

INTERNAL WORK SESSION

Members of the International Observatory of Participatory Democracy

18 November 2009: 9th OIDP International Conference – Reggio Emilia (Italy)

Within the framework of the 9th OIDP International Conference, held this year in the town of Reggio Emilia (Italy) on 18, 19 and 20 November, the annual internal session of OIDP associate members and collaborators took place for the purpose of both validating the preceding year's activities and approving other tasks and initiatives that are of interest to the network in the future.

1. Welcome

Roberta Pavarini, President of the Northeast Circumscription of the Municipality of Reggio Emilia and Ramon Nicolau, Commissioner for Citizens Participation at the Mayor's Office of the Barcelona City Council – Technical Secretariat of the OIDP, offer a warm welcome to the participants.

2. OIDP Management Report 2009

Ramon Nicolau presents the Management Report, drawn up by the Technical Secretariat, and consisting of a succinct description of the activities engaged in since the 8th OIDP Conference was held, in La Paz (Bolivia) in 2008, and which also incorporates a retrospective review of the work done on the network for the purpose of explaining, debating and approving it. The network member towns/cities also participate in this report, being co-responsible for and co-protagonists in all that has been done throughout the year as an exercise or democratic practice.

A reminder is given that Barcelona has taken on responsibility for the OIDP Technical Secretariat until 2010 and it is agreed that this responsibility will be maintained.

2.1. Composition Network Members

The number of adhesions to the network during the last year brings membership up to a total of 457. While in 2008 the total number of members (both associate members and collaborators) was 394 it is currently 457. There are 271 town/city members (26 more than last year), while the number of collaborators in the network now consists of 186 (37 more than in 2008). Most of the associate network members are European and the majority of collaborators are Latin-American.

2.2. Meeting of the Coordinating Committee. Reggio Emilia (Italy) 12-13 March 2009.

- Collaborative design of the Contents of the 9th Conference by the members of the Coordinating Committee.
- A reminder is made that, at the internal session of the town and city members of the OIDP, held in La Paz on 19 November 2008, a motion was approved to make membership of the Coordinating Committee voluntary and, as a result, open to all of the collaborating town and city members with a stated interest in exercising active participation in the activities of the OIDP.
- A call is announced for the Presidency of the OIDP in 2010: taking into account that, at the internal session in Nanterre, 2007, the candidacy of the City of Mexico for the Presidency, and also as the seat of the 10th OIDP International Conference in 2010,

was approved. Thus it is agreed that the Secretariat will eliminate the announcement of the call for the presidency this year. The model of two years in advance is given a positive evaluation, insofar as this make possible, among other things, some flexibility in the November date for the holding of the next Conferences.

- Specific meeting for the purpose of reinforcing and getting to know the position of the members of the Coordinating Committee with regard to the association with the CISDP.
- A new Work Group, proposed by the Junta de Freguesía de Carnide (Lisbon), is presented and approved: "Young People and Children- Citizenship in Participatory Processes".
- Publications: An agreement is reached to reduce the number of languages in which the publications, associated with the Conferences and the Distinction, are printed to Spanish and English, with the proviso of including other languages when the language of the town or city holding the Presidency and organising the International Conference/Winner of the Distinction is other, or when the majority of the participating towns/cities or members attending the event or participating in the Distinction share a different language.
- Agreement on the CD support and communal design, as a manner of creating "an OIDP trademark or image" that can be identified as belonging thereto. Electronic support also represents a less costly, more sustainable policy that will also allow for an exchange of contents by the network.
- The calendar of the 4th OIDP Distinction for Best Practices in Citizens' Participation, 2009.

