

1. INTRODUCTION

In November 2001 the International Observatory on Participatory Democracy (OIDP) was founded, within the framework of the Decentralised Cooperation Projects of the European Commission and, since that time, this local governments network has, through the municipalities, research centres and civil society entities that make up the OIDP, gradually increased its membership, creating new spaces of encounter and taking an in depth look at the presentation and exchange of knowledge within the sphere of participatory democracy.

The OIDP Technical Secretariat has been held by Barcelona City Council since the very beginning and, since 2006, the OIDP has worked in close collaboration with the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) organisation, on the basis of an agreement for the operation and maintenance of the Technical Secretariat of the OIDP network.

Since November 2011 the Technical Secretariat has been working on the positioning of the OIDP as a centre for global reference, in terms of the production of innovative knowledge, and also on consolidating it as a space for the exchange of participatory democracy experiences at a worldwide level.

The report that we present in continuation brings together the activities and projects carried out by the OIDP during the second half of 2012 and the first six months of 2013, following the calendar of the network's annual conferences.

2. EVOLUTION OF NETWORK MEMBERS

The number of new network members has continued to grow.

Work has been done, following the mandate, to increase and at the same time diversify the composition of OIDP network members. Along these lines non-Mediterranean Europe and Africa have been the priority areas for this activity and, as a novelty new members have been registered in Germany, Holland, Poland, Switzerland, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique and Nigeria. Furthermore, work has also been initiated in the Middle East and Asia, with the registration of new members from Tunisia, Palestine, Turkey and South Korea.

Below we provide a list of all of the new members that have joined the OIDP during the second half of 2012 and the first six months of 2013 (55 in all):

1. Service Agency Communities in One World/Engagement (Germany)
2. Foundation Makassarplain Community (Holland)
3. Association Transparence et Développement (ATED) (Mauritania)
4. Association jeunesse de segangan pour la création et le développement durable (Morocco)
5. Enda Ecopop-Bambey (Senegal)
6. Conselho Municipal de Matola (Mozambique)
7. Commune Arrondissement Rufisque Est (Senegal)
8. Cellule d'appui à la Gestion des Collectivités Territoriales, OUAGADOUGOU (Burkina Faso)
9. Metropolis Initiative Integrated Urban Governance - Successful Policy Transfer (Berlin)
10. Institut National Décentralisation et Développement de Madagascar
11. Communauté Rural Keur Baka (Senegal)
12. Conselho Municipal Maputo (Mozambique)

13. Foundation for Social and Economic Initiatives, Warsaw (Poland)
14. Ong Consommateurs Action Directe (Ivory Coast)
15. Xarxa Doustourna (Tunisia)
16. Municipality of Beit Sahour (Palestine)
17. Municipality of Nevsehir (Turkey)
18. Metropolitan Municipality of Gaziantep (Turkey)
19. Municipality of Beyoglu (Turkey)
20. AfroLeadership, (Cameroon)
21. Tunisian Observatory of Citizens Participation (Tunis)
22. Italian Association of Public Participation (Italy)
23. Rural Commune of Anjoman'ankona (Madagascar)
24. WikiRendum (Switzerland)
25. Confédération Française pour l'Habitation, l'Urbanisme et l'Aménagement des Territoires (France)
26. Action pour le Développement des Communautés (Cameroon)
27. Ethics MagazineD (Nigeria)
28. Suwon City (South Korea)
29. Universidad de Rosario, (Argentina).
30. Instituto Seva -Cidade Democratica, (Brazil).
31. Wedecide.cat (Catalonia)
32. Observatori Sociodemogràfic de les Terres de l'Ebre (Catalonia).
33. Delegación Cuauhtémoc (Mexico)
34. Câmara Municipal de Odemira (Portugal)
35. Commission Démocratie, Cohésion Sociale et Enjeux Mondiaux, Conseil de l'Europe – Strasbourg (France)
36. Gobierno de Aragón, Dirección General de Participación Ciudadana (Spain)
37. Amvi Associação - Associação de Moradores Residencial Vila Isabel, Gaspar (Brazil).
38. EUSKUHARTU PARTICIPACION, ONG (Spain)
39. Municipality of Vicente López (Argentina)
40. Generalitat de Catalunya (Catalonia)
41. Sant Cugat Town Council (Catalonia)
42. Les Franqueses del Vallès Town Council (Catalonia)
43. Sallent Town Council (Catalonia)
44. Rede Brasileira de Orçamento Participativo (Brazil)
45. Associació Catalana de Municipis (Catalonia)
46. Vic Town Council (Catalonia)
47. Câmara Municipal de Lisboa (Portugal))
48. L'Alt Camp County Council (Catalonia)
49. Mayoralty of Medellín (Colombia)
50. Instituto Abaeté (Brazil)
51. Confederação das Mulheres do Brasil (Brazil)
52. Municipality of Maipú (Argentina)
53. Municipal Prefecture of Canindé (Brazil).
54. Instituto de la Democracia (Ecuador).
55. Institute for Territorial Development (Argentina)

It must also be stressed that special emphasis has been placed on a diversification of the composition of members, by means of the structural decentralisation of the network, this point

will be dealt with in greater detail in section 5 of the present Report, and also through the enrolment of new members, as a result of contacts established by the Technical Secretariat at the events to which we have been invited (see section 10 of the present Report below).

