

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING – DOCUMENT FOR APPROVAL**

List of participants:

- ❖ Ananias Couana. Assistant Director of Finances, Maputo Municipal Council of.
- ❖ Luciano Fedozzi. Professor at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul.
- ❖ Adriana Furtado. Coordinator of ObservaPoa, Mayor's Office of Porto Alegre.
- ❖ Deise Martins. Secretary for International Relations and Innovation, Mayor's Office of Canoas.
- ❖ Celio Piovesan. Secretary of Governance and Institutional Relations, Mayor's Office of Canoas.
- ❖ Pier Giorgio Senesi Filho. Assistant Municipal Secretary for Shared Management, Mayor's Office of Belo Horizonte.
- ❖ Neslons Dias. President of In-LoCo.
- ❖ Paula Cabral. Director of the Department of Strategic Development, Cascais Municipal Council.
- ❖ Nuno Piteira. Participatory Budgeting Councillor. Cascais Municipal Council.
- ❖ Carlos Carreiras. President of the Cascais Municipal Council.
- ❖ Carles Agustí. Commissioner for Citizens Participation, Barcelona City Council.
- ❖ Cristina Correia. Participation Cabinet, Palmela Municipal Council.
- ❖ Nuno Silva Fraga. Professor at the University of Madeira.
- ❖ Luis Miguel Calha. Councillor for Administration and Finances, Palmela Municipal Council.
- ❖ Giovanni Allegretti. Senior Researcher at the Social Studies Centre of the University of Coimbra.
- ❖ Lluç V. Pelaez. Mayor of Figaró-Montmany.
- ❖ Bachir Kanouté. Executive Coordinator of ENDA-ECOPOP.
- ❖ Cristina Bloj. Professor and Researcher at the National University of Rosario.
- ❖ Mandy Wagner. Project Manager of Participatory Budgeting for Engagement Global/Service Agency Communities in One World
- ❖ Fabrizio Carucci. Studying for a Doctorate at the IUAV University of Venice
- ❖ Laia Vilademunt. Coordinator of the IOPD Technical Secretariat.

On Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> July last the annual assembly of the members of the IOPD Network, henceforth the Internal Session, was held at the Estoril-Cascais Congress Centre, as part of the 13<sup>th</sup> IOPD Conference "Citizenship for Sustainability".

The session began, half an hour later than scheduled, at 16:30 hours when the floor was taken by the Mayor of Cascais, Carlos Carreiras, who, in representation of the host town and the Network Presidency, welcomed the network members and thanked them for attending. He then presented Nelson Dias, Chairman of the In-LoCo Association, handing the floor over to him and, as a representative of this entity, collaborator with the Municipal Council of Cascais in the organisation of the present event, Nelson Dias introduced those in attendance to the programme for the 13<sup>th</sup> IOPD Conference.

In continuation Carles Agustí, Commissioner for Citizens Participation of the Barcelona City Council, took the floor and, after welcoming the participants on behalf of the IOPD Technical Secretariat, introduced a brief round of presentations.

As soon as the welcomes and presentations had concluded, the meeting moved on to the first point indicated in the Order of the Day: the presentation for approval of the Technical Secretariat Management Report for the period June 2012 – June 2013.

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### 1. THE MANAGEMENT REPORT ([see document](#))

- In a short review, on the plus side, Carles Agustí indicated the visibility the IOPD has started to acquire at an international level, nevertheless he also highlighted two aspects that need to be improved in the future, on the one hand network financing and, on the other, the functioning of the Work Groups from a methodological perspective. Providing a response to this question he then proposed the use of videoconferencing as a tool for both the Work Groups and the meetings between the Secretariat and the Regional Offices and/or the Presidency. Following this suggestion he then opened the floor to debate.
- Adriana Furtado came back with a response to the question of financing, stating that some kind of solution would have to be found, perhaps involving the universities. With regard to the Work Groups she informed those present that Porto Alegre was particularly interested in both promoting them and participating in them, although she admitted that this was not easy given that each group member already had to deal with a heavy workload in their regular jobs, and that the Work Group represented an extra load that, interesting as it may be, could not always be assumed. For this reason, she urged the Secretariat to seek financing so that it would be possible to contract people who could take on this workload and liven the process up a little.
- Carles Agustí responded by pointing out that the Barcelona City Council had provided all possible means and reached agreements with two of Barcelona's universities, which have assigned students to provide assistance to the Technical Secretariat.
- Bachir Kanouté, along the lines introduced by Adriana, indicated that the Technical Secretariat's lack of resources was a weakness for the IOPD, and stated that, in his opinion, the network could not operate in an effective manner with just one person and that, in order to further the projects and initiatives promoted by the IOPD it was necessary to have recourse to adequate human resources. Furthermore, he also mentioned the problem of the lack of a legal personality as a difficulty in terms of obtaining external financing for projects, as without a legal personality it is not possible to mobilise financial resources. He then indicated that ENDA are considering setting up the Africa IOPD as a Board of Directors or an Executive Secretariat.
- Carles Agustí then said that he agreed and that all of these points were linked: human resources - status (own legal personality) – financing, and that Barcelona would also like to see the IOPD grow and become a worldwide reference, although he also added that this would imply moving towards the idea of an international organisation, and that being an organisation would entail implicit obligations that all of the members should be clear about, i.e. the IOPD would have to move towards a decentralisation of its economic structure and, as a result, it would be necessary to reflect long and hard on this question and weigh it up carefully.

