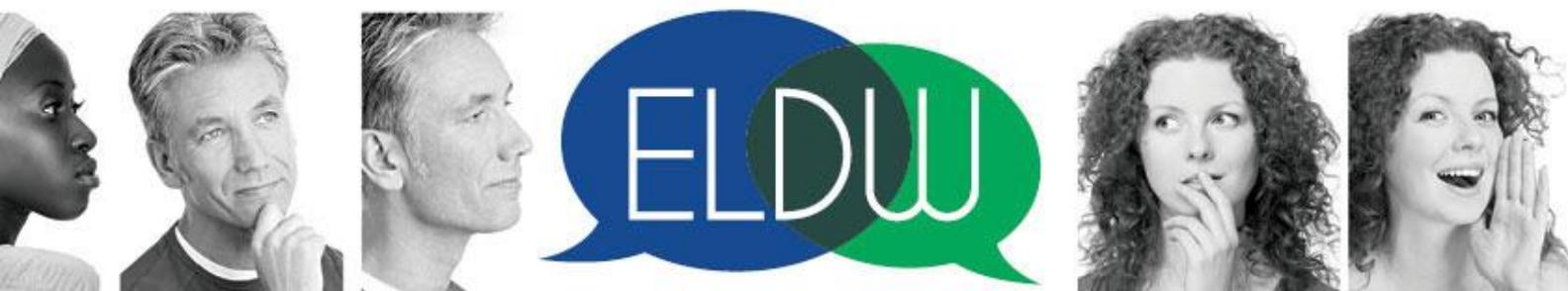


European
Local
Democracy
Week



Assessment of the European Local Democracy Week 2017

Dear ELDW partners,

The European Local Democracy Week (ELDW) is an annual pan-European initiative launched in 2007 with the aim of boosting citizen participation at grassroots level. It is co-ordinated by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.

The week around 15 October – the date on which the *European Charter of Local Self-Government* was opened for signature in 1985 – is dedicated to bringing together local elected representatives and citizens across the 47 Council of Europe member countries at public events and discussions on issues of current interest.

The ELDW is intended to provide an international framework for cities and municipalities across Europe to promote awareness of the rights and responsibilities that are incumbent on each individual in a democratic society, whether as an elected representative, public servant or ordinary citizen. The ELDW offers opportunities for its partners to be part of a bigger international *community* engaged in promoting active citizenship.

A pan-European *community* of local authorities, through which they can share innovative ideas on participation and good practices, build twinning partnerships, and thus learn from each other's experience and use it to further develop their actions.

A *community* of representatives, who can better inform their citizens, not only about what they can do for their local constituencies, and how they can do it, but also about what they can achieve at pan-European level through their elected representatives.

And lastly, a *community* that enjoys the support of the Council of Europe's recognised expertise, and above all its extensive knowledge of the concept of democratic citizenship and its carefully developed participatory tools.

Taking stock of the 2017 edition of the ELDW, let me congratulate all 74 local and regional authorities, their associations and the civil society organisations from 20 countries which celebrated European Local Democracy Week with us. I look forward to welcoming them, and many other old and new partners, at the 2018 edition, which will mark the 11th edition of the ELDW.

Andreas Kiefer
Secretary General of the Congress

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Facts and figures¹

In 2017, the European Local Democracy Week officially took place between *9 and 15 October*. As in previous years, participating municipalities and regions, their associations and civil society organisations also had the option of implementing their ELDW activities at a more convenient time around October, should the week coincide with other important events in their community.

National associations of local authorities, national and international organisations and institutions, and civil society organisations also contributed to the success of the week by disseminating information and raising awareness of the 2017 theme through their networks.

As a result of this joint effort, **74 partners from 20 countries** (see Appendix 1) registered on the official website to take part in the 2017 Democracy Week. **More than 225 activities** were organised in the ELDW framework, covering either the main theme “Citizens participation, consultation and commitment: for a thriving local democracy” or other issues of current interest.

Of the 74 registered partners, **69 were local authorities and 5 were associations of local authorities**. Out of the 20 partner countries represented, 12 have participated in all editions, while Austria took part for the first time, represented by the municipality of Leoben (see Appendix 2).

The country with the **largest number of partners in 2017 was Turkey** (12 cities, 3 local authorities), closely followed by Ukraine and Russia (each 7 cities), United Kingdom (4 cities and 3 local authorities), and France with 6 cities. As for the contribution by associations, 5 associations from Albania, France, Georgia, Serbia and Turkey took part in the initiative.

