

# RESILIENT EUROPE THROUGH DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY: CITIES AND REGIONS IN ACTION!

*European conference on deliberative democracy*

**Palais de l'Europe, Room 1, Strasbourg (France)**

**26 November 2025**

## PROGRAMME

**09:00 – 09:30**

### **Opening session**

- **Konstantinos Koukas**, Vice-President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe and rapporteur on the New Democratic Pact for Europe
- **Daniela Cujbă**, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Moldova to the Council of Europe
- **Véronique Bertholle**, Deputy Mayor of Strasbourg, France
- **Mathieu Mori**, Secretary General of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe



This initiative is a contribution towards the  
**New Democratic Pact for Europe**

**09:30 – 11:00**

**Democracy under pressure: can deliberative democracy help overcome today's crises?**

*Citizens' deliberations have gained prominence in European cities and regions, committed to addressing the multiple challenges faced by our societies. When democracy is threatened by polarisation, war, disinformation, mistrust in politics, climate crisis, inequalities, and urban-rural divide, is deliberative democracy building trust in politics and public decision, thereby reinforcing representative democracy?*

Keynote speech: **Yves Dejaeghere**, Executive Director of the Federation for Innovation in Democracy – Europe, Belgium

Panel discussion:

- **Angel Martinez de Rituerto Arregui**, Mayor of Tolosa, Spain
- **Oksana Hvozdenko**, Secretary of the City Council, Zviahel, Ukraine
- **Đani Rahimić**, President of the City Council of Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Open discussion with participants

**11:00 – 11:20 Coffee break**



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**11:20 – 12:50**

**The future of deliberative democracy: new directions and challenges**

*From its theoretical foundation in the 1980s to widespread practice in the 2020s, deliberative democracy has evolved from an academic concept into a practical and stimulating approach for inclusive public engagement and enhanced policymaking. Looking forward, what are the developments in public deliberation, the potential benefits, including for local governance and communities, and the challenges ahead?*

Keynote speech: **Jane Suiter**, Professor of Political Communication, Dublin City University, Ireland

Panel discussion:

- **Mirela Džehverović**, Deputy Mayor of Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- **Beatričė Umbrasaitė**, Advisor to the Chief Architect of the city of Vilnius, Lithuania
- **Dr. Carsten Berg**, Director of the ECI Campaign, European Citizens' Initiative e.V., Germany

Open discussion with participants

**13:00 – 13:30 Reception at the Lobby of the Committee of Ministers**

*The reception is hosted by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe and the Permanent Representation of Germany on the occasion of the closure of the project "Promoting deliberative democracy and innovative approaches to citizen participation in South-East Europe".*

**13:30 – 14:45 Lunch break**



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**14:45 – 16:00**

**Supporting democratic innovation at local level: the role of international organisations**

*The Council of Europe, as guardian of democracy, rule of law, and human rights; the European Commission, primary executive branch of the European Union; the OECD, as a global policy forum: together, these organisations embody multilevel governance. As international actors, they share the responsibility for democratic innovations. How can they further support deliberative democracy and ensure that the citizens' deliberation make a difference?*

Keynote speech: **Jonathan Moskovic**, European University Institute, Belgium

Panel discussion:

- **Matjaz Gruden**, Director for Democracy, Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity, Council of Europe
- **Daniel Fleischer-Ambrus**, Team Leader – Democracy, Anti-Corruption, Union Citizenship and Free Movement, Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers, European Commission
- **Alexis Durand**, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

Open discussion with participants



**16:00 – 17:00**

**What's next for deliberative democracy in Europe? A collective conversation**

*As democracy faces new challenges, with the New Democratic Pact the Council of Europe seeks to define new solutions and responses. By exchanging views and ideas, this session will offer a space for the participants to reflect on the Council of Europe's evolving role in supporting member states and citizens and on how to reinforce citizens' deliberation at local level.*

Moderated by **Emanuela Pisanó**, international consultant of the Council of Europe

**17:00 – 17:15 Closing session**

Closing remarks by:

- **Damir Kapidžić**, Rapporteur of the conference "Resilient Europe through deliberative democracy: cities and regions in action!"
- **Claudia Luciani**, Director of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The event will be moderated by:

- **Sally Bailey-Ravet**, Head of Department Interpreting, Travel, Events and Multimedia of the Council of Europe
- **Emanuela Pisanó**, Council of Europe international consultant, Belgium
- **Marietta Balázs**, Council of Europe international consultant, Hungary

Rapporteur: **Damir Kapidzic**, Council of Europe international consultant on innovative democracy and deliberative processes

Graphic recorder: **Coline Robin**

*The working languages will include English, French, Albanian, BCMS and Ukrainian (simultaneous interpretation will be provided).*

*The event will be mainstreamed, and the link will be available on the conference [webpage](#).*