3. 13th OIDP CONFERENCE

From 2nd to 5th July the 13th OIDP Conference "Citizenship for Sustainability" will be held in the Portuguese town of Cascais. Within the framework of the acts organised for the presentation of this event to the citizens of Cascais, at the beginning of February the Technical Secretariat visited the town in order to collaborate with the work of presenting and publicising the Conference, and also to start working on the Presidency's proposal for the contents.

Since then the Technical Secretariat has actively collaborated on the organisation of the event and has, at all times, provided support for the Municipal Chamber of Cascais. In particular, the Technical Secretariat coordinated the session that is going to deal with Local Participatory Democracy Observatories, and has also played a part in the organisation of a session dedicated to the exchange of experiences with regard to open government.

The Technical Secretariat has also contributed to the publicising of the Conference and the inscriptions. Finally, we have also taken on the role of a facilitator, in the sense of setting up contacts between OIDP members and the Conference organisation with regard to the specific demands of the former in relation to the event.

Furthermore, from Barcelona an online interactive publication concerning the Seventh OIDP Distinction "Best Practices in Citizens Participation" has been designed, edited and financed, while work has also been done on the physical production of the trophy that will be handed over to the winning town or city.

At the same time, as usual, the Technical Secretariat has taken on the preparation of the Internal Members' Session, which required the preparation and translation of all of the necessary documents, with regard to logistics and to the publicising of the call to attend the meeting.

4. 7th OIDP DISTINCTION "BEST PRACTICES IN CITIZENS' PARTICIPATION"

In 2013, once again, the Technical Secretariat put out a call to all local government network members to take part in the Seventh OIDP Distinction "Best Practices in Citizen's Participation". On this occasion 16 local governments presented projects (one more than at the previous edition) from Portugal, Catalonia, Argentina, Palestine, Turkey and Afghanistan. We would like to stress here the presence, for the first time, of a candidate from the Middle East.

The deadline for the presentation of candidates having finalised in the middle of March, since then the Technical Secretariat has been preparing the documentation and adapting the virtual space so that the International Jury, formed the previous February following an internal call among the collaborating network members, would be able to study the documents and evaluate the candidacies in May. During the voting each member of the Jury had to choose at most three experiences, awarding them respectively 3, 2 and 1 points, as indicated in the competition voting conditions.

On 31st May, the Jury concluded their evaluations and issued their verdict and, as a result, the decision was made to award the Seventh OIDP Distinction "Best Practices in Citizen's

Participation” to the Lisbon City Council for the experience “Priority intervention zones”, with a special mention for the La Plata Municipality, for “Participatory Budgeting as strategy for inclusion and innovation”.

During this period, in parallel with the Jury’s evaluations, work also began on the preparation of an interactive publication.

On this occasion the Jury of the Seventh OIDP Distinction consisted of 13 members:

- ✓ BARCELONA CITY COUNCIL.
- ✓ MUNICIPAL CHAMBER OF CASCAIS.
- ✓ ENDA.
- ✓ PREFECTURE OF PORTO ALEGRE.
- ✓ IN-LOCO ASSOCIATION.
- ✓ SOCIAL STUDIES CENTRE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF COIMBRA.
- ✓ SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC OBSERVATORY OF LES TERRES DE LLEIDA.
- ✓ DEMA PROJECTS.
- ✓ ASOCIACIÓN EDUCATIVA HISPANOAMERICANA.
- ✓ PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY STUDIES GROUP, THE PARTICIPATORY CITY.
- ✓ VILLE DE NIORO DU RIP, SENEGAL.
- ✓ SOLIDARITY FOUNDATION.

The identity of the winning experience will be made public on 3rd July, within the framework of the Opening Session of the 13th OIDP Conference.

5. REGIONAL ANTENNAS

The OIDP Technical Secretariat has been held by the Barcelona City Council since it was founded. However, as a result of a collaboration with the Mayor’s Office of Porto Alegre, since November 2011 the network has disposed of a regional office in Porto Alegre, which covers Latin America, and since work has gone ahead with the decentralisation of the network structure, subject to a mandate from the members, which established that in order to obtain the best and most extensive knowledge possible it was necessary to place emphasis on maintaining a presence in the territory.