“12-Star” partners

25 partners representing 9 countries chose the “12-Star” status, hence giving special prominence to their participation in the Local Democracy Week. The “12-Star” concept was launched in 2010, as a voluntary label for heavily involved cities and associations, which, on registering for the latest edition of ELDW, took on the following 5 commitments:

1. allocating a specific budget to ELDW activities;
2. running an ELDW promotion campaign using the ELDW visual identity;
3. carrying out a number of specific activities linked to the main theme of the year;
4. involving different groups of citizens in the initiatives forming part of ELDW;
5. organising an event with a European or pan-European dimension.

In 2017, ‘12-Star’ status was taken up by:

Ahmetbey (TR)	Fastiv (UA)	Kyiv (UA)
Amadora (PT)	Huddinge (SE)	Lüleburgaz (TR)
Besiktas (TR)	Izmit (TR)	Medgidia (RO)
Bischwiller (FR)	Kadikoy (TR)	Mioveni (RO)
Büyükçekmece (TR)	Kahramankazan (TR)	Rize (TR)
Bydgoszcz (PL)	Karsiyaka (TR)	Strasbourg (FR)
Chania (GR)	Katowice (PL)	Tchernivtsi (UA)
Edremit (TR)	Kharkiv (UA)	Valongo (PT)

¹ Data are based exclusively on the information registered and uploaded on the ELDW website.

Main theme of the 2017 edition

Our ELDW partners confirm that a growing number of local authorities and elected representatives see the benefits of getting citizens involved in decision-making processes: increased legitimacy, improved accountability and more efficient delivery of public services among other things. In the past 10 years, local authorities have developed new ways and opportunities available for citizens to participate in public life. Furthermore, we are living the world of internet and e-democracy in which new technologies and emerging political actors are increasingly gaining space in complementarity to the traditional elements of representative democracy. Citizens are invited to express their opinion on public issues through more direct platforms, such as interactive websites, text messaging systems and social media. At the same time, these new opportunities come with new challenges for the work of local and regional authorities, such as issues related to data protection, accessibility, cybercrime, freedom of speech and social inclusion.

In the light of the 10th anniversary of the European Local Democracy Week, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe – responsible for the co-ordination of the ELDW – decided to reflect on the changing context of citizen participation and its link to the core mission of the initiative. **“Citizen participation, consultation and commitment: for a thriving local democracy”** has therefore been chosen as the **main theme** of the ELDW in 2017.

Citizen participation is the bedrock of democracy and good governance – core values of our society, represented and promoted by the Council of Europe and its Congress. Local and regional authorities are especially well placed to disseminate these values, on account of their proximity to citizens. On the occasion of the ELDW 2017, elected representatives and their citizens may be reminded of the importance of developing and engaging in inclusive participatory processes, in order to ensure effective and sustainable democracy.

Consultation of citizens on the issues that concern them is at the heart of citizen participation at all levels of governance. It is important to show citizens the different types of consultation that are available for them and the various ways to participate in decision-making, including the use of new communication technologies and new participatory methods to keep pace with the constantly evolving democratic processes. This is especially relevant at the local and regional level where citizens can practice their right to participation, as enshrined in the European Charter of Local Self-Government and its additional protocol on the right to participate in the affairs of a local authority, on a daily basis on issues that directly affect their lives. Citizens should be aware of the positive effects of raising their voice and engaging in a dialogue for contributing to the development of grassroots policies.

In this context, it is crucial to emphasise that **making democracy thrive** necessitates a two-sided commitment to participatory processes: local authorities and politicians need to offer citizens the right tools and ways for consultation and participation, whilst citizens need to take these opportunities and get actively involved in local affairs.

While focusing on promoting the added value of participatory democracy at the lowest levels of governance, the theme of the ELDW 2017 also intends to raise awareness of the work and the role of the Council of Europe in promoting local democracy and good governance. In particular, it echoes the first of the 12 principles for good governance at local level developed by the Council of Europe, “Fair Conduct of Elections, Representation and Participation”, which requires that citizens are at the centre of public activity and they are involved in clearly defined ways in public life at local level.

Furthermore, the 2017 motto is in line with the Congress priorities for 2017-2020 developed within its role of improving local and regional governance, in particular, the priorities of “enhancing the quality of local and regional democracy” and “building safe and inclusive societies that respect diversity”. Concrete Congress actions for implementing these priorities include the promotion of a toolkit for local authorities ‘Towards a greater citizen participation in community decision’, revising the 1999 European Code of Conduct on the political integrity of local and regional representatives, and debating a report on open data for better public services during its March 2017 Session.

Examples of activities organised by the ELDW partners²

There was a large variety of different activities organised during ELDW this year, focusing both on the main theme, but also other aspects of democracy. In particular activities to raise citizens' awareness of how local authorities operate and on how shared values on good local governance elaborated at the European level contribute to improving their practice were organised by the municipalities. Furthermore activities centred around offering accessible information to citizens on how they can effectively take part and make use of local consultation processes – including by using the latest communication tools and new forms of citizen participation as complementary to more “classical” ways of citizen participation.

