

# European Local Democracy Week

## WHAT YOU HAVE TO KNOW ABOUT ELDW

---



## 1- ITS BACKGROUND AND AIMS

### ➤ Its background

“European Local Democracy Week” (ELDW) is an annual European event where local authorities from all the 47 member states of the Council of Europe 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 a local level.

The week around 15 October has been chosen for holding this event as a tribute to the European Charter of Local Self-Government, opened for signature on that date in 1985. However should this coincide with other events such as local elections, local authorities may choose to organise the ELDW on more convenient dates in October where possible.

### ➤ Its aims

ELDW aims to enable local populations to meet their elected representatives at national and/or local events. Its purpose is to raise European citizens’ awareness of how local authorities operate, and inform them of the opportunities available for taking part in decision-making at the local level.

During ELDW, local authorities are encouraged to reflect on their responsibilities as key actors in democratic societies. The vitality of local democracy improves the quality of life in our communities and enhances the effectiveness of local governance.

Furthermore, the Week creates the opportunity to promote local democracy as one of the common components for constructing a democratic Europe, and informs the public and elected representatives about the Council of Europe and the Congress’s role in this area.

Each year the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities links the Week to a specific theme of interest to local authorities.

### ➤ Its European dimension

Proximity, a vibrant local democratic life and good governance at local level are aspirations largely shared by most Europeans. The Council of Europe is committed to promoting a style of local self-government that meets the needs of citizens wherever they may be. The Council of Europe also initiated the European Charter of Local Self-Government and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities is the body in charge of monitoring its implementation in each country.

The organization of local events across Europe under the auspices of the Council of Europe and under the common name of "European Week of Local Democracy", allows citizens to promote the concept of local democracy as a primary element of a democratic society.

### ➤ Its coordination at European level

The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, as a political assembly composed of elected officials from local and regional authorities of the 47 member states of the Council of Europe, is responsible for the coordination of ELDW across Europe. John Warmisham, member of the Congress and Salford (UK) City Council, is the political Coordinator of the Week. A Secretariat team in the Division of Communication and Election Observation is in charge of its co-ordination and development in a large number of European countries and communities.

## 2- TAKING PART IN THE ELDW

### ➤ Who can take part in the ELDW?

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

Local Authorities may organise different events with their citizens and target groups (youth in particular) during the October week when ELDW is officially held each year. They can also organise ELDW events on other dates if – for important reasons - they cannot schedule activities during that period.

Regions and Intermediate local authorities, such as County Councils and provinces, can contribute to ELDW in various ways, mainly:

- Registering their participation as a Partner of ELDW, organising their own initiatives involving citizens and other local partners, focusing on activities related to their functions (cultural, education, social and health services, ombudsmen offices, etc.).
- Co-operating with other participating local authorities by supporting their initiatives with their institutional logo and by financial or 'in-kind' support (printing ELDW leaflets and posters, devoting public rooms to holding the events, etc.).
- Disseminating information to local authorities in the region/county to raise awareness of ELDW and the role of the Council of Europe and the Congress in promoting local democracy.

### ➤ How to take part?

In order to take part in ELDW as Partner of the Week, simply follow these simple recommendations:

**Step 1:** Read the general information on ELDW, reference texts and the thematic ideas focused on the leading theme of the year.

**Step 2:** Plan initiatives to be held with citizens and residents during the Week (preferably on the official dates, or at a different time, if necessary) focusing on putting into practice the leading theme, as well as on other initiatives for active participation in local life.

**Step 3:** Fill-in the registration form to take part in ELDW. If you feel that your city complies with the 5 specific criteria, you may apply as a "12 Star City". Otherwise you register as a Partner of ELDW.

**Step 4:** Download and print out communication materials (leaflets and posters) from the ELDW website, and publicise the ELDW logo on your official website.

**Step 5:** Organise the planned events and initiatives with citizens and target groups (NGOs, students, different groups in society).

After the ELDW, local authorities may be asked to send the Congress secretariat materials, pictures, comments on their experience, responses to questionnaires, etc. In return, the list of all participating local authorities and their planned events will be continually updated on this website.

