



FAQ - Questions and Answers on the ELDW

What is the European Local Democracy Week?

The “European Local Democracy Week” (ELDW) is an **annual European event** where local authorities from all the 47 member states of the Council of Europe are invited to organise public events to meet and engage with their citizens on issues of current interest. The aim is **to promote and foster democratic participation** at local level.

Who can participate in the ELDW?

The ELDW is targeted specifically at **local and regional authorities** (local communities, cities, municipalities, provinces, regions), **as well as their associations**. Citizens and NGOs are both the principal beneficiaries of the ELDW’s activities, and its main actors. Young people can also play an essential role in widely spreading the Week’s message, therefore, Youth and Children’s Councils are strongly encouraged to participate in the Week.

How can I participate in the ELDW?

In order to take part in the ELDW, partners may follow the following **4 simple steps**:

1. **Go to the [official website of the ELDW](#)** and choose “register”;
 2. **Fill in the [online registration form](#)** with all information required and create your own ELDW account;
 3. **Plan and organise events** related to the main theme of the year and issues of current interest in your community, using the [visual identity of the ELDW](#) that can be found on the website;
 4. **Make your activities visible** through the ELDW website by uploading them to your account.
- Do not forget to update your account, whenever necessary.

Why are there different categories?

There are three main categories.

Partners are local and regional authorities, which implement activities in the framework of the ELDW. The **Associations** of local and regional authorities, as well as NGOs and other European and international organisations are invited to take part in the ELDW to encourage initiatives to be implemented in their communities. The **“12 Star”** label is upheld for participants, which, at the time of their inscription, want to give special prominence to their participation in the European Local Democracy Week.

What does the ‘12 Star’ status entail?

The **“12 Star”** label is chosen by participants, which, at the time of their inscription, commit themselves to fulfil the following five criteria:

1. Allocate a specific budget for ELDW activities;
2. Launch a promotional campaign using the graphic visuals provided by the Congress;
3. Organise a number of activities linked to the current leading theme of the year;
4. Involve different groups of citizens in the initiatives, in particular young people;
5. Plan an event with a European dimension, to highlight the role of local authorities in building a democratic Europe.

Please note that if you choose this category, you will be asked to express your wish to participate in the ELDW as a '12 Star' partner before the Week and to produce a report on the activities organised and the budget which was allocated after the Week.

When should I register?

You are invited to register as soon as possible. The registration for the current year usually opens in March.

In case I already registered for previous editions, do I need to register again for the new edition?

No, your personal account is maintained each year. Nonetheless, for each new edition, you should connect to your account and change the year of the edition on the top of your window to the current one. You will then need to click on the button "register for the current edition" that will appear afterwards.

What should I do, once I am registered?

As soon as possible during or after the official ELDW, you should upload the activities you organised within this framework. In order to do this, you will need to connect to your personal profile and add the description (in English and in French, if possible) and add pictures of your activity. You will be able to modify the information uploaded at any moment, which allows you to add a description of your activity and complete it with pictures and additional information at a later stage. Do not worry in case the activity does not appear instantaneously: the ELDW team needs to validate each activity submitted by the partners.

Are there any materials to help me in the preparation of my activities?

You can rely on several documents that have been prepared for you by the ELDW team, namely:

- The [thematic ideas general document](#) or [specific 2016 thematic ideas](#);
- [The reference texts](#);
- [The ELDW Handbook "How it works"](#);
- [The concept paper on the ELDW 2016 theme](#);
- The website with links to the [past editions](#) and [activities](#).

What kind of event should I organise?

The range of events you can organise is as broad as your imagination allows. Over the past, ELDW partners have proven to be very creative in the organisation of their activities:

conferences, round tables, seminars, study visits, exhibitions, art competitions, theatre plays, and concerts... You can also draw inspiration from the events organised over the past years and presented on the [ELDW website](#), as well as from the '[Thematic ideas](#)' document.

Am I obliged to organise events related to the annual ELDW theme?

Participants are invited to organise activities related either to the annual theme of the ELDW or, in a more general way, to the promotion of citizen participation within their community.

Am I obliged to organise the events during the official dates of the week?

Even though the week around 15 October has been chosen for holding this event, as a tribute to the opening for signature of the European Charter of Local Self-Government, should this date coincide with other events or local elections in your community, you may choose to organise the ELDW on more convenient dates around October where possible.

How can I invite a Congress representative to participate in my event?

Congress representatives are keen to bring the voice of the Congress to your community! Congress representatives **who may be invited** are: the political coordinator of the ELDW; the President of the Congress; the two Vice-Presidents of the Congress, (the President of the Chamber of Local Authorities and the President of the Chamber of Regions); the heads of the Statutory Committees of the Congress (Monitoring Committee, Governance Committee and the Current Affairs Committee); the heads of the National Delegations of the 47 Congress member states; a member of the Congress Secretariat may also be invited to attend an ELDW event, in particular the Secretary General and the Director.

Travel and accommodation expenses will be borne by the inviting local/regional authority or association. For more information and practical help, please contact: democracy.week@coe.int.

Why should I participate?

Apart from allowing you to engage and meet with the citizens in your community during the activities you organise, the ELDW will make you part of a great European network composed of local elected representatives, associations and citizens that engage for the promotion of citizen participation throughout Europe. You will also benefit from peer exchange, good examples and best practices with all ELDW partners.

How can I stay updated on the ELDW latest developments?

The ELDW team is regularly posting news on the ELDW official website. In addition, you may choose to [subscribe](#) to the quarterly newsletter, the [March 2016 edition](#) of which is already available.

Who can I contact if I have questions?

The ELDW team (democracy.week@coe.int) remains at your disposal for any further inquiry you may have.