



DIRECT DEMOCRATIC EURO-VISION NEWSLETTER

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WORLDWIDE DIRECT DEMOCRACY NEWSLETTER **DIRECTRACY**

What is Democracy?

According to the current myth, democracy is a system where at least two political parties compete for power and that one which obtains most votes in elections, forms government. This concept is deeply wrong. Any political party, as institution, is incompatible with the basic principle of democracy. Democracy means rule by the people for the benefit of society as a whole. A political party, by contrast, works for the interest of a certain category of citizens, even to the detriment of other categories, (and in practice for the benefit of a few well-paid party bosses). The myth pretends that no better form of democracy is possible. There might have been some truth in this for some 200 years, until the fall of communism in Europe in the late twentieth century. The profound changes which have taken place since then, however, make the myth increasingly obsolete, deceitful and, by its consequences, downright criminal, because it gives national and international oligarchies the power and opportunities to support – behind the scenes – all sorts of nondemocratic groups perpetrating horrible crimes including wars.

What principles must a truly democratic system be based on?

MPs must be elected as individuals in single mandate election districts, without any relations with political parties.

The political system must be based on a Constitution adopted in referendum by most referendum participants; no thresholds, those who do not vote exclude themselves from the decision-making process, leaving the decision to those who vote.

Strict separation of the three powers – legislative, executive and judiciary, while the legislative power is superior to the two others. The executive power only implements the decisions made by the non-partisan legislative power. In current parliamentary systems, both these powers are amalgamated in the hands of the party bosses who obtain most votes in the latest elections – a mockery of democracy.

These are the most important principles. There might be a few more. The draft of the Constitution should be written by ordinary citizens, not by representatives of the mock-democratic regimes, as until now.

DEVELOPMENTS



1789: from aristocracy to partyocracy



2017 (?): from partyocracy to democracy

Dissatisfaction with the politicians in power is growing in all countries. People begin to understand that remedies cannot be found in the election of another party than that currently in power. The whole system has to be changed. Therefore, the inclusion of elements of DD, or even DDD, in current, party-based systems, promoted by various organizations in western

countries, although commendable, is not sufficient. The party bosses mostly tolerate it because it does not threaten the very foundation of their power. Nevertheless, they will oppose any attempts at a radical change promoted by us – and many others. And yet, such a change is, perhaps, the only way to save our civilization, heading for disaster

INTERNATIONAL Czech Republic

Citizens' Constitution of Czech Republic
(preliminary, in the making)

Excerpts

Chapter III – Political System of Czech Republic

Article 4

- 1) The only sovereign of Czech Republic is its people. To the greatest possible extent, the Czech Republic's political system has to fulfil the ideals of democracy as power of the people.
- 2) All elected administrative offices are obliged to make accessible for citizen control all documents concerning their activities, their dealings and their decisions

Article 5

- 1) The Citizens' Constitution of Czech Republic preserves a parliamentary system based on a Parliament consisting of representatives – MPs – elected for 4 years' periods by direct election, in single mandate electoral districts.
- 2) In the regions, elections of regional councils are organized according to the same rules.

Chapter IV – Legislative Power

Article 6 – The Parliament

- 1) Candidacy is open to any qualified citizen who pays the administrative tax equal to statistically average monthly income of a physical person in the previous year. It is not permitted to be elected for any post two times consecutively. Every mandate has to be followed by a pause. More detailed instructions concerning election procedures will be set by the election law.
- 2) During the mandate period, the MPs are recallable, if so demanded by more than one half of voters registered in the respective election district. If permitted by law, it is even possible to hold premature extraordinary elections.
- 3) Members of Parliament enjoy immunity for utterances and activities within the framework of the legislative, supervisory and interpellatory activities in the Chamber, but not for offences, misdeeds, and crimes prohibited by law.
- 4) MPs, representatives and all directly elected high civil servants are subject to recall at any time, if so decided by their voters in referendum

(10) The political system guarantees private property and liberal market economy, but consistently based on generally accepted rules of honest entrepreneurship. Dishonestly acquired property is forfeited to the State according to legitimate ruling of a court.

Third International Congress on Deliberative Direct Democracy

(preliminary:)

Date: 12.-14, May 2017
Place: Hotel Pramen, Prag, Czech Republic
(<http://www.hotel.pramen.cz>)
Chair: Prof. Ph.D. Theodore L. Becker, USA

The hotel will put at our disposal a Conference Hall for up to 150 persons.
Participation fee: 300 US dollars. That includes lunch on Saturday and Sunday
Students are invited to participate free of charge.

Accommodation (if so desired): Single rooms for 700 crowns including Swedish breakfast
Double rooms for 1200 crowns - " -
The guests have to personally make reservations by March 15 2017 at the latest.
(address can be found at the hotel's web-site, see above)

Contact person: jiri.polak@swipnet.se

WELCOME !

Great Britain

On 9 mars, INIREF wrote:

Call for second chamber at Holyrood. Direct democracy VETO would be better!

INIREF landRgB REPLIES IN THE GLASSGOW HERALD
Citizens' Veto Referendum as alternative to 2nd chamber of parliament

"The purpose of a second chamber of parliament is presumably to check the quality of parliament's law making and so to improve representation of the people. An alternative or additional way to do these things is to enable the electorate to take part in the scrutiny and supervision. How? Introduce the option of holding a citizen-instigated veto referendum on government policy and parliamentary law.