## 2- TAKING PART IN THE ELDW

### ➤ Which status to choose?

The status of «Partner» is intended for all the local/regional authorities and their associations wishing to take part in the ELDW without complying with the engagements and criteria required for the status of « 12 Star City »; nevertheless, they are more than encouraged to organise events as a Partner of the ELDW,.

The title of « 12 Star city » is intended for towns, cities and municipalities who wish to give special prominence to their participation in ELDW in order to raise citizens' awareness of local democracy and to encourage them to make use of all the opportunities provided to them to do so through participatory democracy processes. They are asked to undertake specific engagements in the implementation of the European Local Democracy Week, such as the 5 following criteria:

1. Devote a specific budget to ELDW activities. This budget may be co-financed by other bodies (local public service providers, other local government authorities, sponsors...)
2. Run an ELDW promotion campaign (posters, promotion of activities at school...) using the ELDW visual identity (logo, leaflets and posters).
3. Carry out a number of specific activities linked to the leading theme of the year.
4. Involve different groups of citizens in the initiatives which form part of the ELDW. Special attention should be paid to the involvement of young people through Municipal Youth Councils, and of pupils and students, in conjunction with schools and colleges. The aim is to bring tomorrow's adult citizens closer to local institutions and to help them play a part in local democratic life.
5. Organise an event with a European or pan-European dimension to illustrate the role of local authorities in the construction of a democratic Europe. A Congress representative may be invited to this main event.

### ➤ Inviting a speaker from the Congress to ELDW events

Local/regional authorities would like to invite a representative from the Congress to attend one of the main events organised in the framework of the ELDW? 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 Current Affairs Committee);
- the heads of the National Delegations of the 47 Congress member states;
- a member of the Congress Secretariat may 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. To find out more about inviting a Congress representative, please send an e-mail to: [democracy.week@coe.int](mailto:democracy.week@coe.int).

### **3- 2012 EDITION: « HUMAN RIGHTS MAKE FOR MORE INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES»**

The leading theme of the 2012 edition of European Local Democracy Week is: “**Human rights make for more inclusive communities**”. In 2012 the ELDW officially takes place between 15 and 21 October. However, should this coincide with other events such as local elections, local authorities may choose to organise the ELDW on more convenient dates in October where possible.

Human rights are an integral part of democracy, and local democracy incorporates full respect for human rights. Many human rights and freedoms are implemented at local level, as is also the case with social and civil rights. Very often, however, local authorities and ordinary citizens are not aware that this is the case. For these reasons, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities has established this leading theme for the ELDW 2012, so as to engage local authorities to play their role in ensuring that this concept becomes the foundation of a modern and cohesive community.

### **4- REFERENCE TEXTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS**

On the ELDW website a number of documents are presented with the aim of raising awareness about the fundamental principles referred to in the leading theme of the ELDW 2012, as well as the position papers of the Council of Europe, and of the Congress in particular, about the values they represent. They include:

- European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, 3 September 1953
- European Social Charter, 26 February 1965
- Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, 25 October 2007
- Convention on Preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, 11 May 2011

### **5- THEMATIC IDEAS 2012**

With the purpose of making it easier for local authorities to organise the ELDW and carry out activities focused on the theme of the current edition, a useful document is available in different languages. « Thematic ideas » presents different activities as a guide for developing initiatives to take place during the ELDW. For more information: [www.coe.int/demoweek-ideas](http://www.coe.int/demoweek-ideas).

The direction suggested for activities of the ELDW in 2012 focus on:

- promoting a culture of respect for human rights;
- encouraging all citizens to take part in public life, in particular youth and the under-represented groups;
- strengthening intergenerational co-operation, solidarity and respect for elderly people;
- promoting social rights and access to public services;
- defending the most vulnerable groups.

## 6- COMMUNICATION TOOLS

The ELDW has its own visual identity developed through communication tools by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities and available to all the participants (through the ELDW website - Download section). Local/regional authorities and their associations will be able to widely promote their initiatives organised in the framework of the Week but also to raise citizens' awareness of this European event. Communication tools such as the leaflet, poster and logo, available in several languages, can be downloaded from the web platform of ELDW.