And it is for this reason that recently, at the initiative of ENDA-Ecopop, the African Observatory of Participatory Democracy was also started up, a platform based in the city of Dakar, which has been set up as the regional office of the OIDP in Africa.

On the occasion of the Afrocities 6 Summit (organised by UCLG Africa), and held in the Senegalese city of Dakar from 4th to 8th December, a session was organised for exchange and the launch of the OIDP among Africa’s local authorities. In this session, in which 154 delegates from 16 different African countries took part, the OIDP was presented to those in attendance while, at the same time, the OIDP African platform was also launched. This platform can be summarised in 4 basic points:

- Territorial groups: This section presents the panorama for decentralisation in the different African countries, documenting the experiences of participatory democracy in the municipalities and the systems of control for municipal budgets.
- Resources: Repertoire of resources: guidelines, books, manuals and other tools.

- Forum: Allowing for thematic discussions to take place.
- Collaboration: A section destined to distance training, videoconferences etc.

It is anticipated that within the framework of this meeting, although in a way unconnected with the present Report, the two regional offices, ENDA and the Prefecture of Porto Alegre, will be presenting their first annual activity report to the members.

The online platform is available at www.democratieafricaine.org.

6. WORK GROUPS

Within the framework of the Internal Members Session, held on 11th June in Porto Alegre, and at the initiative of the Technical Secretariat, an agreement was reached to reactivate a space for reflection with regard to the Local Observatories of Participatory Democracy, through the establishment of a specific Work Group. However it did not stop there, it was then established that this line of work would be taken up as one of the OI DP's most important policies and that a space would be recovered for the OLDP's at all of the network conferences (a line of work that had previously been implemented during the development of the URB-AL Project). And so, in response to this request, within that framework, a specific Work Group was set up consisting of 10 network organisation that had, at that time, expressed their agreement and interest in pursuing it.

Once the minutes of the meeting had been approved, and after the summer holidays, the Technical Secretariat started to map the current situation, a commitment also acquired by the Technical Secretariat during the Internal Session, both with regard to the old OLDP network (the URB-AL Project that concluded in 2007) and also those other existing observatories, which are of interest to the OI DP but do not belong to the OLDP network. In this way, in the meantime, contact was recovered with the OLDP of the city of La Paz, which had been lost for many years due to changes in the title of the person in charge, which was then taken up as an integral part of the new Work Group.

Once the mapping had been completed, the Technical Secretariat then drew up a document for the purpose of locating all of the group participants. In this document 3 scenarios were considered: the past (the URB-AL Project), the present (the mapping) and the future (the roadmap for the new Work Group to be set up). In the middle of October this document/starting point was then sent to the participants in the group.

However, from that point on, and up until the end of November, only a few contributions were received:

- The observatory as a tool is not present in Africa and will have to be introduced to this territory.
- The goal of observation of the Observatories, to observe the processes of participatory democracy that take place in a city, is a very wide ranging and ambitious goal and has to be delimited to precisely what is to be observed (Participatory councils? Participatory budgets?), in order for more consistent reports to be produced.
- Starting from the experience of the OLDP project it is necessary to find out why some of the observatories have managed to carry on for a long time while others have not, and to analyse the trajectories and the reasons why they have or have not been continued.

- It would also be interesting to establish four or five different criteria for the evaluation and systemisation of the successful experiences, and also to do the same with those that were not successful.

The Technical Secretariat has also worked on the drafting of a framework document aimed at the setting up of a new Work Group, to be concerned with the role of the associations in citizens' participation. This document will be presented later on within the framework of the Internal Session.

7. STARTING UP A *CROWDFUNDING* SYSTEM FOR THE OIDP

Once more, within the framework of the Internal Members Session, held in Porto Alegre on 11th June, it was proposed that, taking into account that the network is one of exchange, collaboration, commitment, etc. that it might make sense (particularly given the times that we live in) to implement a *crowdfunding*, or microfinancing system for the decentralisation, not only in terms of the structure but also of network innovation.

Since then, the OIDP Technical Secretariat has made contact with the legal services of the Barcelona City Council to find out what possible future scenarios would be necessary for this to be carried out.

Given that the OIDP, as such, is not endowed with its own legal personality (insofar as it depends on the City Council while not legally forming a part of the Council's structure), there are two possibilities:

1. The members of the OIDP, in assembly, agree to set themselves up as a legal entity (association, foundation, consortium, etc.) and in this way establish a legal personality. This would require the drafting and approval of statutes, forming a board, nominating people to the different executive positions, etc.
2. The City Council cannot cede its own legal personality, although it could decide to act as the applicant for a donation (of the European program type) and then distribute it to the rest of the partners, but this would require a decision to be reached by the governing commission or in plenary session.