### 2. REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE REGIONAL OFFICES (ANTENNAS)

- Bachir Kanouté presented his Report on the activity of the Africa IOPD ([see document](#)).
- Adriana Furtado then explained to those present that to date the Mayor's Office of Porto Alegre has not engaged in any activity because so far the necessary economic conditions have not existed in terms of International relations to do so. However, she went on to assure that this difficulty had now been overcome and that from that point on ObservaPoa would be assuming the IOPD Regional Office. As a result the presentation of her report on activities was more along the lines of a report on future intentions.

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Adriana Furtado then went on to expound on the idea that a Regional Office should serve as a catalyst for experiences aimed at strengthening the network. She stated that it was important that there should be just one single Web for the IOPD and its Regional Offices, and that the information must not become fragmented. She then added that it would also be necessary to clarify exactly what the role of the Regional Offices was to be; that Porto Alegre already had all of the accumulated material/knowledge that Bachir had indicated as being necessary for Africa (guidelines for the creation of participatory processes and the evaluation of their impacts), and that from his point of view it was important to create partnerships with the universities so that the IOPD could become a catalyser of experiences. Finally, she announced to all those present that, the Mercocities Summit would be held in Porto Alegre on 27<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> November and that, within the framework of this event, Porto Alegre would be launching the Web platform for the Regional Office. She also referred to an event that would be held regarding participatory budgets in 2014.

### 3. WORK PLAN 2013/2014 ([see document](#))

- Carles Agustí, then presented a 10-point plan, stressing that the Technical Secretariat, the Regional Offices and the Presidency must all work together to: 1. Institutionalise the network, 2. Promote the Web, 3. Promote the network by way of social networking, 4. Establish more and new strategies of communication among the members, 5. Collectively build an IOPD agenda (wearing two hats) which must also be visible on the Web; 6. Create new links in order to regulate collaborations with other networks (agreements), 7. Establish a regional office in the north of Europe and another in North America (and in the long term another in Asia), 8. Implement videoconferencing as the new work methodology, 9. Promote a crowdfunding platform as an economic strategy, 10. Promote the Work Groups.
- Cristina Bloj then asked what the possibilities of institutionalisation would be for the IOPD (in the sense of acquiring its own legal personality).
- In response to this question, Bachir Kanouté proposed the creation of a Work Group to take a look at the different possible options, to which Carles Agustí replied that, from the perspective of the Technical Secretariat, the aim, at the present meeting, was to launch a new Work Group that would tackle the updating of the IOPD regulations and, consequently, the question of the institutionalisation of the network. Bachir then proposed that a clear mandate be given to this new Work Group.

### 4. 2014 PRESIDENCY: PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES AND THE CHOICE OF A NEW SEAT

Deise Martins and Celio Piovesan presented, on behalf of the Mayor of Canoas, Jairo Jorge, who excused his absence due to the social tensions that were taking place in Brazil at the time, and reiterated the city's political commitment to the IOPD.

Before starting with their presentation of the proposal they explained the participation system of the city of Canoas to those present, while also setting out the results of the holding of the 3<sup>rd</sup> FALP World Forum, material which they placed at the disposal of the IOPD for the success of the 14<sup>th</sup> Conference.