Involvement of citizens in local consultation and decision-making processes

Many activities organised during the ELDW 2017 reflected on this year's theme “Citizens participation, consultation and commitment: for a thriving local democracy”. This refers back to the core mission of the initiative: boosting citizen participation at the grassroots level by organising public events where local elected representatives can meet and engage with citizens on issues of current interest, and give them a broader understanding of the functioning of public institutions and ways of participating in local decision-making.

One of the largest activities was organised by the city of *Strasbourg (France)*, hosting the “Citizen's Summit” which aimed to shape a new Pact of Local Democracy, involving both local authorities and citizens in order to strengthen their engagement in local politics. In *Leoben (Austria)*, citizens were invited to discuss the importance of actively practised democracy during a Citylab. Furthermore, a conference was held in *Kavaja (Albania)*, supported by the Association of Albanian Municipalities, which focused on the organisation of the municipality and the role of citizens in decision-making and consultation processes. Various local stakeholders attended a workshop, organised in *Lüleburgaz (Turkey)* in order to improve participation in local governance processes. ALDA (*The European Association for Local Democracy*) gathered 100 representatives of local authorities, NGOs and the business sector in *Milan (Italy)* to exchange knowledge on participatory processes in the field of sustainable energy. Another event organised by ALDA was the “4th Danube Participation Day” in *Budapest (Hungary)*. The mayor of *Bydgoszcz (Poland)* invited the inhabitants of the city to take part in consultations on the co-operation programme with NGOs and other public entities in 2018. *Kirklees (United Kingdom)* organised a Policy Café to showcase a report on what a strong and healthy local democracy should look like.

Interactive and new ways of citizen participation were applied by many municipalities this year. The citizens of *Izmit (Turkey)* had the chance to express their thoughts on democracy by writing on a “Democracy Wall” set up in front of the municipal office. Furthermore they placed letter boxes in the building to enable citizens to write to the mayor. *Bischwiller (France)* followed the same idea by installing suggestion boxes throughout the city to collect ideas for the development of the city. A good example of active citizenship was presented in *Karsiyaka (Turkey)* by their “Environmental Volunteers”-project where they carried out marine cleaning in the Gediz Delta. In *Södermöre (Sweden)* local trade unions were invited to a dialogue with local politicians.

A more modern approach was used by *Chania (Greece)* which developed an app entitled “Citizen of Chania” being an innovative tool for e-government and e-democracy, while *Chernivtsi (Ukraine)* launched the public dialogue platform “Transparency in Chernivtsi” to achieve a wider citizen participation. Residents of the *Polish Bydgoszcz* were able to submit their comments via a web-based questionnaire on the Development Strategy of the town. Finally, *Kyiv (Ukraine)* organised a training visit about “Innovative tools for community involvement in a dialogue with the authorities and the city administration”.

In *Medgidia (Romania)* the local Youth Council met to evaluate the participation of young people in decision-making processes, whereas in *Bydgoszcz (Poland)*, a new Youth City Council was elected.

Katowice (Poland) encouraged its residents to participate in community life during a meeting organised with the city councillors, while the Mayor of *Rize (Turkey)* held a meeting for aldermen to inform about the European charter of Local Self-Government and ELDW.

Several cities also used artistic methods to increase citizen participation. *Créteil (France)* ran an exhibition of photographs and drawings by children on the subject of the ideal city, whereas *Fastiv (Ukraine)* held an

² Based exclusively on the information submitted by the ELDW partners, either on the official website or by e-mail.

exhibition entitled “Local Democracy as a political tool” which comprised literature on different views about the development of local democracy. In *Amadora (Portugal)* the city council has engaged artists to paint murals across the city, stimulating participation, dialogue and reflection about the city. Participants of the event “What is democracy” could discuss about direct and representative democracy and the power of media in *Chemnitz (Germany)*.

Raising citizens’ awareness of how their local authorities operate

Another aspect of the this year’s theme is to educate citizens in how their municipality functions, giving them the chance to understand how decisions are taken and how they can influence this process.

The *Kolomyagi municipal district (Russia)* held a round table relating on the current theme of ELDW where local representatives from different administrative levels presented recent reports on citizen participation and cooperation between local authorities. An international conference dedicated to the topic: “Metropolis under pressure” was organised in *Katowice (Poland)* where the role of local authorities and citizens was discussed. In *Fastiv (Ukraine)* training for public organisations and activists was organised in order to identify ways of communicating between the local community and local authorities. The city of *Bydgoszcz (Poland)* also conducted training for Ukrainian local government representatives in the framework of the “School of Mayors”-programme where they can benefit from the experience from Polish cities on how to manage a city effectively.

