





ONLINE FORUM  
ON MODERN  
DIRECT DEMOCRACY  
21 - 27 September - Zoom

# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the first-ever **Online Forum on Modern Direct Democracy**! You are hereby part of the Global Forum on Modern Direct Democracy, the oldest and largest conference worldwide on topics related to direct democracy and citizen participation. Over the years, our Forum has become a major feature of cooperation and networking between representatives of civil society, government officials, elections administrators, media professionals and scholars. And even in times when meeting in person has become challenging we are proud to offer you this meeting space online - Come, join, discuss and share your experiences!

To make sure that we all find our way around this Online Forum and feel comfortable, we have compiled a small guide with all the important information for you. This guide will tell you everything you need to know about our program and how to proceed if technology fails.

The Online Forum team



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# 1. ABOUT US

The Online Forum on Modern Direct democracy is organized by **Democracy International**, a German-based NGO supporting democracy activists from all over the world. Together with the **Swiss Democracy Foundation**, **Zócalo Public Square**, **Swissinfo** and many others we want to bring together perspectives on democracy from civil society, academia and administrations throughout this week-long conference. **Throughout the Forum we'll focus on four thematic tracks:**



## Track 1: Swiss Direct Democracy in Practice

Made in Switzerland! Switzerland's greatest export is not luxury watches, but modern direct democracy. Swiss citizens have a direct say in matters that affect their lives such as military spending, socio-political issues and constitutional reforms. As such, Switzerland is a pioneer of multilevel participatory democracy which should serve as a blueprint for democracy in Europe and around the world. What can we learn from this thriving example of direct democracy and what is on the ballot for the [national voting day on 27 September](#)?



## Track 2: Climate, Sustainability & Direct Democracy

Direct Democracy is at the forefront of the fight against climate change with initiatives in France, the UK and Austria recently making waves. Citizens are coming to the realization that they



cannot rely on status quo politics to stop climate change and that direct democracy offers an opportunity to solve one of humankind's biggest collective challenges.



### **Track 3: The Future of Direct Democracy**

The times are changing, and democracy should change as well! In a constantly globalizing world, with information at our fingertips, many people have become disillusioned by the direction politics is taking. Especially the younger generation is being emboldened by the direct democratic atmosphere and it is becoming increasingly clear that the days of technocratic government are coming to an end. The future of democracy should undoubtedly entail a move towards stronger elements of participatory democracy to supplement representative government.



### **Track 4: Democracy in Crisis**

In a world where we are confronted with seemingly overwhelming democratic crises, direct democracy represents a glimmer of hope! In many countries pre-existing crises have been exacerbated by the Covid-19 global pandemic. Through direct democracy, citizens can shield themselves from dictatorial regimes, work together in recovering from Covid-19 and build a better future. Find out how a global alliance of citizens and civil society can help this process.



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# How to join

The entire conference, except for the closing session, will take place over Zoom via this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89309986246>



Meeting ID: 893 0998 6246

For the closing session **“Should Global Democracy Become More Direct?”** on 30 September at 1h30 - 3h00 AM CEST (29 September 16h30-18h00 PDT) please register separately here:

[www.zocalopublicsquare.org/event/should-global-democracy-become-more-direct/](http://www.zocalopublicsquare.org/event/should-global-democracy-become-more-direct/)





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In case you are unable to join our Zoom room or we have exceeded capacity, you can **watch all sessions live** on our website or find the recordings of sessions you have missed:

[www.democracy.community/global-forum/online](http://www.democracy.community/global-forum/online)





## 2. PROGRAM

**MON 21.09**

**TUE 22.09**

**WED 23.09**

**THU 24.09**

**10-11.30 CEST**

**International  
Dimensions of  
Participation.  
Swiss Inputs to  
Bridging the  
Gap**

**Comparing  
Petitioning  
Online  
Collection  
Systems**

**14-15.30 CEST**

**Welcome and  
opening**

**Tools, Issues,  
Campaigns and  
Votes**

**Corona  
Dictatorships**

**Citizens'  
Initiative on  
Climate in  
Austria**

**Towards  
the 2021  
Democracy  
City Summit  
in Bern,  
Switzerland**

**16-17.30 CEST**

**Citizens'  
Convention on  
the Climate in  
France**

**Will the Young  
Push for  
more Direct  
Democracy?**

**18.30-20 CEST**

**How can  
the Simpfol  
campaign  
solve global  
problems  
like Climate  
Change?**

**Can a World  
Citizens'  
Initiative help  
strengthen the  
UN?**

**With Direct  
Democracy for  
Better Cycle  
Paths**

**The American  
election during  
COVID-19: The  
pandemic's  
influence on  
voter turnout**

**20-21.30 CEST**

**The Challenges  
of elections  
and direct  
democracy in  
Mexico in times  
of COVID-19**



**FRI 25.09**

**SAT 26.09**

**SUN 27.09**

**WED 30.09**

10-11.30 CEST

11.30-12 CEST

ALL DAY

1.30-3.00 CEST

**Welcome &  
Workshop  
Presentation**

**Closing  
session:  
Should Global  
Democracy  
Become More  
Direct?**

14-15.30 CEST

**The 27/09  
Popular Voting  
Day: Issues,  
Backgrounds  
and the Role of  
Public Media**

12-13.30 CEST

**Panel: Our  
Democratic  
Future**

Please register  
separately here:



16-17.30 CEST

**Complementary  
Paths to  
Combatting  
Climate  
Change**

14-16.00 CEST

**OPEN SPACE -  
People Power  
around the  
World**

**Swiss national  
voting day**

Follow live  
coverage of  
the voting  
results via our  
media partner  
[Swissinfo](https://www.swissinfo.ch).

18.30-20 CEST

**Global  
Democracy -  
Accelerating its  
Implementation**

10 parallel  
workshop  
sessions

20-21.30 CEST

**Ruling by  
obeying as  
a form of  
government:  
social  
participation  
in the times  
of the 4th  
transformation  
of Mexico**

16.00 - ... CEST

**Invitation to  
the Global  
Forum &  
Online Forum  
Afterwork  
Party**



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## MONDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2020

14:00 - 15:30 CEST

**Track 1: Swiss Direct Democracy in Practice**

### **Swiss Direct Democracy in Practice: Tools, Issues, Campaigns and Votes**

On September 27, eligible citizens of Switzerland will decide on important issues regarding Europe, security, hunting, parental leave and child care. This briefing focuses on key aspects of modern direct democracy in Switzerland including the tools of initiative and referendum available, the major issues subject to direct democratic agenda-setting and decision-making, including the main stakeholders in campaigns and how the pandemic is influencing this very public way of political involvement ahead of the September 27 voting day.

