



CONCEPT NOTE

Renewing Democracy from the Bottom Up

13 June 2022, 16:00-17:30 (CEST)

Hybrid session

Led by the International Observatory on Participatory Democracy (IOPD), in cooperation with the UCLG Policy Council on Territorial Multilevel Governance and Sustainable Financing, and the Global Democracy Coalition

Local and regional governments are key guarantors of democracy, civil liberties, and in ensuring that all people live just lives that are free from discrimination. Throughout the multiple crises our world is facing today ranging from rising inequalities, authoritarianism and war, to climate change and increasing natural and social disasters, multilevel governance, dialogue, and open governance have never been more important to ensure people and the planet are protected and that our policies truly reflect the will and aspirations of our communities.

Democracy is translated into everyday life forms in which citizens act as equals to build a common destiny together. Initiatives promoting democracy are numerous, ranging from self-managed housing to shared gardens, from grassroots networks providing key information related to suffrage, to common and collective neighborhood projects. This imagination stemming from the local level in the way in which we view democracy must be reflected within global policy making processes if we are to truly realize the universal development agendas and achieve sustainable development.

Building on our origins as a movement driven by peace and local democracy, this session aims at discussing the role of local and regional governments and multilevel governance in fostering democracy at the local level, and is envisioned not just as part of the UCLG Executive Bureau, but also organized within the framework of the activities of the Global Democracy Coalition. The Global Democracy Coalition, convened by International IDEA and Counterpart International, is a strategic multi-stakeholder alliance of democracy organizations from around the world committed to advance and protect democracy worldwide and to influence the Summits for Democracy and the Year of Action 2022. UCLG contributes to the coalition by defending the importance of local democracy in the promotion and renewal of democracy and governance at the global level, fostering dialogue and diplomacy among local and regional governments and stakeholders, and promoting open governance, accountability and transparency.

In the framework of the UCLG Executive Bureau and the Mediterranean Urban Migration Forum, and co-led by the International Observatory on Participatory Democracy (IOPD) in cooperation with the UCLG Policy Council on Territorial Multilevel Governance, this thematic session will go into depth on the role that local democracy, public participation and open governance play in the achievement of the universal development agendas and in leaving no one and no place behind and how all spheres of government and stakeholders work together to promote local democracy for a more just and equal future.



Agenda

Opening remarks: (16:00-16:10)

**Roundtable discussion: Strengthening dialogue, democracy and open governance
(16:10-16:50)**

**Open discussion: (with all panelists and questions/comments from the floor)
(16:50-17:20)**

Closing remarks: (17:20-17:30)