2.3 4th OIDP Distinction for Best Practices in Citizens' Participation:

- Participation of 22 local governments from Argentina, Brazil, Spain, France, Madagascar and Mexico.
- The jury is international in nature and voluntary. In this edition the jury was made up of: the OIDP Presidency (represented by the town of Reggio Emilia), the Technical Secretariat (the city of Barcelona), three town/city members of the Coordinating Committee (the city of Cordoba (Spain), the Deputation of Barcelona and the Prefecture of Porto Alegre), one of the towns mentioned in the 3rd edition, Junta de Freguesía de Carnide (Portugal) and 11 network collaborator members.
- A virtual space has been set up, reserved for the jury, to provide access to and extend by means of complementary information the knowledge of the experiences that have presented their candidacy.
- It is stated that in this edition the jury decided to award both a Distinction and also three special mentions, and that the results will be made public at the opening ceremony of the 9th Conference, scheduled for the afternoon. In order to publicise the experiences presented a CD publication has been issued, bringing together the 22 candidacies presented, and this will be distributed among all of the participants at the Conference.

2.4. News:

- Publication of a CD containing a synthesis of the work done at the 8th Conference in La Paz.
- Creation of a **MEDIATHEQUE** on the new OIDP Web, to make possible the incorporation of experiences in an audiovisual format. Currently the OIDP counts on over 70 audiovisual supports, while 12 videos can be watched directly on the Web.

- Three virtual forums have been set up in order to provide the dynamic for the OIDP Work Groups. Another virtual forum with this same function is set up for questions of common interest regarding the OIDP-CISDP association.
- Announcement of a Special Public Mention, to be held within the framework of the 9th OIDP International Conference at Reggio Emilia, with regard to videos related to citizens' participation experiences, jointly organised by the Technical Secretariat and the Audiovisuals Work Group.
- Making of a video, featuring interviews with young people from network towns and cities, which is to be shown during the inaugural ceremony. Young people from Junta de Freguesía de Carnide, Nanterre, Aubagne, Sao Bras, Rosario, Sant Boi de Llobregat, Porto Alegre, Reggio Emilia and San Fernando de Henares have participated in this initiative, which is aimed at young people between 16 and 25.
- An explanation is given of how the virtual forums work, along with how the Web can be managed directly, allowing for the incorporation of events into the agenda, news, documents, etc. There is also a reminder that changes have been made to the telephone numbers of the Technical Secretariat.

2.5 OIDP Annual Expenses Report.

An itemised report is given of the budgetary items that made up the expenses of the Technical Secretariat in 2009. At the request of Enric Francès- President of the CMAB (Municipal Council of Associations of Barcelona) information is provided stating that the amount available for the development of the activities of the OIDP comes in part from the Mayor's Office and in part from the participation of Barcelona City Council. With regard to OIDP expenses, Antonio Aniesa -International Relations for the Nanterre City Hall- also indicates the necessary evaluation of the effort and the economic contribution made on the part of the successive OIDP Presidencies, the towns and cities that have played host to and organised the International Conferences.

Having concluded the presentation of the Technical Secretariat's Management Report, various comments are made stressing the importance of the challenge represented by the extension of the network to other continents in order to avoid reducing the debate on participatory democracy solely to Europe and Latin America while, in turn, making a more global vision possible. In this same sense of extending the network, value is placed on the fact that the present Conference was held in Italy, bearing in mind that previously the OIDP Conferences in Europe had all been held either in Spain or France. M^a Luisa Blanco Roca, Citizen's Participation Councillor for the Las Palmas de Gran Canaria City Hall, for her part, speaks of the preparation for the 2nd International Conference of Citizen's Participation, to be held in this city, either at the end of 2010 or in early 2011. She also adds that, from the perspective of collaborating and extending the network into the continent of Africa, the City Council could include a collaboration with *Casa África* (the Africa Centre), an organisation dependent on the Spanish Government, with its seat in the city of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria.

Ramón Nicolau thanks the members of the OIDP for their trust and the presented management report is approved, giving rise to the presentation of the contents by the cities of Mexico DF and Lleida as the future Presidencies of the OIDP in 2010 and 2011 respectively.

3. Presentation of the Content of the 10th OIDP Conference 2010, in Mexico D.F.

Alberto Martínez – Coordinator of the Neighbourhood Improvement Community Program and representative of the Social Development Secretariat, puts forward the proposal for the contents of the 10th OIDP Conference, which is to be held in November 2010 in Mexico City.

Central Theme: " **Global Crisis, Participatory Democracy and Local Alternatives** "



Overall Goal: To reflect on and debate the impact of the current global crisis on towns and cities and alternative responses to it, from local processes to the multiple dimensions of participatory democracy: political, social, cultural, environmental, economic, legal-institutional. To strengthen citizenship and local government so that they can face up to the crisis.