As in the previous years, many mayors opened their office or visited public institutions to discuss with citizens the city and other current affairs. Such events were organised in *Edremit, Rize, Yunusemre (Turkey)* and *Ramnicu Valcea (Romania)*, where the Mayor received children in his office and explained them the main responsibilities of the mayor and the different organs within the municipality. In *Kavaja (Albania)*, organised by the Association of Albanian Municipalities, the city opened its premises to interested citizens to inform about the structure of the municipality after the administrative reform. In *Olenogorsk (Russia)* the Head of municipality visited the children’s library to talk about “Local government is the basis of the State”.

The work of City Councils and councillors was also of particular interest. School groups from *Newbury (United Kingdom)* met their councillors to hear a presentation about the roles and functions of the Town Council and how they can get involved. Citizens in *Kirklees (United Kingdom)* could get in touch with their local representatives during the “Kirklees Question Time”, organised in the University of Huddersfield and during the democracy session held in local schools. Students and members of Youth Council in *Tbilisi (Georgia)* had the chance to meet three Georgian mayors, who are members of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.

The medium of media and art were also used to bring citizens closer to their local authorities. A series of short videos, highlighting different aspects of the councillor role, was presented online in *Kirklees (United Kingdom)*. The mayor of *Fastiv (Ukraine)* inaugurated the second school of journalism by holding a conference about “Community participation – Thriving local democracy”. In *Edremit (Turkey)* the mayor inaugurated an exhibition about Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, founder of the Turkish Republic, who laid the foundation of a democratic country.

To teach citizens about their democratic institutions, interactive means were used to explain the role of different institutions within the municipality. During the “Political Game”, active citizens in *Kirklees (United Kingdom)* could participate in a creative and interactive workshop, exploring different methods of voting and group decision-making. Finally, the Turkish municipality of *Edremit* conducted an online survey about citizen satisfaction, to explore to what extent citizens are aware of the duties of the municipality and to gather suggestions from them. The results of the survey were presented by the mayor during a live broadcast streaming. In *Kahramankazan (Turkey)* the mayor answered requests from social media users.

Building inclusive communities

Some of the ELDW events targeted the integration of minorities and the empowerment of those groups of society which are less represented in local decision-making. The overall goal of those endeavours is to include everyone into their local community to ensure a wide acceptance of democratic processes and decisions.

To contribute to the aim of creating more inclusive communities, some municipalities held Forums and International Conferences. The city of *Kharkiv (Ukraine)* conducted their first international local democracy forum entitled “Law and the problems of Sustainable Development in a Globalised World”, mainly focusing on promoting a peaceful and open society which is based upon broad citizen participation. They furthermore held a seminar entitled “Gender Policy in a Big City” to increase gender policy awareness among the youth of Kharkiv. Several state and non-state stakeholders discussed existing achievements in creating an inclusive environment during the round table, held in *Kyiv (Ukraine)*. The citizens of *Lüleburgaz (Turkey)* revived an old tradition, when they gathered under a tree, located on the city square, to discuss current issues and to exchange their thoughts about the city and the economy.

When it comes to integration and inclusion, the topics music, culture, art and sport play a vital role. Therefore a lot of municipalities organised activities in this field. For the first time, school children from 14 secondary schools in *Edremit (Turkey)* had the chance to participate in a streetball tournament. In *Kadikoy (Turkey)* interested citizens played the “Treasure Hunt Game DA(YA)NISMA” focusing on how various age groups perceive the city and to get their opinion on the urban environment they live in. An innovative approach on getting in touch with each other was established in *Medgidia (Romania)*, where a “Living library” was set up, giving people the chance to have fruitful conversations. In *Kahramankazan (Turkey)* they organised the “5. International Symposium on Folk Culture” where a lot of meetings about citizen activities were planned. A large canvas was set up on the Amadora Council Building as part of a communication campaign of the city to make its citizens proud to be from the *Portuguese city of Amadora*.

Also the medium of movies was used to present different aspects of inclusive communities. In *Chania (Greece)* the film “The case of the three-sided dream” about racial injustice and rights of people with disabilities was displayed. *Kirklees (United Kingdom)* decided to show the film “Suffragette” in several venues - a movie playing in the early 20th century, which focuses on the fight of women for equality and the right to vote. The movie “Heaven will wait” about the religious radicalisation of young women, was displayed in *Bischwiller (France)*.