Having said this they then went ahead and presented a general outline of their proposal for the 14<sup>th</sup> Conference, including its proposed theme, "Radicalisation of Democracy and Citizens' Participation", which they would be tackling along four main lines of approach: 1) Processing that Focuses on the Citizenry, 2) Transparency and Information, 3) Social Networks and New

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Participation Tools, and 4) Innovation and Processes for the Creation of Participatory Democracy. Canoas also proposed, as the tentative dates for the Conference, 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> July 2014 (following the finalisation of the World Cup of Football).

### **5. THE IOPD REGIONAL OFFICES: DEFINITION, TASKS AND FUNCTIONS**

- Carles Agustí announced to those present that while the reflection with regard to the definition of the Regional Offices was being launched at that time, it would nevertheless remain open online within the network. He then went on to explain that the vision of what a Regional Office ought to be was, from the point of view of the Technical Secretariat, a representation of the IOPD in that territory. However, and at the same time (referring back to the point raised by Adriana Furtado), he pointed out that this perspective also introduced new doubts: How is the IOPD to be represented in that territory? How should the different Offices relate to/coordinate with each other and with the Technical Secretariat and/or the Presidency? Could there be different Regional Offices in countries within the same territory?
- Adriana Furtado intervened, once more highlighting the importance of managing the contents of the Web. If the members/Offices download information to the web, should this knowledge go to the general web or should it go to a specific Regional Office Web? Should there be a space for the annual conference Web? As she indicated in her previous intervention, Adriana also insisted that the Regional Office must act as a catalyst and added that they would have to work to create indicators of participation processes that could serve as a framework for comparisons between different towns and cities. In this way, from her point of view, the regional offices would contribute to enriching the IOPD.
- In response to this, Carles Agustí insisted on the idea, expressed during the 2012 Management Report, i.e. that the Web had great potential but that it was underused. That each of the network members can upload news items, documents, experiences or events to the agenda but that hardly anybody does. He also stressed the importance of universities and research centres, emphasising that they are one of the added values that the IOPD can provide, with regard to other networks or organisations.
- Lluç V. Peláez then took the floor in order to inform those present that this was the first time that he had taken part in the Internal Session, and that his first impression was that this was a very heterogeneous and varied network. Appealing to this wealth of variety he suggested the possibility of creating a specific work space for the smaller municipalities, which have their own specific needs and problems, beyond working from a territorial perspective. In addition, he suggested the possibility to set up working groups based on the different kind of members that IOPD has.

### **6. WORK GROUPS**

- Laia Vilademunt explained the progress that had been made by the Local Observatories on Participatory Democracy Work Group (see Management Report).
- Carles Agustí then informed the members that the Local Observatories Work Group (WG) had not been a great success as it had been difficult both to start up and to monitor.
- Luciano Fedozzi asked what had happened to the LOPD's group, which was founded within the framework of URB-AL, to which Laia Vilademunt replied that the project had been monitored and that, of the initial ten observatories only two were still currently active, Porto Alegre and La Paz, following a period of inactivity, but that the Barcelona Observatory would also soon be active again.

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- Laia Vilademunt then explained that the Technical Secretariat had undertaken a mapping exercise with regard to the observatories that form a part of the URB-AL project, and also a mapping of the current situation, with the detection of the different existing observatories but that, due to the variety of names that they are given (classrooms, laboratories, observatories, etc.) along with the variety of languages in which they are presented in internet, it was practically impossible to include all of the ones that exist in order to provide a reliable diagnosis of the actual situation.
- Pier Giorgio Senesi agreed that the observatories were often camouflaged under an immense variety of names and that, as a result, it was difficult to detect all of them.
- Bachir Kanoute suggests working the issue of the Observatories under two angles: geographically and thematically. Under the geographic perspective he proposes to approach the observatories on regional scales to local scales. Its purpose, so that local authorities get in touch with the citizens at the heart of civil organizations and academic institutions in order to create an effective flow of information. From a thematic angle, Bashir suggests to work the observatories around objectives covering the following four issues: i) How can we observe the practices of participatory democracy and make them visible around the world? ii) How can we ensure the quality of participatory democracy processes already involved? iii) How can we take advantage of the experience given by participatory democracy and share the gained knowledge? iv) How can we strengthen the growth of participatory democracy processes in Africa without losing its quality throughout the process?
- Celio Piovesan then informed those present that he had tried to contact Katia Lima, of the Brazilian Participatory Budgeting (OP) Network, given that within this network they were discussing the possibility of creating a state observatory in Sao Paulo (*Observatorio Paulista*). In their name, and in his own, he then indicated that, from his point of view, the purpose of an observatory is different from that of a participatory budgeting process and, as a result, it is necessary to look beyond participatory budgeting. He also pointed out that the network of observatories has to count on support from the universities, stakeholders that, on the other hand, already form a part of the IOPD.
- In continuation, Carles Agustí presented, to those attending, the new Work Group set up to deal with the role of associations in citizens' participation. He explained that this WG was the result of an initiative launched by Barcelona's Council of Associations, and that the associations have (and have always had) a fundamental role in participation in the city of Barcelona. He then informed those present that the goal of this WG was to reflect on the models of participation established in these associations, with the idea of raising the following questions, among others: How does the associative model function in your town or city? What role do associations play in municipal policy? What weight do they have in the town or city's participation dynamic? Are they organisations that are representative of citizens? What is their legitimacy? What decision making capacity must they have in municipal policy? Are they open and transparent organisations?
- Luciano Fedozzi proposed to those present a reflection regarding the importance of taking into account changes in the associative fabric and including the new social movements, given that they are key players in modern day society. According to Luciano Fedozzi it is important to take a look at these new forms of organisation and incorporating this new reality into participatory democracy without leaving aside the traditional associations.
- Carles Agustí then responded that this last observation would be included in the proposed framework for the launch of the WG.
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### 7. REFORMULATION OF THE IOPD INTERNAL REGULATION