Welcome and Moderation: Bruno Kaufmann (Co-President Global Forum)

Lecture by Giada Gianola (Swissvotes)

18:30 - 20:00 CEST

**Track 2: Climate, Sustainability & Direct Democracy**

### **How can the Simpol campaign solve global problems like climate change?**

The need for governments to keep their national economies internationally competitive and attractive to global investors makes it impossible for them to tackle global problems like climate change. By driving nations to cooperate; Simpol offers one way to solve this dilemma.

Workshop: John Bunzl and Alfred Groff (Simpol)



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## TUESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2020

10:00 - 11:30 CEST

### **Track 1: Swiss Direct Democracy in Practice International Dimensions of Participation. Swiss Inputs to Bridging the Gap**

There is an old tension between the participatory and direct democratic mechanisms within a country and the less transparent legislation and agreements between different nation states. In the context of rapid technological and societal change, international regulation increasingly includes new soft law instruments. While offering advantages of speediness, flexibility, and adaptability, their growing importance also raises questions on the involvement of parliaments and civil society in their elaboration and adoption.

Moderation: Bruno Kaufmann (Co-President Global Forum)  
Lecture by Ambassador Roger Dubach (Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland)

14:00 - 15:30 CEST

### **Track 4: Democracy in Crisis Corona Dictatorships**

This panel will look at those laws that have been enacted during this pandemic that have restricted human rights of freedom. With views from the Netherlands, Hungary, Serbia and Norway, it will be discussed what impact the pandemic has had on governments and what will be the lasting effects on democracies. How have countries dealt with crises in the past and have the laws they implemented during this period been withdrawn ever since?

Moderation: Daniela Bozhinova (Democracy International)



Panel: Håvard Mogleiv Nygård (IASR), Clara Egger (University of Groningen), Dobrica Veselinovic (Don't let Belgrade d(r)own), Toni Skorić (Friedrich Naumann Foundation) and Arjen Nijeboer (Meer Democratie Netherlands)

**16:00 - 17:30 CEST**

**Track 2: Climate, Sustainability & Direct Democracy**  
**Citizens' Convention on the Climate in France**

In June 2020, the "Convention Citoyenne pour le Climat", a French citizens' council on the climate crisis ended its work. Their goal is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in France by 40 percent by 2030. To do this, they came up with 150 concrete legislative proposals. A referendum will now be held on three of their proposals, while all other measures will be voted on in Parliament. The Convention consisted of 150 randomly selected citizens, representing the demographic diversity of French society. Nadine Breneur was one of them. She lives in the French-German-Swiss border triangle and will present her experience.

**Workshop: Nadine Breneur (Convention Citoyenne pour le Climat)**

**18:30 - 20:00 CEST**

**Track 3: Future of Democracy**  
**Can a World Citizens' Initiative help strengthen the UN?**

In an increasingly interconnected world, we are facing unprecedented global challenges to the environment, human rights and health. But now that we need them more than ever,



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international organizations and multilateral collaboration have come under pressure. Is more citizens' participation a key to turn the tide? What role can a World Citizens' Initiative play?

Moderation: Andreas Bummel (Democracy Without Borders)  
Panel: Dr Livingstone Sewanyana (UN Independent Expert OHCHR), Agustin Maggio (Greenpeace International), Daniela Vancic (Democracy International) and Soo Suh (Asia Democracy Network)

## WEDNESDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2020

14:00 - 15:30 CEST

### Track 2: Climate, Sustainability & Direct Democracy Citizens' initiative on climate in Austria

This June, an Austrian climate citizens' initiative collected an astounding 380.590 signatures, meaning that their demands on climate action will have to be discussed in parliament this autumn. Katharina Rogenhofer was the coordinator of this climate citizens' initiative. She will give an overview of the citizen's initiative as a democratic tool in Austria, how the campaign and movement was organized and on its impact on real politics.

Workshop with Katharina Rogenhofer  
(Klimavolksbegehren Austria)

16:00 - 17:30 CEST

### Track 3: Future of Democracy Will the Young push for more direct democracy?

Generation Z and Alpha use technology like their mother-tongue, developing completely new ways



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of communicating, building networks and sharing information in worldwide communities. Does this 'new' technological culture lead to democratic progress or even another way of practicing direct democracy?

**Moderation:** Achim Wölfel (Mehr Demokratie e.V.)  
**Panel with** Christine Schmidt (Fridays for Future ECI), Sanna Ghotbi (Digidem Lab), Klevisa Kovaci (Montage Initiative) and Leonardo Manganelli (AEGEE)

**18:30 - 20:00 CEST**

**Track 2: Climate, Sustainability & Direct Democracy**  
**With direct democracy for better cycle paths**

Throughout Germany, citizens are starting municipal citizens' initiatives to improve cycle paths in their towns and villages, currently totaling over 30. The North Rhine-Westphalian initiative "Aufbruch Fahrrad" was organized by the NGO RADKOMM and is the largest such initiative at German state level to date. Sonja Thiele has been with RADKOMM since the launch of "Aufbruch Fahrrad" in 2018. She lives near Bonn where she works with many others on improving local cycling infrastructure through a petition for a referendum ("Radentscheid Bonn") that will be completed by the end of September.

**Workshop with Sonja Thiele (RADKOMM)**

**20:00 - 21:30 CEST / 13:00-14h30 CDT**

**Track 4: Democracy in Crisis**  
**The Challenges of elections and direct democracy in Mexico in times of COVID-19**

Mexican experts will present how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the development of relevant and emerging



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issues of the elections and direct democracy mechanisms in Mexico, such as the political participation of women and indigenous communities, along with the challenges for holding plebiscites and other instruments of citizen participation.

