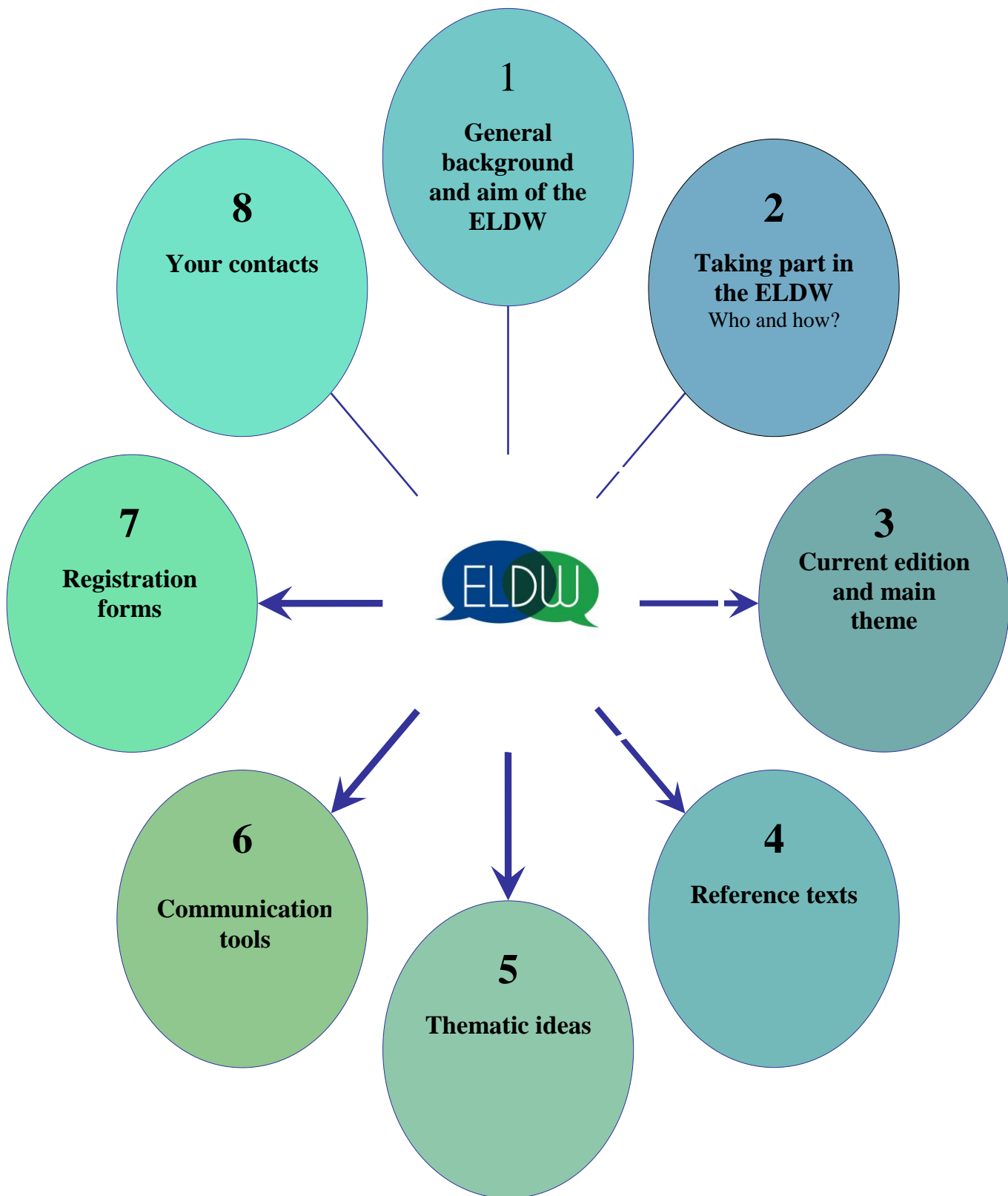


# European Local Democracy Week

## WHAT YOU HAVE TO KNOW ABOUT ELDW

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## 1- GENERAL BACKGROUND AND AIM OF THE ELDW

### ➤ Its background

The European Local Democracy Week (ELDW) is an annual pan-European event where local and regional authorities from all the 47 member states of the Council of Europe and beyond 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 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 at enabling citizens to meet their elected representatives at 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 and regional 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. One of its most important tools in this respect is the European Charter of Local Self-Government, the implementation of which is regularly monitored by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities in each country.

The organisation of local events across Europe under the auspices of the Council of Europe and in the framework of the 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 Council of Europe member states, is responsible for the coordination of ELDW across Europe. A member of the Congress is nominated as **political coordinator for the ELDW**, while a project team in the Cooperation, Administration and External Relations Department is in charge of its coordination and development in a large number of European countries and communities.

## 2- TAKING PART IN THE ELDW

### ➤ Who can take part in the ELDW?

The 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 the ELDW's activities, and its main actors. Young people can also play an essential role in widely spreading the Week's message, therefore, Youth and Children's Councils are strongly encouraged to participate in the Week.

**Local Authorities** may organise events and activities with their citizens, involving different target groups, during their Local Democracy Week in October.

**Regions and intermediate local authorities**, such as County Councils and provinces, can contribute to the 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.).
- cooperating 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 the ELDW and the role of the Council of Europe and its Congress in promoting local democracy.

### ➤ How to take part?

In order to take part in the ELDW, partners may follow the following **3 simple steps**:

1. fill in the online registration form on [www.coe.int/demoweeek-registration](http://www.coe.int/demoweeek-registration) and create your own ELDW account;
2. plan and organise events related to the main theme of the year and issues of current interest in your community, using the visual identity of the ELDW;
3. make your activities visible through the ELDW website by uploading them to your account.