Others attempted to enhance intercultural and intergenerational understanding by promoting groups of society which are less represented in everyday life. *Hagby (Södermöre, Sweden)* was one of the few municipalities which held a discussion on how to organise activities especially suited for senior citizens. Another city which was organising an event for this group was *Edremit (Turkey)*. The municipality presented a concert of traditional Turkish music to the residents of a retirement home in celebration of ELDW. Social homes for around 2.500 Roma citizens were built in the Mimarşinan District in *Büyükçekmece (Turkey)*. The project planning and implementation was actively accompanied by many Roma citizens, raising their voice in the decision-making process. In *Neuchâtel (Switzerland)* the Citizenship Prize was awarded to mark the ELDW. The Association "Noël Autrement" ("Christmas differently") won the prize for their engagement for providing meals and organising events for those in need on Christmas.

The *Lüleburgaz Municipality Women's Drum Rhythm Group (Turkey)* supported the fundraising for scholarships to be awarded for secondary education of young citizens. In *Kirklees (United Kingdom)*, the Council staff nominated colleagues who successfully demonstrated what it means to be an active citizen, making them to Local Democracy Ambassadors who help communities to have a voice and speak up for someone else. The movement “BiblioVoluntarii” from *Medgidia (Romania)* supported the Council of Europe’s campaign against hate speech by promoting tolerance and fighting all forms of discrimination through distributing flyers and leaflets about the topic and having discussions about it with citizens.

The two *Turkish cities Büyükçekmece and Edremit* conducted painting and colouring activities for children with disabilities, where they could paint wooden bird houses and learn about the importance of citizen participation. The Mayor of *Rize (Turkey)* held a meeting in the town hall for NGO-representatives and local citizens with disabilities. The event focused on problems encountered by persons with disabilities and their expectations of local government.

Events promoting a European Identity and cross-cultural dialogue

As in the recent years too, a lot of activities were aiming at bringing European citizens closer together. This was mainly done by events fostering international exchange and activities promoting other European cultures.

The bilingual Polish-Ukrainian School of Cultural Diplomacy, located in *Bydgoszcz (Poland)*, conducted a project fostering Bydgoszcz’s relations with its Ukrainian twin towns through education, mutual communication and

understanding. A similar activity was organised in *Izmit (Turkey)*, where foreign university students and French secondary school pupils from Istanbul exchanged ideas about democracy and how to make the world a better place.

In *Edremit (Turkey)* the mayor met over 30 European citizens living in the city to discuss the role of interculturalism. In addition to that, they hosted the mayor of Lesbos and Chania (both Greece) to share experiences about ELDW and promoting their “Twin Town”-projects. *ALDA (The European Association for Local Democracy)* organised an event in *Brussels (Belgium)*, bringing together decision makers and European and national associations to discuss the role of metropolitan governments in today’s Europe especially focusing on citizen participation at metropolitan level.

The municipality of *Huddinge (Sweden)* held an open lecture with a representative of the European Committee of the Regions to discuss about EU, Sweden, Huddinge and what challenges to face with Brexit. Furthermore, the awarding of “The Flag of Honour” was celebrated by over 1.000 people in the city of *Karsiyaka (Turkey)*. The Flag of Honour is the second prize level in the award system for the Europe Prize, awarded by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE). A more sportive activity was organised by the *Ukrainian municipality of Kharkiv* which arranged an international marathon to commemorate people of different nationalities who were murdered under the communist regime. A practical approach was followed by the city of *Neuchâtel (Switzerland)*, which held a ceremony welcoming all people who have recently settled in the town, giving newcomers an opportunity to meet their municipal authorities.

As part of the “World Culture Festival” the city of *Kyiv (Ukraine)* promoted friendly relations between nations and intensified cultural ties between states. Students and school children, together with representatives from Polish-foreign organisations were invited to watch contemporary Ukrainian films in *Bydgoszcz (Poland)*. In *Edremit (Turkey)*, the band “Tatavla Keyfi” performed a concert, presenting Greek-Turkish music, preceded by a video message of Gudrun Mosler-Törnström, President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities.

Kharkiv (Ukraine) continued its tradition to celebrate different countries in during the ELDW. This year they dedicated their festivity to Denmark, organising a festival of Danish movies, theatre performances and a workshop on Danish cuisine. The children of the lycée Goulden in *Bischwiller (France)* organised a quiz for secondary school pupils of the secondary school in Erlenberg, based on the Council of Europe game “Europe Matters: A Question of Values”.

Educating young citizens about democracy and citizen participation

To ensure broad citizen participation not only today, but also in the future, many municipalities decided to devote their activities to youth. Educating young citizens about democracy and decision-making processes will ensure a thriving democracy on local and regional level in the years to come.