Specific Goals:

- ✓ To establish the options that participatory democracy raises with regard to the main challenges of the crisis.
- ✓ To encourage the democratic participation of the different social sectors in order to provide tangible solutions to global problems.
- ✓ To promote the importance of the roles of towns and cities in facing up to the crisis.
- ✓ To strengthen the citizens, social movements and local governments.
- ✓ To deal with inequalities and poverty by boosting social and gender equity and the full exercise of overall citizen's rights: civil, political, economic, social, cultural and environmental.

Among the preparatory work prior to the design and organisation of the event emphasis must be placed on the setting up of an Organising Committee to work participatively and which includes technical personnel and civil organisations, as well as the prestigious National University of Mexico. The presentation of the Organising Committee was made on Monday 25th May 2009 in Mexico City, with an explanation of both the theme and how the OIDP operates.

Starting with the central theme, the relationship between "Global Challenges" and their "Local Alternatives" was considered, working on the diagnosis on the nature, profundity and extent of the global crisis and its impact on the local setting in order to design options based on citizens' participation. The structuring of the contents into 6 axes, organised on the basis of 6 thematic dimensions is proposed: political, social, cultural, environmental, economic, legal-institutional.

Logistics: The Tlatelolco University Cultural Centre Seminars Unit will provide the work space for the 10th OIDP Conference. The Centre, provided with all of the necessary infrastructure for the event, is located in the centre of the City and is a symbol of democratic struggle in the country.

With reference to the stated theme positive value is assigned to: the participation of citizens and civil organisations in the definition of the program itself as an indication "that progress is being made in participatory democracy"; the conception of participation policies and strategies as a contribution to the inclusion of vulnerable sectors damaged by the crisis; in contrast to the themes that have recurred most in past OIDP Conferences, this is seen as a more extensive proposal that will allow network town and city members a wider framework in which to reflect. The coincidence with the 10th OIDP Conference and the 3rd UCLG World Congress is presented as an optimum climate in which to bring the association between the CISDP and the OIDP even closer together. In this sense the announcement of the programming of both events is proposed at each one.

As a specific proposal for modification of the contents the elimination of the categorisation "women" from the group of minorities or socially vulnerable groups. Several interventions addressed the matter of correcting this frequent mistake, which appears to ignore the fact that women constitute over half the world's population.

The 10th International Conference is also presented as an occasion on which to draw up a balance of the networking work that has been done to date, following a period of 10 years in which the worldwide municipalist movement has been working on participatory democracy.

4. Presentation of the Content of the 11th OIDP Conference 2011, in Lleida (Catalonia-Spain)

Josep Pons –Head of Participatory Action- and Nacho Companys –European Technical Projects Coordinator for the Lleida City Council- present the proposal for the contents of the 11th OIDP International Conference, to be held in the city of Lleida.

Proposed Theme: “New Technologies and Citizens’ Participation, Civil Society and Instruments of Communication”

Proposal for Thematic Axes:

1. The impact of technologies on the modernisation of public management, citizen’s participation and democracy.
2. Social networks, virtual platforms and participatory initiatives.
3. Transparency, network participation and collaboration of the network on the design of public policies.

The proposed dates for the holding of the 11th International Conference are 6, 7 and 8 April 2011.

It is agreed that the theme proposed is of great interest, while also being considered that it is very useful for the local governments of the OIDP network. The floor is opened and a number of proposals are made by the town and city members:

- The proposed theme regarding new technologies will be of great use always insofar as local participatory experiences and the problems they have encountered are taken as the starting point. It is important that the questions should come from and be about citizens.
- Diversifying the papers to the extent that they will be able to include social movements, citizens, academia and governments.
- A suggestion is made to request the collaboration of the UCLG Committee, which is working on the new technologies: Information Society Committee, under the Presidency of the city of Bilbao (Basque Country - Spain)
- For the design of the Conference it is important to take into account that the challenge for many countries resides in the difficulty in pushing forward the implementation of new technologies.
- A proposal is made to incorporate a new thematic axis to work on the new technologies from the point of view of “another possible communication” seeking alternative experiences. In this sense it is proposed that contact be made with the experience of “Another communication is possible”, which was undertaken in the FALP in Caracas.
- The consideration of new technologies not only as information but also as a useful tool for encouraging participation. “To seek experiences that make the following step, not only dealing with information but also with actual participation”

Josep Pons refers to the importance of resolving the digital breach for those towns and cities in which the development of new technologies is still a challenge and states that, in terms of content, the proposals indicated above will be taken into account.