### ➤ The leaflet

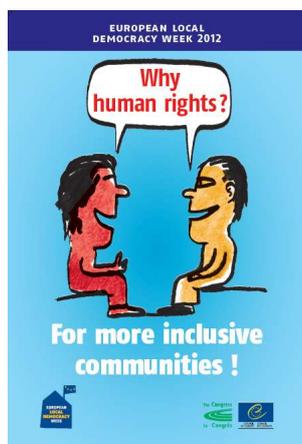


The leaflet of the European Local Democracy Week 2012 may be downloaded on :

[http://www.coe.int/t/congress/demowee/edition-2012/download/brochures\\_FR.asp?mytabsmenu=3](http://www.coe.int/t/congress/demowee/edition-2012/download/brochures_FR.asp?mytabsmenu=3).

It presents the main information on the ELDW 2012. It is copyright free and it may be published as communication material.

### ➤ The poster



The posters of the European Local Democracy Week 2012 are available on-line and they can be downloaded on:

[http://www.coe.int/t/congress/demowee/edition-2012/download/posters\\_en.asp?mytabsmenu=3](http://www.coe.int/t/congress/demowee/edition-2012/download/posters_en.asp?mytabsmenu=3)

Adaptations in different languages may be available on the web site.

To obtain the poster in other languages not available on the web, a request can be addressed to: [demowee@coe.int](mailto:demowee@coe.int).

### ➤ The logo



The logo of the European Local Democracy Week, available in 24 languages, can be downloaded on the page

[http://www.coe.int/t/congress/demowee/download/logo\\_en.asp?mytabsmenu=3](http://www.coe.int/t/congress/demowee/download/logo_en.asp?mytabsmenu=3)

It is copyright free and it can be published on all the communication materials.

## 7- REGISTRATION FORMS

### ➤ To apply as “Partner”

Registration form to fill in is available on the website:

[http://www.coe.int/t/congress/demoweek/form\\_fr.aspx](http://www.coe.int/t/congress/demoweek/form_fr.aspx)[http://www.coe.int/t/congress/demoweek/form\\_fr.aspx](http://www.coe.int/t/congress/demoweek/form_fr.aspx)

### Information about the Community or local authority registering as “Partner”

MUNICIPALITY, LOCAL AUTHORITY, OTHER APPLICANT BODY	
Please enter the name of your community	<input type="text"/>
Country	... <input type="text"/>
Population of your community (number of inhabitants)	<input type="text"/>
Website	<input type="text"/>
Are you organising the Week in partnership with other local/regional authorities? Please, fill in	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
CONTACT PERSON	
Ms <input type="checkbox"/> Mr <input type="checkbox"/>	
Surname	<input type="text"/>
First name	<input type="text"/>
Function	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>
Municipality	<input type="text"/>
Postal Code	<input type="text"/>
Phone	<input type="text"/>
E-mail	<input type="text"/>
Service in charge of the event(s)	<input type="text"/>

## Activities of the Week

<b>ACTIVITIES PLANNED WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE 2012 THEME</b>	
<b>Human Rights make for more inclusive communities</b> Thematic ideas can be found on <a href="http://www.coe.int/demoweeek-ideas">www.coe.int/demoweeek-ideas</a>	
<b>Human rights</b> - Activity 1	
Description	
Place of the event	
Date	
The activity is addressed to	<input type="checkbox"/> All citizens <input type="checkbox"/> Specific groups (students, youth, women, elderly) <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/>
<b>OTHER ACTIVITIES</b>	
<b>Other</b> - Activity 1	
Description	
Place of the event	
Date	
The activity is addressed to	<input type="checkbox"/> All citizens <input type="checkbox"/> Specific groups (students, youth, women, elderly) <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/>
<input type="button" value="Validate"/>	

➤ **To apply as a « 12 Star City »**

Registration form to fill in is available on the website: [http://www.coe.int/t/congress/demoweek/FormStars\\_fr.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/congress/demoweek/FormStars_fr.asp)

**Information about the Community or local authority registering as “12 Stars City”**

MUNICIPALITY OR CITY	
Please enter the name of your community	<input type="text"/>
Country	... <input type="text"/>
Population	<input type="text"/>
Website	<input type="text"/>
CONTACT PERSON	
Ms <input type="checkbox"/> Mr <input type="checkbox"/>	
Surname	<input type="text"/>
First name	<input type="text"/>
Function	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>
Municipality	<input type="text"/>
Postal Code	<input type="text"/>
Phone	<input type="text"/>
E-mail	<input type="text"/>
Service in charge of the event(s)	<input type="text"/>

The applicant municipality will accomplish the 5 requested criteria: allocation of a budget, running a promotional ELDW campaign, organizing several activities, organising a European/Pan-European event, promoting youth involvement.