**Moderation:** Carlos Chávez (Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana)

**Panel with** Claudia Zavala (National Electoral Institute Mexico), Bernardo Valle Monroy (Electoral Institute of Mexico City), Rita Bell López (Indigenous Regulatory Systems Commission) and Arturo Meraz (Electoral Institute of Chihuahua)

## THURSDAY 24 SEPTEMBER 2020

10:00 - 11:30 CEST

**Track 3: Future of Democracy**

### **Comparing Petitioning Online Collection Systems**

This workshop will be looking at how the COVID-19 crisis has reinforced how necessary a strong digital infrastructure is for democratic tools. With online petitioning becoming an increasingly favored form of participation, we will discuss what kind of future the European Citizens' Initiative has to look forward to in the post-Corona world, by looking at how other local, national, or transnational online collection systems and petitioning platforms around the world work. What can the European Citizens' Initiative's Online Collection System learn from other systems and examples?

**Moderation:** Daniela Vancic (Democracy International)

**Workshop:** Andreas Freimüller (Campax), Dion McCurdy



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(NewVote), Didzis Melķis (Manabalss), Meike Hartwig (Change.org), Yu-Hsuan Yeh (Environmental Justice Foundation) and Jérôme Stefanini (European Commission).

**14:00 - 15:30 CEST**

**Track 1: Swiss Direct Democracy in Practice  
Towards the 2021 Democracy City Summit  
in Bern, Switzerland**

The next Global Democracy City Summit will take place in Bern/Switzerland in spring next year and offer an opportunity for leading democracy cities around the world to share, care, exchange and develop key dimensions of local democracy. This panel will feature representatives from the host city of Bern and the city of Helsinki, which have developed comprehensive ways of bringing in their citizens locally. We will also meet and learn about two major initiatives to support these local democracy efforts: the European Capital of Democracy project and the Open Government City initiative.

Moderation: Bruno Kaufmann (Co-President Global Forum)  
Panel with Claude Longchamps (City of Bern), Helfried Carl (European Capital of Democracy), Anu Markkola (City of Helsinki) and José Maria Marín (Open Government Partnership)

**18:30 - 20:00 CEST / 12:30 - 14:00 EDT / 9:30 - 11:00 PDT**

**Track 4: Democracy in Crisis  
The American election during COVID-19: The  
pandemic's influence on voter turnout**

The global pandemic has exacerbated many existing election challenges in the USA. Voter turnout and participation in



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state-wide ballot measures are of particular concern. In the 2016 election, only 56% of the voting-age population cast their votes with a quarter of these votes being cast via postal ballots. The number of postal ballot votes is expected to rise significantly due to the public health crisis brought about by the COVID-19 virus. This poses a considerable challenge to democratic practice in the USA.

**Moderation:** Daniela Vancic (Democracy International) Panel with John Matsusaka (University of Southern California), Paul Jacob (Citizens in Charge), Dane Waters (Democracy International), Sarah Rosier (Ballotpedia), Nancy Wang (Voters Not Politicians)

## FRIDAY 25 SEPTEMBER 2020

14:00 - 15:30 CEST

**Track 1: Swiss Direct Democracy in Practice**

### **The September 27 Popular Voting Day: Issues, Backgrounds and the Role of Public Media**

After postponing the May initiatives and referendums due to the Covid19-lockdown, eligible citizens will decide until September 27 about important matters of the country. In this panel, we will discuss the issues at stake, the backgrounds to these decisions as well as the impact of the pandemic onto the processes of direct democracy. The panel also assesses the specific role of a public service media in the decision process and offers us a unique insight into one of the world most vibrant modern participatory and direct democracies.

**Moderation:** Bruno Kaufmann (Co-President Global Forum) Panel with Larissa M. Bieler, Renat Künzi, Domhnall O'Sullivan and Urs Geiser (Swissinfo)



**16:00 - 17:30 CEST**

**Track 2: Climate, Sustainability & Direct Democracy**  
**Complementary Paths to Climate Change**

The panel explains the idea of an online citizens' assembly of the global civil society parallel to the world climate conference. John Bunzl will discuss with interested people and groups how SIMPOL (simultaneous politics) can be useful to implement their aim in a more successful way, if their topic is connected with a global issue suffering from "Destructive Global Competition".

Panel with Erwin Mayer (Mehr Demokratie Austria) and John Bunzl (Simpol)

**18:30 - 20:00 CEST**

**Track 3: Future of Democracy**  
**Global Democracy: How it can be implemented soon**

In this panel representatives of different societies working on the implementation of a global direct democracy will discuss together, why and how a global democracy can be implemented. The panel will discuss how to speed up the implementation by working together and they will also discuss and answer questions about the best possible solution for a global democracy system.

Moderation: Lucy Koechlin (GloCo)

Panel with Santiago Siri (Democracy Earth), Assaf Eshed (Global Online Democracy), Gery Colombo (GloCo) and Alexandra Gavilano (Extinction Rebellion)



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**20:00 - 21:30 CEST / 13:00-14h30 CDT**

#### **Track 4: Democracy in Crisis**

### **Ruling by obeying as a form of government: social participation in the times of the fourth transformation of Mexico**

The Government of Mexico has proposed achieving the transformation of the country's public life by giving special attention to the groups with the greatest economic disadvantages. Following this principle, public policy has been aimed at fighting corruption in the public sphere, lack of transparency and bad government practices. This presentation emphasizes the importance of social participation to achieve Mexico's transformation as well as to overcome the challenges and crises stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Moderation:** Carlos González, (Independent Consultant Citizens' Participation)

**Lecture by** Rabindranath Salazar Solorio (Ministry of the Interior Mexico)

## **SATURDAY 26 SEPTEMBER 2020**

**11:30 - 12:00 CEST**

### **Welcome & Workshop Presentation**

**12:00 - 13:30 CEST**

### **Our Democratic Future**

Going into the final stretch of the Online Forum, we look back at the four main themes of the week and discuss what they entail for the future of democracy and for us. Are we facing a downturn of Democracies? How can we confront



it? What kind of measures do we need to strengthen direct democracy in the future and how can we ensure a higher participation and a more sustainable democratic practice?

**Moderation:** Caroline Vernailien (Democracy International)  
**Panel with** Roslyn Fuller (Author "In Defence of Democracy"), Ichal Supraidi (Asia Democracy Network), and Marie Jünemann (Mehr Demokratie e.V.)

**13:30 – 14:00 CEST Lunch time**

**14:00 - 16:00 CEST**

## **OPEN SPACE: People Power around the World**

In 10 parallel workshops, we look at democracy and participation initiatives from all over the globe. To keep our minds sharp, we'll enjoy two yoga breaks hosted by Elisabeth Erlandsson Kaufmann.