- Carles Agustí then put to the members that it was time for the regulations of the IOPD, originally drawn up in 2001, to be updated, given that as the years have passed and in view of the technological revolution that has taken place since then, they have become outdated and do not reflect the activity of the network. Carles Agustí sounded out those present to see if there was any town or city interested in leading a Work Group that could take a look at this matter, along with the question of institutionalising the network. As no affirmative response was forthcoming the Technical Secretariat will make a further call to the different network members to try and find a town or city that is disposed to lead this new WG.
- Nelson Dias then urged the Technical Secretariat to establish a series of assessment parameters, which would allow for a clarification of how many network members are truly active, insofar as, bearing in mind that no fees are paid, it is difficult to measure the commitment of members to the network.
- Adriana Furtado then mentioned that it was important to promote the presence of technicians from the towns and cities, outside the bounds of politics, insofar as this would make them less vulnerable to the changes that may result from election results, and that their presence would allow for more continuity in terms of the lines of work being pursued within the network.
- Giovanni Allegretti, picking up on this question, explained to those present that the continuity of "*Democracine*", which is the main result of what was originally an IOPD Work Group, is dependent on political decisions be taken by the Mayor's Office in Porto Alegre, and that this is why it will not be taking place in 2013 (although a small festival will be held at a local level) but will be held in 2014. He then defended the idea that, from within the network they should try and ensure that this film festival could be independent of municipal bureaucracies and budgets, as well as the political changes that come about.
- Carles Agustí, with regard to "*Democracine*", then explained to the members that the Barcelona City Council had shown an interest in hosting this festival, while adding that, whatever the case might be, holding it in Barcelona would be perfectly compatible with the edition to be held in Porto Alegre in 2014.

### 8. AGENDA 2013/2013:

Carles Agustí insisted on a collective drafting of the agenda by way of the marvellous tool that the network disposes of, which is its web page. He also insisted on the strategy of the "double hat" to provide visibility to the network, i.e. whenever a town or city is invited to attend an event that they should take advantage of the occasion to spread the word about the IOPD. This would then make the network much more visible at an international level.

### 9. OPENING THE FLOOR TO CONTRIBUTIONS:

- Fabrizio Carucci, who is presently studying a Doctorate in Territorial Planning and Public Territory Policies, at the IUAV University of Venice, took advantage of this opportunity to inform those present about his research project, how to get handicapped people to form a part of active citizenry, while also informing them that he has the support of both the IOPD Technical Secretariat (Barcelona City Council) and the Centre for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra, another IOPD member.
- Celio Piovesan then informed Fabrizio Carucci that two disabled people's organisations in the city of Canoas were actively participating in the city's participatory budget, and

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that they had managed to get some building projects accepted.

And, as no further contributions were forthcoming, Carles Agustí and Paula Cabral (on behalf of the Mayor of Cascais) then brought the meeting to a close at 20:30 hours, thanking everybody for attending and informing them of both the hashtag for The Conference (#IOPDcascais13) and the fact that in continuation a dinner was to be held to welcome the members of the network.