



**European
Capital of
Democracy**

In a Nutshell

We invite you to join us in creating a Europe-wide initiative for strengthening democracy: the European Capital of Democracy.

Similar to a “European Capital of Culture”, a European Capital of Democracy will be selected for every year, starting in 2021. In cooperation with civil society and citizens, the designated city will curate, organise, and implement a wide range of activities and events designed to improve and strengthen democracy. Visitors from all over Europe – politicians, experts, members of civil society, artists, citizens, and the media – will be invited to observe and to participate in these efforts.

Furthermore, the city will host events such as international conferences, exhibitions on societal change, fairs on the latest participation technologies, or music and film festivals. This gives organisations, foundations, and institutions plenty of opportunity to come together, discuss and exchange best practices, and implement their initiatives.

What we aim to accomplish: European Capitals of Democracy will become beacons of civilisation. The competitive selection process will have an impact on applicant cities all over Europe. We aim to establish a highly visible space where the citizens of Europe come together, get involved, experience new forms of real democracy in action, and get inspired by a comprehensive programme designed to bring democracy forward and rebuild trust. Best democratic practice will shine in the media spotlight.

How cities will be selected: Each city’s application must include a self-evaluation of their democratic track record and an outline for a year-long programme aimed at strengthening and broadening democratic practice. Based on transparent criteria, our group of experts will create a shortlist from all applicants. Finally, a jury of 10,000 citizens representative of the European population will select the winner.

What cities will get: A city carrying this title will enjoy a wide range of benefits, such as an enhanced international reputation as a centre of education and innovation, the chance to host international events and meetings of leading European politicians, and of course heightened city pride.

The first two cities: In 2021 and 2022, while we will be building up the envisaged selection process, two cities take the torch for bringing this initiative to life and will serve as showcases of what to expect in the future.

Who we are: Based in Vienna and Berlin, with partners in 14 countries, The Innovation in Politics Institute constitutes a Europe-wide organisation dedicated to improving democracy across borders and beyond party lines. We also present The Innovation in Politics Awards. From 2017 to 2019, more than 1,600 courageous and creative political projects were submitted by politicians and presented to a jury of 3,000 citizens.