### **Track 1: Swiss Direct Democracy in Practice**

#### **Workshop 1: From the streets to the Constitution : Introducing the RIC in France**

On November 19, the Yellow Vests movement visibly put the issue of the implementation of initiative and referendum back into the political agenda in France. Protests gathered thousands of people in the streets during more than six months and despite the use of an unprecedented repressive arsenal by the French police and a refusal of the French government to even consider the request. Following this impetus, the demand for a RIC took various forms and was present in the European and municipal elections debates in France. In several French municipalities, wild (illegal) RIC



have been recurrently implemented. This roundtable will present the state of the French debate about the RIC, the various strategies used by the groups defending it and the next steps planned to introduce the RIC in the French constitution.

**Speakers:** Dr Clara Egger (University of Groningen & Mouvement pour le Dauphiné Démocratique), Prof Dr Raul Magni-Berton (Institut de Recherche Territoires Démocratiques), Léo Girod (Article 3 et Clic-Ric), Hakim Loewe (Objectif RIC) and Daniel Vienne (Faites des RIC)

## **Track 2: Climate, Sustainability & Direct Democracy**

### **Workshop 2: Catching the deliberative wave**

Randomly drawn citizens' assemblies are booming: they are organized around the globe to formulate solutions to political issues. The OECD even reports a veritable "deliberative wave". Citizens' Assemblies discuss burning issues such as the climate crisis, transport policy, the Covid-19 pandemic or waste disposal. The citizens who were randomly selected then discuss concrete action for policymakers. We'll present the development of deliberative democracy worldwide and focus on the Citizens' Assembly in Germany last year, where 160 citizens discussed the future of democracy.

**Moderation:** Thorsten Sterk (Bürgerrat.de) and Alexander Trennheuser (Mehr Demokratie e.V.)



## **Workshop 3: How to activate neighborhoods for local democracy**

We will discuss, what it needs to activate a neighborhood (“Kiez”) for a local self-organized democracy (Kiezdemokratie), what the challenges are, and how we can address these issues. Guided with examples from Berlin with public assemblies and playing- & neighborhood streets. An initiative from KIEZconnect .

Moderation: Fiete Rohde ([www.kiezconnect.org](http://www.kiezconnect.org))

## **Track 3: Future of Democracy**

### **Workshop 4: Campaigning for Direct Democracy**

Many of you have already experienced it: Campaigning for direct democracy is not an easy undertaking, obstacles are plenty. Alliance building, timing and persuasion are just some of the ingredients for a successful campaign that most activists have already come across. To make advocating for direct and participatory democracy more effective and efficient, in this workshop, we are gathering experienced campaigners from around the world. After a short introduction to their work and their main take-aways from year-long campaigning, we will then open the floor for your questions and input to identify best practices for direct democracy activists around the world.

Moderation: Martin Freres (Democracy International)

Panel: Zakia Elvang (We Do Democracy), Alex Marini (Movimento 5 Stelle), Linn Davis (Healthy Democracy), Ping Xu (Universal Basic Income Initiative Taiwan), Stefano Longano (Più Democrazia in Trentino)



## **Workshop 5: European Public Sphere**

The European Public Sphere – Europe 2.0 creates an open laboratory for Europe's future questions in 10 online discussions. While the project focuses on young Europeans, everyone is invited to join for the kick-off session during the Online Global Forum! Together, we want to develop new approaches, collect visions and solutions for Europe's future in solidarity. Not only will we discover common ground among our group of active people from all over Europe. All ideas will be sent to the European Commission at the end of the project so they can actually make a difference.

**Moderation: Gerhard Schuster (European Public Sphere)**

## **Workshop 6: Let the 17 million EU citizens vote!**

EU citizens who are residents in another EU country can vote and run in municipal and European elections, but not in regional and national ones. Nor can they generally vote in referendums in their country of residence. Some EU citizens have never been able to vote in a national election simply because they have used their right to freedom of movement. This is a stain on European democracy. Therefore ECIT has launched an ECI "Voters Without Borders" with a task force of young people coming from all over the EU and campaigning for more democracy. It is the perfect example of youth involvement in European politics.

**Moderation: Voters Without Borders Team**

## **Workshop 7: Digital solutions for better democracy - from the local to the global level**

This workshop will present and discuss two existing digital tools for better democracy. The Direktdemokraterna, the Swedish direct democratic party, started out in 2012



and has run for two elections. Their model for digitalizing incorporates direct democracy and liquid democracy elements. The Global Voting Platform of Democracy Without Borders is an internet tool that enables debate, voting and elections on the global level.

**Moderation:** Thomas Larsson (Direktdemokraterna) and Rasmus Tenbergen (Democracy Without Borders)

## **Workshop 8: On our future: From competitive to co-creative democracy**

Politics often appear as a strategic struggle, not for the common good but for one-sided claims of powerful groups that see their limited perspective as paramount. In the future, democratic decision making should and could be dominated by heterogeneous groups of citizens who discuss and act in their common good. Instead of forming competing interest groups, they could share their views and combine them to create new solutions in a co-creative and environment. Our workshop will focus on innovative democratic tools like citizens' assemblies, systemic consensus principle, hybrid online/offline solutions,... that will enable us to put co-creative democracy into practice.

**Moderation:** Stephan Bettzieche and Andreas Schiel (denkzentrum|demokratie)

### **Track 4: Democracy in Crisis**

## **Workshop 9: Lessons from the Coronavirus crisis**

The Corona crisis had a strong impact on our everyday life, but especially also on our democratic systems. Elections



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have been postponed, demonstrations banned, and civic involvement restricted. Democracy International and the European Civic Forum have analyzed these limitations and challenges in their projects “Corona and Democracy” and “Civic Space Watch” and will present learnings and recommendations on how civil society can stay democratically active during such a global challenge.

**Moderation: Andreas Müller (Democracy International)  
With Giada Negri (European Civic Forum) and Reiner  
Duvenage (Democracy International)**

**16:00 EST - open end**

## **Invitation to the Global Forum & Online Forum Afterwork Party**

Closing speech by Bruno Kaufmann and Joe Mathews, Co-presidents of the Global Forum on Modern Direct Democracy. Followed by a musical surprise and an informal afterwork party.