On the project website, you can find all ELDW materials you need, including:

- general information, thematic ideas, reference texts, events from the previous editions, as well as a toolkit;
- logos, posters and leaflets, downloadable in several languages;
- a list of national coordinators, partner associations and contacts to the ELDW Team of the Congress.

➤ **Which status to choose?**

**Partners** are local and regional authorities, which implement activities in the framework of the ELDW.

The **Associations** of local and regional authorities, as well as NGOs and other European and international organisations are invited to take part in the ELDW to encourage initiatives to be implemented in their communities.

The “**12 Star**” label is upheld for participants, which, at the time of their inscription, commit themselves to fulfil the following five criteria:

4. allocate a specific budget for ELDW activities;
5. launch a promotion campaign using the graphic visuals provided by the Congress;
6. organise a number of activities linked to the current leading theme of the year;
7. involve different groups of citizens in the initiatives, in particular young people;
8. plan an event with a European dimension, to highlight the role of local authorities in building a democratic Europe.

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

Your community would like to invite a representative from the Congress to attend one of the main events organised in the frame 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 or association. For more information and practical help, please contact: [democracy.week@coe.int](mailto:democracy.week@coe.int).

### 3- THE MAIN THEME OF THE YEAR

In the beginning of each year, the Congress organises a general coordination meeting of the ELDW, with inviting the “12 stars” of the last edition, as well as national coordinators. The aim of this meeting is to evaluate the past Local Democracy Week, start the preparation for the next edition, and launch the discussion on the leading theme of the year. The final decision on the main theme is taken by the Bureau of the Congress (a body responsible for the general policy of the Congress), taking into consideration the mission and aims of the ELDW.

During the Week, participants may organise events on issues of particular interest to them; however, the Congress recommends that at least one of the activities focuses on the main topic of the current ELDW edition. The general slogan related to the leading theme of the year has a central position in the promotion campaign of the ELDW, and appears on the posters and leaflets, which may be used by the partners in their communication campaigns and events organised.

### 4- REFERENCE TEXTS AND THEMATIC IDEAS

On the ELDW website a number of **reference documents** are presented with the aim of raising awareness about the fundamental principles referred to in the main theme of the current ELDW edition, 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 Charter of Local Self-Government (explanatory report) and additional protocol on the right to participate in the affairs of a local authority;
- Convention on the participation of foreigners in public life at local level;
- Charter on education for democratic citizenship;
- Code of good practice for civil participation in the decision-making process;
- Recommendation 307 on Citizen participation at local and regional level in Europe;

With the purpose of making it easier for ELDW participants to organise their Democracy Week and carry out activities focused on the theme of the current edition, a useful document is available on the project website. “**Thematic ideas**” presents different activities as a guide for developing initiatives to take place during the ELDW.

*For the whole list of reference documents and the thematic ideas in downloadable format, please visit [www.coe.int/demoweeek](http://www.coe.int/demoweeek).*

## **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 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. The main communication tools are the leaflet, poster and logo, adapted to the current theme of the year, which are copyright free and can be used as communication materials. These are available in several languages and can be downloaded from the web platform of the ELDW.

## 7- REGISTRATION FORMS



### ➤ To apply as “Partner”

*Registration form to fill in is available here: Thematic ideas*

#### 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	... 
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

ACTIVITIES PLANNED WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE CURRENT THEME OF THE YEAR	
Current leading theme - Activity 1	<input type="text"/>
Description	
Place of the event	<input type="text"/>
Date	<input type="text"/>
The activity is addressed to	<input type="checkbox"/> All citizens <input type="checkbox"/> Specific groups (students, youth, women, elderly) <input type="text"/>
OTHER ACTIVITIES	
Other - Activity 1	<input type="text"/>
Description	
Place of the event	<input type="text"/>
Date	<input type="text"/>
The activity is addressed to	<input type="checkbox"/> All citizens <input type="checkbox"/> Specific groups (students, youth, women, elderly) <input type="text"/>
<input type="button" value="Validate"/>	





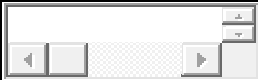

➤ **To apply as a « 12 Star »**

*Registration form to fill in is available on the website:*

**Information about the participant registering as “12 Star”**

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 WILL ACCOMPLISH THE 5 REQUESTED CRITERIA	
Will allocate a budget	
Will run a promotional campaign	
Will organize the following activities	
Activities focused on the main theme	
Activity 1	<input type="text"/>
Description	
Place of the event	<input type="text"/>
Date	<input type="text"/>
The activity is addressed to	<input type="checkbox"/> All citizens <input type="checkbox"/> Specific groups (students, youth, women, elderly) <input type="text"/>
Other activities	
Other - Activity 1	<input type="text"/>
Description	
Place of the event	<input type="text"/>
Date	<input type="text"/>
The activity is addressed to	<input type="checkbox"/> All citizens <input type="checkbox"/> Specific groups (students, youth, women, elderly)
Organize a European/Pan-European event	
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	<input type="text"/>
Date	<input type="text"/>
<input type="button" value="Validate"/>	

## 8- CONTACTS

### ➤ The project manager

Under the responsibility of the Cooperation, Administration and External Relations Department of the Congress Secretariat, the project manager of the ELDW is in charge of the coordination and the dissemination of the information concerning the 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.

To contact him/her, please use the address [democracy.week@coe.int](mailto:democracy.week@coe.int).

### ➤ The national coordinators

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 overall contacts are available here: [Contacts](#).

### ➤ 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 is available on the ELDW web site (Contact section) here:  
[Partners](#)