THE APPLICANT MUNICIPALITY WILL ACCOMPLISH THE 5 REQUESTED CRITERIA	
<b>Will allocate a budget</b>	
<b>Will run a promotional campaign</b>	
<b>Will organize the following activities</b>	
Activities focused on "Human rights make for more inclusive communities" (2012 ELDW leading theme) - Thematic ideas can be found on <a href="http://www.coe.int/t/congress/demoweeek/content/ELDW2011/themeHR_en.ASP">www.coe.int/demoweeek/ideashhttp://www.coe.int/t/congress/demoweeek/content/ELDW2011/themeHR_en.ASP</a>	
<b>Human rights - Activity 1</b>	
Description	
Place of the event	
Date	
The activity is addressed to	<input type="checkbox"/> All citizens Specific groups (students, youth, women, elderly)
<b>Other activities</b>	
<b>Other - Activity 1</b>	
Description	
Place of the event	
Date	
The activity is addressed to	<input type="checkbox"/> All citizens Specific groups (students, youth, women, elderly)
<b>Organize a European/Pan-European event</b>	
Please mention the provisional title of the event, expected participants, main speakers, main issues, European invited bodies/cities, Pan-European dimension/twin cities involved, Congress' speaker participation, etc.	
Description	
Place of the event	
Date	
<input type="button" value="Validate"/>	

## 8- CONTACTS

### ➤ **The project manager**

Under the responsibility of the Congress Secretariat, Communication and Election Observation Division, the project manager of the ELDW is in charge of the co-ordination and the dissemination of the information concerning European Local Democracy Week. The project manager takes care of the development of the events in the widest number of communities of the 47 Council of Europe countries.

### ➤ **The national co-ordinators**

The National Associations of Local and Regional Authorities, as well as the ELDW partner organisations appoint one of their officers as national coordinator/correspondent of the ELDW. They can provide information and support to local authorities in the language of the country, allowing cities and towns to easily participate in the Week.

The national coordinators may provide local authorities with:

- 2012 ELDW leaflet contents in their language;
- thematic ideas contents in the language of the country or a summary of that document;
- simple information on how to register the participation of their municipality on-line on the ELDW website in English or French;
- the possibility of registering municipalities' participation on their behalf, with a summary of the planned events and meetings.

The overall contacts are available on :

[http://www.coe.int/t/congress/demoweek/contacts/coordinators\\_en.asp?mytabsmenu=4](http://www.coe.int/t/congress/demoweek/contacts/coordinators_en.asp?mytabsmenu=4)

### ➤ **The ELDW partner organisations**

The European Local Democracy Week is supported by several institutions and international networks. They promote the ELDW, mainly through their web site and encourage their members to take part in the ELDW. Following the yearly leading theme of the ELDW, different organisations may decide to join the partner organisations. They include, amongst others:

- Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)
- Association of Local Democracy Agencies (ALDA)
- Central and Eastern European Citizens Network (CEE CN)
- Assembly of European Regions (ARE)
- United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)
- Solidarity Water Europe (SWE)

More information on the partner organisations are available on the ELDW web site (Contact section) on :

[http://www.coe.int/t/congress/demoweek/contacts/partners\\_fr.asp?mytabsmenu=4](http://www.coe.int/t/congress/demoweek/contacts/partners_fr.asp?mytabsmenu=4).



The Congress  
  
Le Congrès



*In your community the European Local Democracy Week 2012 will contribute to:*

- *Promoting engagement in public life, especially for youth and less-represented groups;*
- *Strengthening intergenerational co-operation and solidarity;*
- *Defending the most vulnerable groups*
- *Fostering social rights and access to public quality services*

*Thus, promoting more inclusive communities.*