## **SUNDAY 27 SEPTEMBER 2020**

### **Track 1: Swiss Direct Democracy in Practice Swiss national voting day**

Follow live coverage of the voting results via our media partner Swissinfo: [www.swissinfo.ch/eng](http://www.swissinfo.ch/eng)



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## WEDNESDAY 30 SEPTEMBER 2020

01:30-03:00 am CEST / 16:30-18h00 PDT (29 /09/2020)

### Track 3: Future of Democracy

## Closing session - Should Global Democracy Become More Direct?

Across the world, elite politicians, militaries, and powerful business and political groups appear to have a monopoly on representative democracy. By exploiting the resulting discontent, populists and authoritarians have created an international narrative of democracy in decline. But in many regions and countries, including some ruled by autocrats, citizens are collaborating with local and provincial officials to expand participatory and direct democracy so that residents can make decisions themselves. What is the relationship between the seemingly opposing trends of authoritarian nationalism and stronger local democracy? How are people using participatory tools to change their communities, and the world? And what are the future possibilities and perils of direct citizen decision-making?

Moderation: Kathleen Miles (Noema Magazine)

Panel with Shari Davis (Participatory Budgetting), David Altman (Author "Citizenship and Contemporary Direct Democracy"), Michael Kau (Taiwan Foundation for Democracy) and Greta Rios (Ollin) - Hosted by Zócalo Public Square

Please note, you need to register separately for this event [here: www.zocalopublicsquare.org/event/should-global-democracy-become-more-direct/](http://www.zocalopublicsquare.org/event/should-global-democracy-become-more-direct/)

Alternatively, you can watch the live stream on our website: [www.democracy.community/global-forum/online](http://www.democracy.community/global-forum/online)



## OUR SPEAKERS

- **Prof. David Altman** is a professor political science at the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile and Citizenship and Contemporary Direct Democracy author.
- **Bell López Vences** is the Electoral Counselor of the State Electoral and Citizen Participation Institute of the State of Oaxaca, where she also presides in the Commission for Indigenous Normative Systems. She serves as an expert on indigenous legal system, the fight against gender-based political violence, human and electoral rights.
- **Stephan Bettzieche** is a co-founder of several initiatives in the field of participation. He has co-developed the Cooperative Communities governance model, an evolutionary approach bridging the gap between representative governance structures and participatory ones. Managing Director of Gemineo GmbH, Munich/Germany.
- **Larissa M. Bieler** is the editor-in-chief for SWI swissinfo.ch, the international unit of the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation (SBC). She is an expert on direct democracy (#DearDemocracy), ethical issues, feminism and as a linguist, focuses on the examination of the power of language.
- **Daniela Bozhinova** is a democracy researcher, writer and activist and Board Member of Democracy International. She has a PHD in political science and has researched extensively national models of direct decision-making. She is one of the founders of the Bulgarian Green Movement. Currently Bozhinova manages the Bulgarian Association for the Promotion of Citizens Initiative.
- **Nadine Breneur** was one of the 150 citizens drawn to participate in the French Citizen's Convention for the Climate. She lives in the French-German-Swiss border triangle. Participatory democracy is very important



- to her, because it allows ordinary citizens to express themselves as soon as they receive all the information.
- **Andreas Bummel** is co-founder and Executive Director of Democracy Without Borders. He is global coordinator of the Campaign for a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly which he helped establish in 2007. Since 2019 he's assisting in launching a campaign for a UN World Citizens' Initiative. He frequently writes and speaks about global democracy and is the author of "A World Parliament: Governance and Democracy in the 21st Century" (with Jo Leinen).
  - **John Bunzl**, President, Founder, International Simultaneous Policy Organization (SIMPOL).
  - **Helfried Carl** is an Austrian diplomat. Served in London, Sarajevo, New York. After eight years as Chief of Cabinet the President of the Austrian Parliament, posting as Ambassador to Slovakia. Since 2019 on leave from the Austrian foreign service and partner in the Innovation in Politics Institute. Building up the European Capital of Democracy Initiative.
  - **Carlos Chávez Becker** is a researcher at the Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana (UAM), in the Department of Social Processes in Mexico City. He coordinates the Academic Body "Governance, Citizen Participation, Cohesion and Social Capital in urban and rural areas". He is an expert on rural civil society and has worked as a consultant for institutions such as OECD, GIZ, UNDP, UNFPA, IECM, Fundación Merced, among others.
  - **Dr. Gery Colombo** co-founded Gloco.ch in 2019, an organization that works towards building up global democracy to solve global issues. With the "Global Democracy Initiative", he aims to bring together the many stakeholders promoting democracy.
  - **Linn Davis** is the Program Manager and principal process designer at Healthy Democracy, a nonpartisan nonprofit based in Oregon in the US, which brings together



everyday people – selected by lottery to represent a microcosm of the public – to deliberate on policy issues. Linn develops and monitors HD's complex public processes, trains its facilitation teams, and consults on deliberative projects in the US and internationally.

- **Shari Davis** is the Executive Director of the Participatory Budgeting Project . She joined PBP staff after nearly 15 years of service and leadership in local government. As Director of Youth Engagement and Employment for the City of Boston she launched Youth Lead the Change, the first youth participatory budgeting process in the US, which won the US Conference of Mayors' City Livability Award.
- **Ambassador Roger Dubach** is the Deputy Director of the Directorate of International Law at the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland.
- **Reiner Duvenage** is currently completing a 4-month internship at democracy International e.V. He completed his bachelor studies in Philosophy and History at the University of the Free State in South Africa and is a final-year M.A. student in the Erasmus Mundus Euroculture programme at Göttingen University and the Jagiellonian University Krakow. His main fields of interest are politics, democracy, cultural studies and societal studies.
- **Clara Egger** is Assistant Professor in international politics at the University of Groningen where she serves as the Director of Studies of the Erasmus Mundus Programme in International Humanitarian Action. In her recent work Citizen initiated referendums. At the heart of direct democracy, she reviews the history and effects of citizen initiated referendums.
- **Zakia Elvang**, Partner and Strategy Consultant, We Do Democracy.
- **Elisabeth Erlandsson Kaufmann** is an internationally renowned yoga teacher from Sweden and founder of Yoga Productions.