Many forums and conferences, dedicated to the topic of youth were organised. The *Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities of Serbia* organised six events with more than 300 participants about integration of youth in all policies at local level. The youth of *Medgidia (Romania)* had the chance to participate in a World Café, giving them the opportunity to discuss subjects of common interests in a friendly and creative atmosphere. In *Kyiv (Ukraine)*, a Youth Forum was held to inform youth about local decision making processes and how they can get in contact with their local authorities. The municipality of *Büyükçekmece in Turkey* discussed means to increase the participation of youth on local level during a workshop with university students. The project entitled “Window of Opportunities for Youth” was conducted in *Fastiv (Ukraine)*, bringing together leading organisations with youth communities, aiming at enhancing the development of young people in the city. In *Karsiyaka (Turkey)*, the youth group “Municipal of Youth” held a meeting on participation, local democracy and involvement of youth in decision-making processes. In *Ljungbyholm, (Södermöre, Sweden)* pupils of the local middle school had the chance to propose changes they consider necessary to politicians.

Lots of cities used art and movies to give youth an understanding of how they can participate in their local communities. Four short films, being part of the “Maidan Encyclopaedia” were presented in *Bydgoszcz (Poland)*, followed by a discussion with Serhiy Lysenko, director of the documentary. *Huddinge (Sweden)* initiated a competition on Instagram, inviting primary school pupils to share their opinion on the topic “Will democracy survive the hatred that is so common in social media?”. A more hands-on approach was used by the city of *Izmit (Turkey)*, organising a painting activity for children at the Children’s Rights School. The Primary School No. 30 in

Bydgoszcz (Poland) prepared a documentary about the Student Council elections, giving pupils the chance to indicate the criteria and characteristics of their ideal candidate.

Another field of action was getting in touch with local representatives, such as mayors and councillors. In *Pancevo (Serbia)*, *Huddersfield (United Kingdom)*, *Büyükçekmece (Turkey)* and *Huddinge (Sweden)*, young citizens had the possibility to meet their elected representatives on the premises of the municipality. In Town Halls and Council Chambers they could discuss with mayors and councillors their role in a vital democracy on local level. An event, also organised in *Huddinge (Sweden)*, chose another approach. Here politicians from every party visited five upper secondary schools to discuss with young voters about their future and other issues that directly concern them. The mayor of *Yunusemre (Turkey)* met with secondary school students at the Manisa culture centre to discuss about local democracy.

Many cities also used interactive means to enthuse youth with topics like citizen participation. The representatives of *Ramnicu Valcea (Romania)* asked pupils from secondary school classes to answer a questionnaire about measures they would take if they were the mayor of the town. The TEC Specialised School No. 9, located in *Fastiv (Ukraine)* offered their students to participate in a game called "Youth in Action", where they could play the role of a representative of the authorities. Furthermore, in celebration of the anniversary of the town, a variety of events was organised in the city park where teachers taught young people about involving city residents in local decision-making processes. In *Kirklees (United Kingdom)*, Youth Councillors launched a toolkit that will help councillors talk to school children about local democracy. Following a request from the Children's Council in *Büyükçekmece (Turkey)*, a playground was established on the premises of the school.

Participatory Budget initiatives

Participatory budgeting was one of the democratic aspects which were highlighted by several cities during their ELDW. Indeed, participatory budgeting is a great tool to increase local democracy by giving the citizens a concrete opportunity to contribute directly to the development of their city.

Many cities implemented a citizen budget mechanism. In *Kharkiv (Ukraine)*, for example, the City Council adopted a Participatory Budget worth 50 Million UAH (almost 1.5 million euro). Workshops were held all around the city to inform citizens and explain the new mechanism to them. In order to enable active participation in decision-making and budget allocation, the city of *Katowice (Poland)* decided to commit 5 million euro to participatory budgeting: 139 projects have been qualified for realisation in 2018. In *Amadora (Portugal)*, 16 propositions were submitted to vote during the 8th Participatory Budget organised by the city. The citizens were invited to decide which part of the budget should be, for example, assigned to the reclassification and improvement of urban public spaces, the setting up of an informal library in the park or a Christmas shop window contest, and, in the sports area, the extension of a bicycle lane and the refurbishment of a sports complex.

Linking the broader issue of e-democracy to the participatory budgeting is an innovative approach to the subject of local democracy. *Kyiv (Ukraine)* decided to explore this potential by launching a series of workshops entitled "The Public Budget Projects". While emphasising the importance of internet and the tools of the digital area in participatory budget, 62 projects were chosen following a competition and are currently being implemented.

Some cities decided to target youth, which is a good way to give a sense of local democracy to our future citizens. In *Huddersfield (United Kingdom)*, young people from School Councils had the opportunity to allocate a certain amount of the city's budget to support a worthy school project in a neighbouring school or community. These projects, all submitted by other young people, were discussed among the representatives of the School Councils. In *Valongo (Portugal)* the third youth budget was organised this year. Young people living in Valongo could make proposals and afterwards decide which projects they wanted to support in order to develop their city. Also, an international seminar and trainings on participatory budget were organised in order to raise the citizens' knowledge on the subject.