Once the Presidencies have been approved, 2010 (Mexico) and 2011 (Lleida) it is agreed that the Presidency for 2012 will be decided on at the Internal Session of the OIDP, in Mexico 2010.

5. Presentation of the 2008 OIDP Work Groups:

5.1 OIDP Work Group: "Spatial Segregation and Territory in Major Urban Centres"

Félix Sánchez, the Group Coordinator, representing the Observatory of the Metropolises of São Paulo, along with Adriana Furtado of Observapoa, city of Porto Alegre, and Rocío Lombera, of COPEVI, being the member institutions of the Work Group, summarise the WG's first year with the provision of documents –with copies being handed over to all of those attending the meeting- showing the initial results, understood as a partial, incomplete and novel attempt to design the articulation between questions of participatory democracy and spatial and territorial segregation (given that at the present time there are no studies that bring together participatory democracy and segregation).

Very positive emphasis is placed on the conferences, held using Skype technology, as a useful way of organising the work of the WG and guaranteeing the simultaneous participation of Barcelona, Mexico DF, Porto Alegre and Sao Paulo. This virtual forum is also a space in which the members have provided their contributions: 3 methodological documents as preparatory elements for the final document presented, plus 7 practical cases related to 7 Latin American experiences in which the participatory budgets/maps of exclusion and inclusion/case studies are presented as tools that allow for the institution of new socio-spatial relations within the framework of social and urban management.

Challenges for 2010:

- An increase in the participation of local governments in the European area.
- A greater interaction with the team that prepares the FALP meetings and the 2010 Getafe Meeting, with a view to the 2nd stage that this WG is entering into.
- 2nd stage: In view of the need to advance in the discussion and reflection between social segregation and participatory democracy, the intention is to draw up a more substantial document that will allow for an in depth look into how participatory democracy –by means of participatory budgets and other tools- allows for the articulation of policies, programs, etc. in each of the territories, in order to combat segregation and, at the same time, placing emphasis on the relationship between spatial segregation, social territorial policies and citizens' participation, in order to boost social inclusion and participatory democracy.
- To create work tools (files, itineraries) for the gathering of information.

5.2 OIDP Work Group: "Image as a Communication and Participation Tool"

Giovanni Allegretti and Alfredo Ramos (Group Coordinators) present the work that has been done during the year, including the organisation of a Public Mention for videos within the framework of the present conference, which is particularly highly valued as an initiative that has contributed to advancing in the systemisation of indicators for the evaluation of audiovisual materials and the extension of the Mediatheque. The "Mention" has also meant an incentive for production by some of the network towns and cities, which have drawn up audiovisual proposals on the basis of this announced call.

Work Proposals 2010:

1. Audiovisuals and citizens' participation contest
2. Final discussion of evaluation criteria



3. Extension of the Mediatheque
4. Consolidation of the WG and the virtual forum

Calendar for the Organisation of the Contest:

- November/December/January: On the basis of the results of the 9th OIDP Conference, closing the criteria for participation in the Contest.
- January/February: Notification of the Call.
- May: Closing date for reception of materials.
- June: Selection of participating documentaries and closing the indicators for the evaluation sheets.
- July/September/October: Closing the sessions within the Contest.
- September/October: International publicising of the Contest.
- November: Holding the Contest.