- **Assaf Eshed** is the founder of the Global Online Democracy organization. His Global Online Democracy governance model presents a tangible and easy to build roadmap for solving different problems that humanity has to deal with – an online decision-making system that represents the true voice of the people.
- **Andreas Freimüller**, Founder and Managing Director, Campax.
- **Martin Freres**, Volunteer, Democracy International e.V.
- **Dr. Roslyn Fuller** trained in law before writing her PhD in Democracy and International Law at Trinity College, Dublin. She frequently writes and lectures on issues pertaining to technology, ancient and modern democracy, privacy and international law. She ran as an Independent on a platform of direct digital democracy in the 2016 Irish national elections, and is the Managing Director of the Solonian Democracy Institute.
- **Alexandra Gavilano**, Member, Extinction Rebellion Bern.
- **Urs Geiser** is a journalist from the English department of SWI swissinfo.ch. He reports directly from the parliament and serves as an expert for direct democracy, parliamentary issues and citizens initiatives.
- **Sanna Ghotbi**, Co-owner and citizen participation consultant, Digidem Lab.
- **Giada Gianola** is a doctoral student at the Année Politique Suisse in the context of the SNSF project “Digital Democratic Innovations to Empower Citizens in the Digital Age”. Prior to that, she was involved in the evaluation of policy measures and programmes, particularly in the areas of education and health.
- **Carlos González Martínez** works as an independent Consultant on issues of civic education and citizen participation. With more than twenty years of experience, he has held positions of high responsibility in autonomous constitutional bodies that guarantee



- fundamental human rights of citizenship, including federal and national electoral institutions in Mexico.
- **Alfred Groff**, Coordinator, International Simultaneous Policy Organisation (SIMPOL).
  - **Meike Hartwig** is a campaigner for the world's biggest online petition platform change.org. Before joining change.org she worked for a federal state ministry. Her academic background is political science, gender studies and peace and conflict studies. She is most interested in democracy, feminism, sustainability and the social dimension of digitalization.
  - **Paul Jacob**, President, Citizens in Charge.
  - **Marie Jünemann** is a Board member of Mehr Demokratie Berlin/Brandenburg and spokeswoman of a local initiative calling for a referendum on a new transparency law in Berlin.
  - **Michael Kau** is a senior fellow at the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy and the former Taiwan foreign vice minister.
  - **Bruno Kaufmann** is the Global Democracy Correspondent at the Swiss Broadcasting Company. He is the Global Forum Co-Founder and Co-president and lives in Sweden, where he serves in the Water Council of the Arboga River. He is the author of the European Democracy Passport and the Global Passport to Modern Direct Democracy.
  - **Lucy Koechlin** is the Leader - Working Group Partnerships at GloCo.
  - **Klevisa Kovaci**, Programme Manager, Montage Initiative. As co-founder and chair of Montage Initiative's Student Advisory Board, she leads the Youth Leadership Program.
  - **Renat Künzi** works as the managing editor for the #DearDemocracy-initiative of SWI swissinfo.ch, which has published more than 6000 articles and videos on direct



- democracy and active citizenship in the past six years.
- **Thomas Larsson**, Direktdemokraterna
  - **Stefano Longano**, Più Democrazia in Trentino
  - **Claude Longchamp** is a Swiss historian and political scientist.
  - **Agustin Maggio** is the global Break Free campaign manager for Greenpeace International.
  - **Prof Dr Raul Magni Berton**, Professor of political science, Institut de Recherche Territoires Démocratiques
  - **Leonardo Manganelli**, Political Activism Coordinator, AEGEE-Europe
  - **José María Marín** has more than 15 years of experience managing projects and carrying out research, policy analysis and advocacy in the field of public sector transparency, anti-corruption, citizen participation and accountability. Currently, he is Senior Program Officer for OGP Local, working to advance open government in local jurisdictions.
  - **Alex Marini** is the founder and former president of the association of social promotion, Più Democrazia in Trentino. Elected Council member of the Province of Trento among M5S, 2018. Previously employed as a collaborator for the secretary of the Bureau of the Italian Chamber of Deputies. He also worked as a foreign salesman, police interpreter, restaurant manager, banker and accountant.
  - **Anu Markkola**, Project Manager, City of Helsinki
  - **Joe Mathews** is co-president of the Global Forum on Modern Direct Democracy, and a Democracy International board member. He serves as syndicated California columnist and editor at Zócalo Public Square, a Los Angeles-based journalistic and civic nonprofit that is also a creative center of Arizona State University.
  - **John Matsusaka** is Charles F. Sexton Chair in American Enterprise, Professor of Finance and Business Economics



- at the University of Southern California & Executive Director of Initiative and Referendum Institute. His most recent book is *Let the People Rule: How Direct Democracy Can Meet the Populist Challenge*.
- **Erwin Mayer** is spokesperson for Mehr Demokratie Austria and Board Member of Democracy International. Erwin Mayer works as a consultant on energy issues. From 1997 until 2008 he was an energy campaigner at Greenpeace, Austria. From 2008-2013 he worked as an independent consultant in the field of climate and energy.
  - **Dion McCurdy**, CEO and Co-founder, NewVote
  - **Didzis Melņis** has worked as a journalist and international news editor for over 20 years. He is currently managing the content for the Latvian public participation platform MyVoice (ManaBalss.lv).
  - **Arturo Meraz González** is the current president of the State Electoral Institute of the Mexican federal state of Chihuahua for the period of 2015-2022. Due to his long-term work experience, he has gained extensive knowledge about the workings of the Mexican electoral system.
  - **Kathleen Miles** is the executive editor of Noema Magazine. She leads the team that launched Noema both online and in print in early 2020. Based in Los Angeles, Noema is published by the Berggruen Institute.
  - **Dr Håvard Mokleiv Nygård** (PhD, University of Oslo) is Research Director at the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO). His main research interests are related to understanding the authoritarian politics and the dynamics of armed conflict. Nygård has worked closely with a broad set of potential users of the research, including the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the UN.