Other cities chose a different approach. In *Mioveni (Romania)* and in *Chernivtsi (Ukraine)*, students from secondary schools were invited to develop projects or, being invited to imagine that they are mayors of fictional towns, to draw budgets for different investments. The most realistic projects were rewarded with a price which is also an interesting way to raise young citizens' awareness for public budgeting.

The full list of events can be found on the official ELDW website, which not only advertises the events organised across Europe, but can also be used as a “knowledge base” to inspire and encourage future ideas and activities.

ELDW website and communication campaign

As in previous years, the European Local Democracy Week website (www.coe.int/demoweek) provided key information on the Week. *Logos, posters and leaflets* (in several languages), *thematic ideas, concept papers and reference texts* geared to the 2017 theme have been available and can be downloaded from the site.

While all information on the website is available in the two official languages of the Council of Europe, English and French, the “Google Translate” option was introduced in 2016, in order to provide easier access for the visitors in their own language.

In addition to the general website of the ELDW, a separate web platform is set up for local and regional authorities and their associations to register their community and take part in the initiative in a more visible manner. Our partners can directly upload (and update) information about their events and activities which – after being translated and checked by the ELDW team – can be seen under their personal profiles and used for publicity and networking purposes. This visibility is further enhanced by an interactive map developed in 2016, which allows a more modern visual overview of the ELDW partners. The increasing use of online and offline media to publicise ELDW can be observed among participating local authorities. Apart from the dissemination of posters and flyers carrying the official ELDW logo, most partners have publicised their Democracy Week through special articles in local newspapers, radio broadcasts, TV interviews, and tweets and posts on social media platforms.

Events from previous editions back to 2010 are also available and can serve to illustrate good practices and generate new creative ideas.

Our partners can learn about recent developments through regular newsletters and Congress news items relating to ELDW posted on the website. The ELDW is also present on social media platforms, such as Twitter and Facebook.

Celebrating the 10th anniversary during the Congress Session

The European Local Democracy Week celebrated its 10th anniversary in October 2017, under the theme *“Citizen participation, consultation and commitment: for a thriving local democracy”*. On 20 October 2017 a debate on the future of ELDW was organised on the occasion of the 33rd Session of the Congress, with presentations by Marc COOLS (Belgium) and statements by José Manuel RIBEIRO, Mayor of Valongo (Portugal) and Mikhailo NETIAZHUK, Mayor of Fastiv (Ukraine). All three speakers pointed out the importance of the initiative both for the local authorities and for the citizens, highlighting the high motivation of the participants.

In its Resolution 423 (2017) on “10 years of the European Local Democracy Week”, adopted at the October Session, the Congress decided to establish a Reflection Group tasked with taking the European Local Democracy Week initiative forward to a new dimension, by building on the best practices of the past decade, which would examine all questions related to the evolution of the Week.

Through the resolution, the Congress has reiterated its commitment to promoting the ELDW initiative and to broadening it to include the Council of Europe neighbouring regions.

Special partnerships of the ELDW initiative

Along with longstanding partners of ELDW, such as the European Association for Local Democracy (ALDA), the Education Department and the Europe Prize initiative of the Council of Europe, which have actively supported and promoted the European Local Democracy Week, other fruitful partnerships have been established in the hope that this will bring mutual benefits in the future.

The Intercultural Cities Programme

Driving its previous editions, by its 2015-16 theme “Living together in culturally diverse societies: respect, dialogue, interaction”, ELDW established co-operation with the Intercultural Cities Programme (ICC) of the Council of Europe. The ICC supports cities in reviewing their policies through an intercultural lens and developing comprehensive intercultural strategies to help them manage diversity positively. Over 100 cities across Europe are currently enjoying Council of Europe support in developing, implementing and evaluating local diversity and inclusion strategies using the set of analytical and practical tools proposed by the programme. Thanks to this co-operation, the cities of Malaga (ES), Melitopol (UA), Neuchatel (CH) and Patras (GR) joined the ELDW initiative, in addition to long-standing partners of Amadora (PT) and Strasbourg (FR).

Arab Local Democracy Week in Kairouan

The Tunisian city of Kairouan is a committed partner of ELDW and has contributed to it since 2013 by organising an “Arab Week of Local Democracy” (SADL) during which citizens can take part in debates, conferences and seminars on local democracy issues and have the opportunity to meet local decision-makers and express their opinion.

The programme of SADL features seminars on ways and consultative forms for elaborating projects of common interest, the use of public spaces, a seminar on the role of civil society in the management of urban mobility, on women’s participation in social economic and political life, as well as debates on “Decentralisation and local democracy”, forums of young “Euromaghrébins” and workshops for children on the topics of human rights and local democracy.

