



Year 2021

MANAGEMENT REPORT

INTERNATIONAL OBSERVATORY ON PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY



International Observatory on Participatory Democracy



1. INTRODUCTION	3
1.1 GOALS	3
1.2 PROJECTS	3
1.3 THE CONTEXT OF THE YEAR 2021	4
2. THE 2021 CONFERENCE	4
2.1 THE CONFERENCE ORGANIZED BY THE CITY OF COCODY OCTOBER 20, 21 AND 22	4
2.2 THE VIRTUAL SESSIONS OF THE CONFERENCE	5
15TH IOPD AWARD IN BEST PRACTICE IN CITIZEN PARTICIPATION	6
OTHER ACTIVITIES	7
COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL NETWORKS	12
WEB STATISTICS	13
NEW NETWORK MEMBERS	15



1. Introduction

The International Observatory on Participatory Democracy

The International Observatory on Participatory Democracy (IOPD) is an international network open to all cities, organizations and research centers interested in learning about, exchanging and applying experiences of participatory democracy at the local level. It was founded in 2001 within the framework of the European Commission's URB-AL program for decentralized cooperation and its official constitution was in November 2001 in Barcelona, during the 1st IOPD Conference. Also, since 2006 it has worked with United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG).

1.1 Goals

- To be the worldwide center of reference within the participatory democracy field.
- To create synergies between cities, organizations and research centers in order for them to think about the quality of democracy at the global level.
- To produce and improve the existing knowledge in the local participatory democracy field.
- To exchange experiences about democratic innovations in all regions of the world.
- To recommend policies to public administrations of the world, preferably local ones.

1.2 Projects

The IOPD holds an annual international conference to discuss and reflect on the state of participatory democracy in the world. It is a meeting for experts in the field of participation and political leaders, as well as an opportunity to promote cooperation between cities and international organizations in the field of democratic innovations.

- Award "Best Practice in Citizen Participation"

This is an annual award with which the IOPD aims to acknowledge innovative experiences in the participatory democracy field which have been developed at the local level. It evaluates if it fosters citizens' implication and participation in the processes of elaboration and implementation of public policies. [More information](#)

- Publications and experiences repository

The IOPD wants to be a benchmark space to find information related to participatory democracy and citizens' initiatives. That's why it has a publications and experiences repository in its website linked to these topics. Also, it has a news section in which it explains what happens in the world in regard to this field.



1.3 The context of the year 2021

The COVID 19 pandemic continued in 2021 as it did from March 2020. This crisis has put on the table risks of centralization and authoritarianism by national governments. In addition, democratic processes, such as elections or participation processes, have been put on hold or have suffered difficulties. Local and regional governments have seen their resources diminish, while the demand for basic services has increased. In addition to the pandemic, other world crises and disturbing global phenomena (climate emergency, financialization of the economy, digitalization) play a key role in the instability of the current scenario.

This annual report demonstrates that local governments have been at the forefront of fighting these challenges and creating collective responses based on political innovation, collective intelligence and solidarity. This is particularly true when considering his approach to the impacts of these phenomena on people's daily lives: climate change, the crisis of confidence in institutions, the challenges of the growing urbanization of populations, inequality and poverty. By adopting transformative narratives and practices of democratic innovation, local governments seek to overcome these challenges.

The following annual report contains a compilation of our main activities in 2021, including again the holding of the annual conference. The Technical Secretariat thanks all the cities, institutions and people involved in the work of the IOPD, especially the promoter members who allow the continuity of our observatory and network.

2. The 2021 conference

2.1 The conference organized by the city of Cocody October 20, 21 and 22

The Commune of Cocody, in coordination with IOPD secretariat, organised a [new edition](#) of the **International Observatory of Participatory Democracy** Conference. The conference "Sustainable Cities/Territories and Participatory Democracy" was organised around four themes: Local Economic Development, Environment and Citizen Participation, the Right to the City, and Governance and Participatory Democracy.