- **Andreas Müller** is the Executive Director of Democracy International. He holds a master in Political Sciences with focus on democracy development and democracy promotion from the Philipps University Marburg. Andreas has co-organised the Global Forum on Modern Direct Democracy since 2015. He is also co-founder and board member of the „Initiative house on human rights and democracy“ in Cologne, Germany.
- **Giada Negri** is a research and advocacy officer at the European Civic Forum, which she joined in 2017. She coordinates the Civic Space Watch, an online tool for monitoring civic space in Europe.
- **Arjen Nijeboer** is the Campaign Manager of Meer Democratie in the Netherlands and Board member for Democracy International. He is a journalist and NGO professional and has been actively campaigning for direct democracy since 1999.
- **Domhnall O’Sullivan** works as a journalist for the English department of SWI swissinfo.ch. Located in Bern, he regularly reports on topics such as direct democracy, politics and culture.
- **Greta Rios** is a youth participation expert and the President of Ollin president
- **Katharina Rogenhofer** was coordinator of Austria’s climate citizens’ initiative ([klimavolksbegehren.at](http://klimavolksbegehren.at)).
- **Fiete Rohde**, Board Member, KIEZconnect
- **Sarah Rosier**, Director of Strategic Partnerships for Ballotpedia.
- **Rabindranath Salazar Solorio** is Mexico’s Undersecretary for Democratic Development, Social Participation and Religious Affairs within the Ministry of Home Affairs. He has extensive experience in the field of public service and democratic institutions in Mexico.
- **Dr. Andreas Schiel** is a co-founder of the Berlin-based think tank [denkzentrum|demokratie](http://denkzentrum|demokratie), is a philosopher



- and social scientist involved into several projects focusing on the future of humanity. He works as a researcher, advisor and teacher on topics like the future of work, the digital transformation and democratic innovation.
- **Christine Schmidt**, Organiser, the Fridays for Future ECI.
  - **Gerhard Schuster**, Board Member IG-EuroVision and Co-founder European Public Sphere.
  - **Dr. Livingstone Sewanyana** is the founder and Executive Director of the Foundation for Human Rights Initiative (FHRI) and the current UN Independent Expert on the Promotion of a Democratic and Equitable International Order. A lawyer by profession, he has written and published widely in world renowned scholarly journals, and books on human rights, corporate governance, public sector management and access to justice.
  - **Santiago Siri**, Founder, Democracy Earth
  - **Toni Skorić**, Project Manager, Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom.
  - **Jérôme Stefanini** has been working for IT projects of the European Commission for more than 15 years. He is the leader of the IT team responsible for the European Citizens' Initiative and contributed to the drafting of the new ECI regulation for its IT aspects.
  - **Thorsten Sterk**, Campaigner, Mehr Demokratie and Bürgerrat.de
  - **Soo Yon Suh** is Program Manager at the Asian Democracy Network, managing and implementing ADN's various programs to uplift the Asian democracy narrative to widely promote and defend democracy in the region.
  - **Ichal Supriadi** is the current Secretary General of the Asian Democracy Network and Advisor for Asian



Network for Free Elections- (ANFREL). He actively engages in democracy movement, co-founder of Democracy Watch Indonesia (2001), co-founder of INDEPT Indonesia (2012), and advisory council of the Human Rights Alliance (HRA) – Pakistan, and Board Advisor of the People Empowerment Foundation in Thailand.

- **Rasmus Tenbergen**, Program Coordinator, Democracy Without Borders
- **Sonja Thiele** is part of RADKOMM’s social media team since the launch of the petition “Aufbruch Fahrrad” in 2018. RADKOMM is an NGO in Cologne, Germany that organises an annual conference on urban mobility and cycling to support sustainable transport and more liveable cities. She lives near Bonn where she works with many others on improving local cycling infrastructure through a petition for a referendum.
- **Alexander Trennheuser**, Board Member, Mehr Demokratie e.V.
- **Bernardo Valle Monroy** is the President Counselor of the Commission for Citizen Participation and Training. In the past, he has held the position of Secretary General of the Electoral Tribunal of Mexico City and wrote several books about electoral law and electoral schemes in Mexico’s capital city.
- **Daniela Vancic** is the European Program Manager at Democracy International, managing the organization’s European campaigns for stronger citizens’ participation in the EU and maintaining and growing the organization’s European partnerships. Daniela has worked extensively on the European Citizens’ Initiative, from offering campaigning advice to organizers, to advocating for stronger implementation of the tool’s regulation, to making the tool more well-known to citizens.



- **Caroline Vernailen** is responsible for Democracy International's Public Relations and Global Community building. She oversees the development of a global hub of activists which seeks to serve as the link between organisations and people working on democracy issues worldwide. She advocates for more transparent and participatory policies and supports activists worldwide.
- **Dobrica Veselinovic**, Political activist, politician and the spokesperson for the Don't let Belgrade d(r)own movement.
- **Nancy Wang** is the Executive Director and a founding member of Voters Not Politicians.
- **Dane Waters** is Board Member of Democracy International and the CEO of Tipping Point Strategies, a communications and advocacy firm based in Washington, DC. He is founder of the Initiative & Referendum Institute at the University of Southern California and helped co-found the Initiative & Referendum Institute Europe. He also serves on the board of the Citizens in Charge Foundation.
- **Achim Wölfel**, Managing Director Mehr Demokratie Nordrhein-Westfalen.
- **Ping Xu**, Co-founder, Universal Basic Income Initiative Taiwan
- **Yu-Hsuan Yeh** is a former Corporate Sustainability Development Consultant and Business Development specialist who is now Campaigner at a British NGO in Taiwan campaigning against climate change.
- **Beatriz Claudia Zavala Pérez** has served as Director of the Electoral Judicial Training Center of the Electoral Tribunal of the Federal Judicial Power, as President Counselor of the Federal District Electoral Institute and as Electoral Counselor of the same institute until January 2013. Currently she holds the position as Electoral Counselor at the National Electoral Institute.



## 3. BASICS

### Make yourself comfortable...

- Find yourself a quiet, comfortable place with good internet reception!
- Participate with grace and humor. Embrace the moment and the technology to the greatest extent possible.
- Also pay attention to your physical well-being. Do you have drinks and snacks? The sessions will go on for a few hours.
- Make sure you have a stable internet connection and a charging device. Pen and pad are ideal for taking notes.
- If possible, use a laptop or PC (instead of telephone or tablet).
- Consciously take time for the conference. Get involved in the individual items on the program.
- Be there a few minutes in advance. If technical problems occur, there is enough time to solve them.
- Close all tabs that you don't need (yes, even Instagram) and turn your phone off. We recommend that you restart your computer before entering the webinars.



