

# The design of the Referendum process determines the quality of Referenda

To discuss a useful design,  
you need to know why Direct Democracy  
may help us to overcome the crises of democracy

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# We should overcome the banalisation of the term “Democracy”

- ✓ Democracy enables us to be free.
- ✓ Freedom enables us to act together on our common life (« Life is not a destiny »)
- ✓ Democracy constitutes the rules, rights and procedures to prevent conflicts to be solved violently
- ✓ Democracy is the only source for legitimate power

**Representative democracy is an essential part of Democracy.**

**But it should not have the monopole of D.**

**Indirect Democracy enables you to vote your representatives;**

**Direct Democracy enables you to vote on important issues you don't want to leave to your Representatives**

# Direct Democracy is about people voting on issues

- **The Right to Vote on important issues contributes to the democratization of democracy and improves the political culture of a country**
- **More substance, more alternatives, more differentiation, more deepness, more individual knowledge and more social learning**
- **The Referendum (Peoples vote) is just the last stadium of a long process: Decisive is the question: Who may start the process, where,how?**

# The 3 cornerstones of modern Direct Democracy

- ✓ Secret vote by ballot-box, mail or internet : No assemblies
- ✓ Some citizens decide when all citizens may decide: No plesbiscites
- ✓ Issues (const./legisl. Reforms): No personal decisions

# **DD is a set of participatorial citizens rights - much more than just a referendum**

- ✓ **Const.Referendum**
- ✓ **Optional legislat. Referendum**
  - ✓ **Const.pop.Initiative**
  - ✓ **Threaty Referendum**
- ✓ **General/legislat. Initiative**
- ✓ **Konstruk.Referendum**
- ✓ **Financial Referendum**
- ✓ **Citizen Motion (To the Parliam.)**

## Which are the basic (“principal”) products of Direct Democracy’s best practices?

- √ Individual / collective communication&deliberations
  - √ Power has to be shared
  - √ Collective learning potentials
- √ political openness et legitimate polity
- √ Identification with the DD process  
(« Democratic patriotism »)

# Implication of this intended DD-products for the DD-Design

- ❑ Shared power - low sign' requirement
- ❑ activating citiz - low sgn' requirement
- ❑ Communication - free sign gathering
  - ❑ Deliberation - no antidelib. quorums
  - ❑ Coop., no antag - you need time/ no bypassing of the parliam./interaction



# Each level requires a specific DD-Design

## ❖ Communal and regional:

Most complete DD-Design

## ❖ National level:

General Initiative /Interface ID-DD/Fairness requirem.

## ❖ European level:

Qualification/ Agenda / Europ.Vote imposing