ELDW leaflets and posters are translated into Arabic and distributed in local communities.

Appendix 1: List of all partners of the 2017 edition of the ELDW

Total: 74 partners including 44 partner cities, 5 associations, 25 “12-Star” partners

Albania	Association of Albanian Municipalities
	Kavaja
Austria	Leoben
Belgium	Association of the City and the Municipalities of the Brussels-Capital Region 
	Brussels
France	ALDA - European Association for Local Democracy
	Bischwiller 
	Créteil
	Creuzier-le-Vieux
	Haguenau
	Hérouville Saint-Clair
	Strasbourg 
Georgia	National Association of Local Authorities of Georgia
Germany	Chemnitz
Greece	Chania 
	Farkadona
	Samos
Italy	Legislative Assembly of the Region Emilia-Romagna
Netherlands	Loon op Zand
Poland	Bydgoszcz 
	Katowice 
Portugal	Amadora 
	Valongo 
Romania	Medgidia 
	Mioveni 
	Ramnicu Valcea

	Sebeş
Russia	Bryansk
	Finlyandskiy Municipal district
	Kolomyagi municipal district
	Ligovka-Yamskaya municipal district
	Olenegorsk
	Shebekino
	Stary Oskol
Serbia	Novi Pazar
	Pancevo
	Prokuplje
	Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities of Serbia
	Vracar
Spain	San Cristóbal de Segovia
	Segovia
Sweden	Huddinge 
	Södermøre
Switzerland	Neuchâtel
Turkey	Ahmetbey 
	Artvin
	Besiktas/Istanbul 
	Beylikduzu Municipality
	Büyükçekmece 
	Edremit 
	Izmit 
	Kadikoy 
	Kahramankazan 
	Karsiyaka 
	Lüleburgaz 
	Rize 
	Şişli
Suleymanpasa	

	Union of Central Anatolian Municipalities Statutes
	Yunusemre
Ukraine	Chernivtsi 
	Fastiv 
	Kharkiv 
	Kyiv 
	Pokrovska
	Chuguev
	Vasylkiv
United Kingdom	Brent
	Derry City and Strabane
	Kirklees
	Malvern Hills
	Newbury
	Rochdale
	Selby

Appendix 2: ELDW Representation of Countries 2012-2017

2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
20 countries	23 countries	29 countries	24 countries	29 countries	29 countries
Albania	Albania	Armenia	Armenia	Albania	Albania
Austria	Armenia	Belgium	Belgium	Azerbaijan	Armenia
Belgium*	Azerbaijan	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bulgaria	Belgium	Belgium
France*	Belgium	Cyprus	Croatia	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Georgia	Finland	Czech Republic	Finland	Bulgaria	Bulgaria
Germany*	France	Denmark	France	Finland	Croatia
Greece*	Germany	France	Georgia	France	Finland
Italy*	Greece	Georgia	Germany	Georgia	France
Netherlands	Italy	Germany	Greece	Germany	Germany
Poland*	Luxembourg	Greece	Hungary	Greece	Greece
Portugal*	Moldova	Hungary	Italy	Iceland	Hungary
Romania*	Norway	Italy	Moldova	Ireland	Ireland
Russia*	Poland	Luxembourg	Netherlands	Italy	Italy
Serbia	Portugal	Moldova	Poland	Moldova	Lithuania
Spain*	Romania	Netherlands	Portugal	Morocco	Morocco
Sweden	Russia	Poland	Romania	Netherlands	Netherlands
Switzerland	Spain	Portugal	Russia	Poland	Poland
Turkey*	Sweden	Romania	Serbia	Portugal	Portugal
Ukraine	Switzerland	Russia	Slovakia	Romania	Romania
United Kingdom*	Tunisia	Serbia	Spain	Russia	Russia
	Turkey	Slovakia	Sweden	Serbia	Serbia
	Ukraine	Spain	Tunisia	Spain	Slovakia
	United Kingdom	Sweden	Turkey	Sweden	Spain
		Switzerland	United Kingdom	Switzerland	Sweden
		"The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"		"The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"	Switzerland
		Tunisia		Tunisia	Tunisia
		Turkey		Turkey	Turkey
		Ukraine		Ukraine	Ukraine
		United Kingdom		United Kingdom	United Kingdom

* Countries which were represented in all editions of the ELDW

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union. The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities is an institution of the Council of Europe, responsible for strengthening local and regional democracy in its 47 member states. Composed of two chambers – the Chamber of Local Authorities and the Chamber of Regions – and three committees, it brings together 648 elected officials representing more than 200 000 local and regional authorities.

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