Conference website <https://www.oidp-cocody2021.ci/fr/views/index>
More information on the event <https://oidp.net/en/content.php?id=1828>



2.2 The virtual sessions of the conference

In collaboration with United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and the promoting members of the IOPD, on November 29 and 30 and December 1 and 2, the virtual sessions of the 20th conference of the IOPD took place, organized in virtual format due to the restricted conditions of the pandemic. Three virtual sessions were organized covering the main thematic priorities of our network, as well as the Annual General Assembly.

The first session focused on the **role of citizen participation in ecological transformation**, one of the main areas of work of the IOPD.

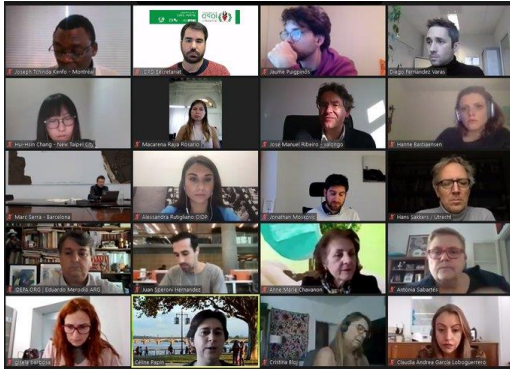


Citizen participation in ecological transformation

[Video of the session](#)

[Concept note and presentations](#)

The second session, organized on November 30, reviewed local democracy through the different strategies, mechanisms and plans to revitalize it. Mayors, councilors, local government representatives and experts shared their experiences in strengthening democracy, trust in institutions and civic dialogue at the local level. From participatory budgets to citizen assemblies chosen by lottery, passing through culture as a pillar of this democratic renewal, many examples were presented.



Revisiting local democracy

[Video of the session](#)

[Concept note and presentations](#)

On December 1, the session on municipalism, social movements and feminist approaches took place, organized jointly with the UCLG Commission for Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights. Mayors, councilwomen and other representatives of local governments or social movements participated in two panels on cities and municipalism from a gender perspective and on feminist municipalism. The importance of integrating social movements in the new municipalism was also discussed.



Municipalism, social movements and feminist approaches

[Video of the session](#)

[Concept note and presentations](#)

On December 2, the **IOPD General Assembly** was held, chaired by **Jean-Marc Yace**, mayor of Cocody, and **Clara Brugada**, mayor of Iztapalapa. **Eric Piolle**, Mayor of Grenoble, assumed the presidency of the network and presented the XXI Conference of the IOPD, which will be held from December 7 to 10 in Grenoble. The city of Rio de Janeiro has been chosen as the venue for the 2023 conference and the city of Sfax has joined the coordination committee.

15th IOPD Award in Best Practice in Citizen Participation

The 15th edition of the “Best Practice in Citizen Participation” Award counted with 51 nominations. There has been a large participation in the open evaluation phase and the results were announced during the UCLG World Council on November 17. The different stages of the award were:

- Call and dissemination: at the end of February the [call for applications](#) was launched. The secretariat carried out an intense task of dissemination and communication of the call.
- Open evaluation: the [open evaluation](#) phase, in which it was possible to comment and vote on all the practices submitted through the [PARTICIPATE OIDP platform](#), was held during May. At the end of this phase, 26 experiences were voted to move on to the next phase.
- Evaluation by the jury: the finalist applications were studied and evaluated by the jury of experts in July and August. In September, a virtual meeting was held with the jury members to deliberate within the finalist's nominations.
- Announcement of the results: the winners were [announced](#) on November 17, during the UCLG World Council, organised in the Smart City Expo World Congress in Barcelona. The Jury decided to award the prize to the experience "**Lima Joven Acciona**" presented by the Metropolitan Municipality of **Lima**. It also decided to give special mention to five other experiences: those of the cities of Ankara, Gothenburg, Mexico City, Milan and Rio de Janeiro.
- Publication. The technical secretariat prepared the award website with information on the winning experiences, as well as a publication with summaries of all the entries and organised interviews with the cities' officials.