In the meantime, the OIDP Technical Secretariat has also contacted the people in charge at GOTEQ and have held a meeting, at which GOTEQ indicated their desire to accept the OIDP in the bosom of their platform, once these legal obstacles have been overcome.

8. FOSTERING THE EXCHANGE OF KNOWLEDGE.

The Technical Secretariat has provided contents for the web page by downloading contents, such as news, case studies, novelties, etc. and has encouraged all network members to do the same.

In response, some members, such as the Solidarity Foundation, or the Government of Aragon, have contributed to fuelling the production of knowledge by making use of the OIDP web. Whatever the case may be contributions of this kind have only been residual and minority and, as a result, the Technical Secretariat will continue to work in order to try and ensure that network members use the web to present everything that they are doing in terms of citizens' participation.

As well as producing a publication on the 7th Distinction of Best Practices in Citizens Participation, the Technical Secretariat has also set in motion a collaboration with both United Cities and Local Governments (ULCG) and the Social Studies Centre of the University of Coimbra for the drafting of a study, requested by the GIZ (German Cooperation Agency) concerning community/participatory monitoring structures, as well as actively collaborating on the doctoral thesis presented by Fabrizio Carucci (a student at the University of Venice) on the inclusion of disabled people in local citizens' participation processes.

Internally, for the purpose of improving communications between network members and offering more updated information at all times, every month, since January 2013, the Technical Secretariat has issued a generalised monographic article, or electronic bulletin.

9. LAUNCH OF THE CALL FOR THE ELECTION OF THE SEAT OF THE NETWORK PRESIDENCY IN 2014.

In accordance with the established regulations for the election of the new seat of the Presidency, the Technical Secretariat opened the call, two months prior to the holding of the Annual Conference, specifically on 2nd May 2013, and will close it three weeks before the conference is to be held (on 10th June).

Two cities have expressed an interest in hosting the Conference in 2014, and the Technical Secretariat has accompanied them and advised them with regard to their respective candidacies.

10. PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITIES EXTERNAL TO THE OIDP AND NETWORK VISIBILITY

During the second half of 2012 and the first six months of 2013 work has continued in a very special way on increasing the visibility of the network and, for this reason, apart from organising the OIDP's own activities, the Technical Secretariat has also taken part in a number of other conferences and international seminars.

In October 2012 the Technical Secretariat was invited to attend the 2nd Iberian Meeting on Participatory Budgets, held in Odemira (Portugal), while two months later the OIDP was also invited, by the Zaragoza City Council, to attend the 3rd Forum for Citizens' Participation in the Local Sphere.

The Technical Secretariat also presented and represented the OIDP at the Second International Conference on Participatory Budgeting in the US and Canada, which was held in Chicago from 3rd to 5th May, specifically taking part in a Workshop with the title "Promoting Transnational Connections: International Networks & the Global Spread of the Participatory Budget".

In June, the Technical Secretariat took part in the Informed Cities Forum & InContext Conference (in Berlin on 6th and 7th June), a conference that aimed to explore how it is possible to create space for change and progress towards better cities by working together to build stronger communities and more resilient societies. Specifically the OIDP took part in a session in which the challenges and benefits of joint creation and shared decision making were examined. Also in June, the OIDP was invited to take part in the Annual World Cities Summit (Dublin 26th to 28th June), where the main subject of discussion and debate was the question of co-creation and participation.

The Technical Secretariat has also continued to work on positioning the OIDP as a reference in the field of participatory democracy via social networks, with both our Twitter and Facebook profiles continuing to grow. There has also been an increase in the number of visits to our web, according to Google Analytics, which indicates around 1,000 visits per month (with around 70% of monthly visits being new visits).

The OIDP will also shortly be attending the 4th UCLG Congress, a Summit for local and regional leaders that is to be held in Rabat from 1st to 4th October. Within this framework, and having received an affirmative response from the UCLG in relation to the proposal for the organisation of a workshop on participation as a new form of governance in the access to basic services, the OIDP will be jointly co-organising a workshop with the Local Autonomy Commission of the UCLG.

To the extent that it is economically viable the Technical Secretariat will also be attending such other activities, arranged by other networks, as are considered to be of priority interest for the effective development of our Goals for 2013.

11. COLLABORATION AGREEMENT WITH UNITED CITIES AND CITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS (UCLG) FOR HOLDING THE OIDP TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT.

The previous agreement between the UCLG and Barcelona City Council having expired, the decision has been made to provide continuity to this collaboration agreement for the period of one more calendar year (2013).

12. 2013 EXECUTED BUDGET (MAY 2013)

ITEM	COST IN EUROS
7 th Distinction (design and production of the online publication, plus trophies)	907,50 + 484
Annual cost of Web Hosting	653,40
Translations	6,605,15
UCLG Agreement (Technical Secretariat, personnel expenses, travel and allowances)	58,550.00
TOTAL	€ 67,200.05