5.3 OIDP Work Group: “Young People and Children. Construction of Citizenship in Participatory Processes”.

João Oliveira (Junta de Freguesia de Carnide, Lisbon), as the Coordinator, presents the work done over the half year that the WG has been in existence, accepting that –counting on the 7/8 towns/cities that form part of the Group- they have not achieved the progress that they would have liked in the discussion of the form and the conceptual framework, while at the same time they have considered this aspect as a challenge for 2010. Due to time restrictions on the presentation he states that he does not wish to discuss each of the specific experiences and that the form drawn up as a tool for gathering information raised a number of difficulties in terms of systemisation of the information, given that on some occasions not all of the questions on it were answered. He also mentions the possibility of opening up the WG to entities that are not network members, insofar as a number of universities have shown an interest in the project.

The following are outstanding among the challenges for 2010:

- To promote discussion between the different group members.
- To extend the database and improve the form.
- To create a space on the OIDP Web in which a new experience can be placed every month, so that each of the network members can give their opinion, discuss and ask about it.
- The creation of an own profile for each experience on the OIDP Web, which can be used as a resources bank.

6. Proposal for Working Jointly with the Social Inclusion and Participatory Democracy Committee of the UCLG.

Antonio Aniesa –International Relations for the City Council of Nanterre (France)- and Eva García Chueca –Technical and Executive Secretary of the CISDP- present a report on the progress and some of the problems encountered in the activities carried out jointly.

Antonio Aniesa proposes specific measures that may be of use in the drafting of a political positioning document or “Declaration” regarding participatory democracy that could transcend and be approved at the 3rd UCLG World Congress:

- To evaluate the trajectory and the work that has been done by the OIDP over the last 10 years. In this sense the proposal is to carry out an exchange of each of the themes dealt with at the different International Conferences held by the OIDP up to now and take these to the UCLG via the CISDP.
- To evaluate the CISDP opportunity as a tool to be used to ensure that the voice of local governments and participatory democracy can be heard at the 3rd UCLG World Conference in Mexico, in which there is room for both the OIDP and other networks.
- As an initial approach to the drafting of the policy position document: to avoid entering into the debate about what is and what is not participatory democracy, rather taking as a starting point the reasons that have led us during these years to strengthen the participation of citizens and in which there is room for the full range of forms and processes of participation: "If we start out by trying to establish a definition we are not going to reach an agreement".
- The reasons that led us to encourage citizens' participation from local governments continue to exist. The "Declaration" has to be a call to increase this participation between 2010 and 2020.

Eva García Chueca likewise points out that this is a key moment in the relationship between the two networks, due to them coinciding in Mexico in 2010, the importance of setting up a joint reflection and establishing a single voice with regard to participation that can be heard at the 3rd UCLG World Conference. With regard to the undertaking of joint work and, more specifically, the drafting of the policy positioning document she proposes the provision of greater visibility and depth to the debates through a virtual forum, via e-mail, by phone, etc., but also at face-to-face meetings. In this sense she refers to the difficulties that have arisen, given the plurality of experiences, when entering into a reflection and debate solely on a virtual basis. For this reason a proposal was made at previous meetings to hold a face-to-face debate at the CISDP Meeting, scheduled for the coming Saturday. She also proposes taking advantage, in this sense, of the face-to-face debates that are scheduled for June at the FALP Congress in Getafe de 2010.

7. Next Meeting of the Coordinating Committee:

The Technical Secretariat proposes looking for a date for the next meeting of the Coordinating Committee to ensure that it coincides with another event that is of interest to the members over the next few months, preferably in Latin America insofar as the 10th International Conference of the OIDP is scheduled to be held in Mexico DF.

Specific proposals:

1. **World Urban Forum: 22 to 26 March, Rio de Janeiro**
2. **World Social Thematic Forum: May, Mexico DF**

To simplify attendance for the members of the Coordinating Committee, the decision was made to hold two Coordinating Committee meetings in 2010. The holding of two meetings is likewise convenient in terms of making progress in the work for the 11th OIDP Conference in Lleida, due to the closeness of the dates in April 2011.

8. Other Announcements of Interest on the International Agenda:

- International Congress on Participatory Budget Models: 20-21 January, Berlin.
- Commemoration of the 10th Anniversary of the World Social Forum. 25 January, Porto Alegre.
- Social Thematic Forum. 29-31 January, Bahía.