[Announcement](#) / [Award website](#) / [Publication](#) / [Interviews with the winners](#)



Conversations with the winners of the 2020 IOPD Award



In January 2021, the Technical Secretariat continued to organise and share conversations with representatives of the winning cities of the [2020 IOPD Award](#): with [Pilar Díaz](#), Mayor of Esplugues de Llobregat (Spain) and with [Marco Lozano](#), Director General of Citizen Participation of Cuenca, Ecuador.

Other activities

UCLG Retreat and Campus 2021: 15-22 February 2021



[UCLG annual retreat](#) was held in a virtual format. During this occasion all UCLG sections and teams, including IOPD, had the opportunity to share their priorities and visions. The seminar is an opportunity for partners to define synergies and develop actions in line with the work plans.

[More information](#)

Partnership of the People Powered online course "How to start a climate assembly": February 18

IOPD was a partner organisation on the People Powered University online course, "[How to Start a Climate Assembly](#)". Participants learned key lessons from climate assemblies in the UK, Poland and France.

Webinars on the role of participatory budgets in climate change mitigation

IOPD organised a [series of webinars](#) with Yves Cabannes, Professor Emeritus of the University of London, following the publication of the study [Contributions of participatory budgets to climate change adaptation and mitigation](#). In each of these seminars, different cities and regions presented their experiences, experts analysed the main challenges and the author of the study presented the main conclusions of the study. These seminars were organised in collaboration with different partners such as UCLG, IOPD Africa, FMDV, DPU.



[Webinar in French](#) on February 23

[Webinar in Spanish](#) on March 23

[Webinar in English](#) on April 20

[Webinar in Portuguese](#) on June 9

[The role of citizens in ecological transition](#)

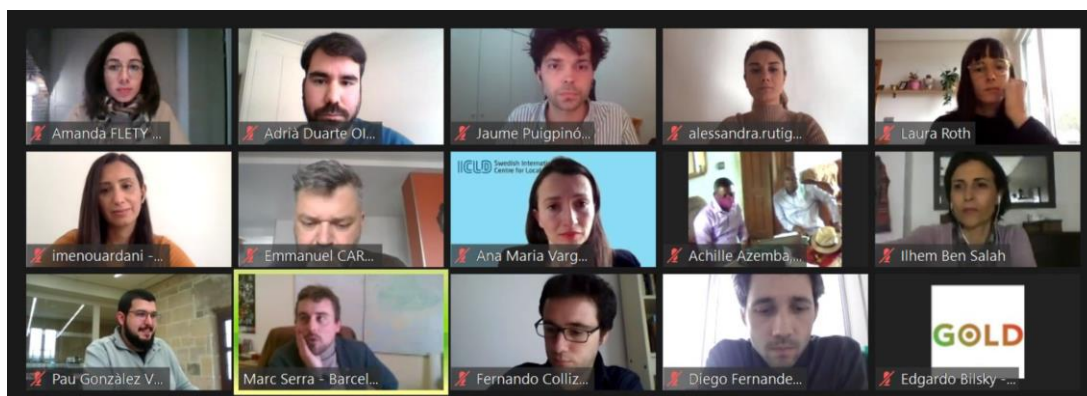
International Women's Day: March 8



On **International Women's Day**, IOPD called for the [promotion of substantive equality](#), specifically in the field of political representation and in the definition of participation practices. Different women mayors and elected officials shared their testimonies through videos.

Participatory democracy in the promotion of urban equality: A conversation between members of CISDPDH and IOPD: March 18

We organised with the Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights of UCLG (CISDPDH) a session on the [role of local participatory democracy practices in promoting urban equality](#). The workshop allowed an interesting exchange of experiences between different regions of the world. The report of these exchanges is part of our contribution to the [GOLD VI](#) report on urban equality.



