objectives of ECoD NPO are achieved through a variety of activities.

- Events like conferences, panels and workshops
- Competitions and awards for outstanding democratic achievements
- Promotion of networking and knowledge exchange in support of relevant democratic and (civil) society actors via networks and platforms
- Supporting and enabling participatory and decision-making processes, e.g. with the Citizens' Jury, a Europe-wide network of democracy defenders
- Publishing electronic and printed media of various kinds

Organisation

ECoD NPO's office is located in Vienna, Austria, with an international team and a network of partners in many European countries.

An **Experts' Jury** - made up of highly respected experts and practitioners in the field of academia, civil society, arts, and business - assesses the level of ambition, innovation and creativity of democracy projects based on the fair and transparent selection.

The **Consortium** is the strategic body guiding the ECoD. It brings together former title-holding cities and key partners to shape the long-term vision, ensure continuity, and support the annual Democracy Year. Member cities actively contribute their expertise and commit to advancing democratic innovation across Europe. The Consortium also provides advice, suggestions and recommendations regarding the Democracy Year and the further development of the initiative.

The **Citizens' Jury**, a network of over 5,500 engaged citizens, selects the next European Capital of Democracy.

All Cities that submit a full application will be admitted to the **European City Network**, a strong group of 27 Cities from 15 European countries, providing 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 ECoD partners

Financial resources

The necessary financial resources are being raised through public and private fundraising, including European Institutions, donations, sponsoring, legacies, and other contributions, such as income from events and business activities necessary for the achievement of ECoD NPO's purpose (e.g. income from consulting, the granting of licences and rights of use, and the production and distribution of products or services).

Legal notice

The terms used in this document shall have the meaning as defined in the Glossary in the section "Glossary" of the current ECoD Call document.

For further questions, please contact:

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