The election of members of parliament is based on a wide range of policy ideas and promises, some matters have never been mentioned prior to elections, new events and challenges often crop up. The behaviour of political parties and actors once in power may vary widely from the will of the electorate.

How does this optional veto referendum work? A large number of voters, within a rather short defined time limit, must endorse a proposal to hold a ballot on a law which has just been passed by Parliament. The number required is debatable, it could be, say, one in a hundred voters. Endorsement could be collected by smart phone and internet. If the veto proposal succeeds then a ballot on the law in question must be held within reasonable time period, say six months."

On 27 March, INIREF wrote, "SNP, make DEMOCRACY REFORM a feature of your 2016 election campaign! Then, if you win, We The People could decide if and when to hold a second referendum about Scotland's independence."

Here is what we need from you: Promise to strengthen the role of voters between elections to allow co-deciding on some laws and policies. In other words, go as far as possible to enable the introduction of some direct democracy.

For instance, this would mean:

- The electorate can instigate a referendum (by collecting many voter-endorsements for a proposal) on any aspect of public policy or constitution. This is much more efficient and precise than having to vote for a whole range of policies in a party manifesto.
- The electorate can veto an unwanted government law or policy by collecting an agreed, large number of endorsements for a proposal to do this. A referendum must be held to decide the matter."

On 19 April INIREF wrote: "**Election manifesto of the Scottish Green Party presents proposals for effective direct democracy**"

In a few weeks on 5th May 2016 the people of Scotland will vote to elect their own Scottish "Holyrood" parliament. In their 2016 election manifesto the Green Party of Scotland promises major reforms of the democratic system. These reforms would strengthen the political rights of the people, citizens, voters.

INIREF comments on

A better Scotland needs a bolder Holyrood. #GreenHolyrood. MANIFESTO 2016

Copy of Header Chapter 10 Scotland can be a bolder democracy"

On 28 April INIREF wrote (abstract) **LET'S MAKE DEMOCRACY FOR PEOPLE BEYOND ELECTIONS**

Do you struggle finding the motivation to take part in choosing and electing our political representatives – MPs, councillors, mayors? Many people see councils, parliaments and governments as remote and unresponsive to their wishes, needs and ideals. Just casting a vote once every few years, then having nothing to say until the next election, is a weak and inefficient way for we voters, citizens, to take part in our own public affairs. What's to be done? We must push and lobby our politicians to accept the introduction of citizen-led democracy for local and central government."

Belgium

On 21 May Mr. *Mattia Sozio* wrote: "Dear General Secretary of E2D, Strongly interested in participating in your activity in Belgium to improve direct democracy, I would like to know how can I collaborate with you to support your action. Do you have Belgian partners which I can work with? Are you looking for any kind of collaborators?"

Answer:

"The E2D collective has not been active for some time, you might have better luck communicating through the Facebook page:

https://www.facebook.com/groups/electronicdirectdemocracy.E2D/?ref=br_rs"

Answer from Mr. *Paul Nollen*: "For international cooperation about Direct Democracy I propose to contact Democracy International. <https://www.democracy-international.org/>"

South Africa

On 14 May, Mr. *Jim Powell* sent round the following document (excerpt):

"DIRECT DEMOCRACY is a government system that ensures accountability to you, the voter!"

Only vote for a politician that is accountable to the voters
The Local Government elections are coming 3rd August 2016

Our current constitution and political system in South Africa is considered one of the best in the world but worse than other constitutions in some of its content and application.

- The system lacks in accountability of politicians to the voters.
- The primary allegiance of proportion representation politicians is to their political party and not to the voters!
- Many of the ward councillors see their political party as their first allegiance, not the voter, the employers of the politicians.

Our system is effectively a 5-year dictatorship

We, the voters, are

- The legitimate shareholders of South Africa, province and local government.
- The employers of our politicians.

As such, voters should have control over politicians and accountability of the politicians to the voters."

Mr. Powell presents a draft of a document in which an MP or other elected representative pledges allegiance to the voters. Mr. Powell invites citizens of any country to present this text for politicians soliciting their votes. He also encourages them to propose their own formulations.

Great idea! Mr. Powell can be contacted at jimpowell@mweb.co.za

USA

On 21 March, Mrs. *Sandy Heierbacher* wrote: "Hi everybody! You may have noticed the growing buzz around Participatory budgeting in the U.S. Over the past few years. Participatory budgeting (PB) is a different way to manage public money, and to engage people in government. It is a democratic process in which community members directly decide how to spend part of a public budget.

Though each PB program is different, most follow a similar basic process: residents brainstorm spending ideas, volunteer budget delegates develop proposals based on these ideas, residents vote on proposals, and the government implements the top projects. For example, if community members identify recreation spaces as a priority, their delegates might develop a proposal for basketball court renovations. The residents would then vote on this and other proposals, and if they approve the basketball court, the city pays to renovate it.

PB's recent success and proliferation in the U.S. (the process was launched in Brazil years ago) is largely due to the efforts of our friends at the Participatory Budgeting Project, a New York-based nonprofit organization. We asked David Beasley from PBP and Allison Rizzoli from Public Agenda (a leading organization in our field that is evaluating PB's growth) to join us on this month's NCDD "Confab Call" so our members and anyone else who is interested can learn more about PB and get their questions answered about the process."

Germany

mdmagazin www.mehr-demokratie.de Nr. 108-2/2016

Editorial by **Ralf-Uwe Beck**

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Demokratie und Kapitalismus



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