# CODE OF CONDUCT:

Every participant plays a role in creating and maintaining a welcoming and respectful working environment where everyone, no matter their background or individual characteristics, can truly thrive.

- **We do not tolerate discrimination** against any individual on the basis of any non-performance-related characteristics, including race, religion, gender, age, marital status, national origin, sexual orientation, citizenship status, disability, and other protected characteristics.
- Mute your microphone when you are not speaking, this way we avoid disruptive background noises.
- Wait for your turn in the session-chat and when you raised your hand – our moderators are following along and your time will come.
- Please only use the chat for topics related to the session or what the speaker is talking about.
- We reserve the **right to remove participants** who do not comply with the code of conduct.



## 4. TECHNOLOGY

We've listed a few tips and tricks on how to use Zoom for you. It's best to make yourself familiar with the technology in advance. We will be using the video conferencing program **Zoom**. The software is freely available for download at [www.zoom.us/download](https://www.zoom.us/download). Zoom is usable from different devices (including smartphones, tablets or a landline phone). It is not necessary to use a device with a camera.

### This is how it works:

- Go to <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89309986246>
- A new window will open in your Internet browser.
- If no new window opens, after a short wait, click on "Download zoom and execute".
- A new window appears, select "Download file".
- When the download is finished, you can start the program.
- You are now entering the online conference room.
- You will be automatically muted and your camera will be off upon entering the meeting room. However you can switch on your microphone and camera at all times.



# As a participant to the webinar, you have three ways to interact:

1. Use the chatroom
2. Raise Hand
3. Polling

- **Chats** will be enabled during all sessions. Please use the chat only to comment the topic or if you face technological problems. Try to avoid asking your questions to panelists here. They will be answered over the Raise Hand-function, so that the moderator can keep a good overview. Please note the code of conduct.
- **Raise Hand-function** will show the host of the webinar that you have a question or a comment that is important to all the participants of the webinar. The host will unmute you so that you can talk live.
- **Polls** can be used during all types of lectures and are a tool to give the panelist/s a short overview about the opinions of his/her audience.



ONLINE FORUM  
ON MODERN  
DIRECT DEMOCRACY  
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## Take a break...

One of the greatest things about the Global Forum on Modern Direct Democracy is the chance to meet incredible people with amazing projects from around the world. Because we did not want to give up on this important function of our world conference, we will have a **Democracy Café** on the sidelines of our Forum on Saturday.

This means that at any point you can leave the main session to meet up with like-minded people in an informal setting. Just click the coffee icon in the Zoom “participants” window and our host will let you into the Democracy Café. You can return to the main session at any time.



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## 5. HELP

We've set up a **telegram channel** where we will share important updates during the Forum. If you want to receive these notifications, you have to download the Telegram-App (it's free and data secure) and subscribe to the following channel:

<https://t.me/GFMDDgoesOnline> **(for updates)**

**IMPORTANT:** If something should go wrong technically, this is the place where you get the information on how to continue.

If you're having technical issues and are unable to join the meeting, have a look at our help page on the website: [www.democracy.community/stories/help](http://www.democracy.community/stories/help)

If you can't find a solution for your issue there, you can write to our technical support team using Telegram: <https://t.me/GFMDDgoesOnlineSupport> or write us an email on [support@democracy-international.org](mailto:support@democracy-international.org)

We will also be livestreaming and publishing recordings of the event on our site. If you have problems getting into the room or have technical problems that simply cannot be solved, then you can also watch the livestream: [www.democracy.community/global-forum/online](http://www.democracy.community/global-forum/online)



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## 6. STAY IN TOUCH

Do you want to keep updated on direct democracy news from around the world or keep in touch with people you have met at the Forum? Sign up for our **International Democracy Community** - [www.democracy.community!](http://www.democracy.community)

Are you an activist advocating for citizen participation? An expert on direct democracy instruments? Do you represent an organization that defends citizens' right to have a say? **Create a profile and put yourself on the map** to present your work to the world, promote your events and connect with others working on democracy issues around the world.

And of course don't forget to register for our in-person **2021 Global Forum on Modern Direct Democracy** in Bern, Switzerland next year!

Join us from 28 April until 1 May for a fascinating week, where we'll get to experience Swiss-style direct democracy at work. [www.2021globalforum.com](http://www.2021globalforum.com)



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# Organisers & Partners



**DEMOCRACY INTERNATIONAL**

Democracy International is a German-based NGO working on the promotion of direct democracy and citizen participation worldwide. The aim is to give citizen a real say in political decision-making by strengthening direct democracy at the national, European and global level. Democracy International advocates for more transparent and participatory policies, support activists internationally and organise opportunities to learn and exchange best practices. More info: [www.democracy-international.org](http://www.democracy-international.org)



**SWISS  
DEMOCRACY  
FOUNDATION**  
SCHWEIZER  
DEMOKRATIE  
STIFTUNG

The Swiss Democracy Foundation (SDF) – in common with the simultaneously founded European Democracy Foundation – stands for greater participation of citizens in the political process, democracy, tolerance and international understanding. The Swiss Democracy Foundation is currently supporting projects and organisations in the fields of consultancy, education, development, media, research and networking at all political levels. More info: [www.swissdemocracy.foundation](http://www.swissdemocracy.foundation)

Founded in Los Angeles in 2003, Zócalo Public Square is an ASU Knowledge Enterprise. We syndicate our journalism to 290 media outlets worldwide and have hosted more than



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600 events in 33 cities  
in the U.S and beyond,  
including New York,  
Washington D.C., Chicago,

Houston, San Francisco, Shanghai, Guadalajara, London,  
and Berlin. We are a nonprofit organization that frequently  
partners with educational, cultural, and philanthropic  
institutions, as well as public agencies. More info: [www.zocalopublicsquare.org](http://www.zocalopublicsquare.org)

Our media partner SWI swissinfo.ch is the international unit  
of the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation (SBC), providing independent reporting  
on Switzerland. With its ten languages, SWI swissinfo.ch potentially reaches  
about 75% of the world's population.

SWI Swissinfo reports extensively on direct democracy.  
More info: [www.swissinfo.ch](http://www.swissinfo.ch)



## Permanent partners of the Global Forum on Modern Direct Democracy



## Partners of the Online Forum