- 2nd Peripheral Local Authorities Forum (FALP) – Solidarity Metropolises: 10-12 June, Getafe.
- III UCLG World Congress: 16-20 November, Mexico City.

The OIDP meeting, corresponding to the 2009 annual internal session, is brought to an end and it is agreed that the Technical Secretariat will draw up the minutes for all of those in attendance in order that they be definitively approved thereby.

9. Attending: 41

Eva García Chueca	Executive Technical Secretary of the CISDP (UCLG)
Magaly Giovannangeli	First Deputy Mayor of the Mayor's Office: Aubagne City Council
Slimane Toudert	Assistant to the First Deputy Mayor of the Mayor's Office: Aubagne City Council
Manel Brinquis	Participation Director: Deputation of Barcelona
Abelardo Pérez García	French Correspondent for Participatory Democracy Cultural Initiative: Miami
Miquel Poch Clara	Councillor for Participation: Girona City Council
María Luisa Blanco Roca	Councillor for Participation: Las Palmas de Gran Canaria
Luis Miguel Torres Hernández	Councillor for Technological Innovation, Citizens' Participation and Youth: Alcobendas Town Hall
Javier Arteaga	Head of the Department of Participation: Alcobendas Town Hall
Rocío Lombera	COPEVI (Operational Centre for Housing and Settlement): Mexico
Alejandro Luévano	COPEVI (Operational Centre for Housing and Settlement): Mexico
Adriana Furtado	Coordinator of Observapoa: Prefecture of Porto Alegre
Elisabet Corbetta	Head of the First Lady's Cabinet: Prefecture of Porto Alegre
Patrick Jarry	Mayor of Nanterre
Antonio Aniesa	Head of International Relations: Nanterre City Council
Alberto Martínez	Coordinator of the Neighbourhood Improvement Programme: Mexico City

Juan Manuel Gamarra	Director of Protagonistic Participation, Secretariat of Childhood and Adolescence: Government of Paraguay
Nelson Días	IN LOCO Association (Portugal)
Cristina Correia	Youth Technician: Palmela Municipal Chamber
Paulo Quaresma	President of Junta Freguesia de Carnide (Lisbon)
João Oliveira	Coordinator of Participative Management and Culture: Junta de Freguesia de Carnide (Lisbon)
Ana Ramos	Coordinator of Education and Sports: Junta de Freguesia de Carnide (Lisbon)
Mónica Diogenes	Coordinator of the Cabinet for the Elderly, Participative Management: Junta de Freguesia de Carnide (Lisbon)
Miguel Agrochao	Spokesman for Sport: Junta de Freguesia de Carnide (Lisbon)
Nico Cabezas	Technical Coordinator of the Overall Improvement Plan for the District of Casablanca: Sant Boi de Llobregat Town Hall
Giovanni Allegretti	Coordinator of the OIDP Work Group: "Image as a Communication and Participation Tool"
Alfredo Ramos	Coordinator of the OIDP Work Group: "Image as a Communication and Participation Tool"
Félix Sánchez	Coordinator of the OIDP Work Group: "Spatial Segregation and Territory in Major Urban Areas"
Roberta Pavarini	President of the Northeast Circumscription: Municipality of Reggio Emilia
Maurizio Battini	Head of Cabinet of the Síndaco: Reggio Emilia
Natalia Maramotti	Assessor to the municipality: Reggio Emilia
Cristóbal González	Head of the Participation and Citizenship Promotion Service
David Pujol Fabrellas	Head of the Participation Department: Girona City Hall
Josep Pons	Head of Participative Action: Lleida City Hall
Nacho Compans	Technician-Coordinator of European Projects: Lleida City Hall
Antoni Saldaña	Manager of the Municipal Institute of Computing: Lleida City Hall
Enric Francès	President of the CMAB (Municipal Council of Associations of Barcelona)

Ramon Nicolau	Commissioner for Citizens' Participation for the Mayor's Office: Barcelona City Council - OIDP Technical Secretariat
Àngel Aragües	Secretary of the Municipal Council of Barcelona - OIDP Technical Secretariat
Eugenia Cáceres	OIDP Technical Secretariat
Laia Vilademunt	OIDP Technical Secretariat