Meeting of IOPD members in the Grenoble Biennial of Cities in Transition: 1-4 April

The 3rd edition of the [Biennale des Villes en transition](#) (Biennial Meeting of Cities in Transition) organised by the city of Grenoble took place in April. In this framework, a meeting of the French members of the IOPD was held, for the preparation of the 2022 conference coordinated by the city of Grenoble that will host the conference. It was also stressed on the strengthening of links but also on the idea of coordinating the french members of the IOPD.

Intermediary Cities & Reinventing local democracy: April 30

A specific [consultation session for the 2nd Intermediary Cities](#) forum was organised to contribute to UCLG's Pact for the Future through a Code of Conduct for Intermediary Cities to rethink local democracy, as a critical line to design the post-COVID world.

Webinar on citizen participation for UCLG MEWA members: May 5



In the framework of the Executive Bureau of UCLG MEWA, the IOPD organised a [session](#) with the mayors of Chefchaouen: Mohamed Sefiani, Cuenca: Pedro Palacios and Esplugues de Llobregat: Pilar Diaz. This meeting was organised to promote citizen participation among cities in Turkey and the Middle East.

Preparatory meeting for the 5th Iberian Conference on Participatory Democracy and Budget: May 6

The [first preparatory meeting](#) for the 5th Iberian Conference on Participatory Budgeting and Participatory Democracy, which will be held in 2022 in the city of Cascais, focused on the participation of children and young people.

IOPD Coordination Committee: May 20

The Steering Committee met to review the activities of the first half of 2021 and to plan the actions for the second half of the year, including the conference.

Experiences of participatory budgets shared by local government leaders: May 27



The Swedish International Centre for Local Democracy (ICLD) and IOPD organised a [talk debate](#) with local leaders to share their experiences with participatory budgeting in their cities.

Workshop with the team of the Governorate of Antioquia: 1st of June

The team of the Governorate of Antioquia and teams from the UCLG secretariat, including the IOPD, exchanged views on the [Antioquia2040 Agenda](#) and its participatory process.

Workshop with UNICEF and UCLG on public service finance in local and regional governments: 2 June



The IOPD participated on the issue of transparency and participation in budgets and public spending.

Metropolis Pilot Project session: June 8

A new session of the Metropolis pilot project on citizen participation, in which on this occasion it was discussed the case of the city of Montreal and its Office of Public Consultation.

IOPD Coordination Committee for the 20th Conference: June 30

A new meeting of the coordination committee took place in order to determine and define the details of the 2021 conference: dates, formats, concept notes and thematic contents.

Workshop on Children in Local Development: 8 and 9 September

The IOPD was a partner in this event organised by Coglobal and the city of San José (Uruguay)

The International Day of Democracy: September 15

On the occasion of the [International Day of Democracy](#), with UCLG's Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights, we proposed a [piece](#) on the priorities of local governments to reinvent the agendas of participatory democracy.

Participatory climate action - Local government innovations: September 15

With ICLD we organised a panel on democratic innovations that promote citizen involvement and participation in response to climate change.

European Meetings on Participation - Workshop on Participatory Budgets: September 16

IOPD participated in the [Rencontres Européennes de la Participation](#) by intervening in the workshop on participatory budgets as a lever for the ecological transition.

2nd Intermediary Cities Forum: 5 to 8 October

IOPD [participated](#) in the World Forum of Intermediary Cities organised by UCLG and the City of Kütahya as facilitator of a networking event and coordinator of a High Level Dialogue. The dialogue focused on participatory budgeting as a tool to innovate ecological transformation and strengthen democratic innovation in cities; the dialogue focused also on the importance of Intermediary Cities as a place to promote the human dimension of transformation.



Workshops for pilot city projects - Metropolis: 3 and 4 November

Study of the case of Cordoba, and the role of decentralised cooperation with representatives from Barcelona, Cordoba, Madrid and Montreal and the secretariats of Metropolis and IOPD.

Seminar on Human Rights and Local Democracy: November 8

Participation in a seminar on Human Rights and Local Democracy at the World Democracy Forum organised by the Council of Europe.

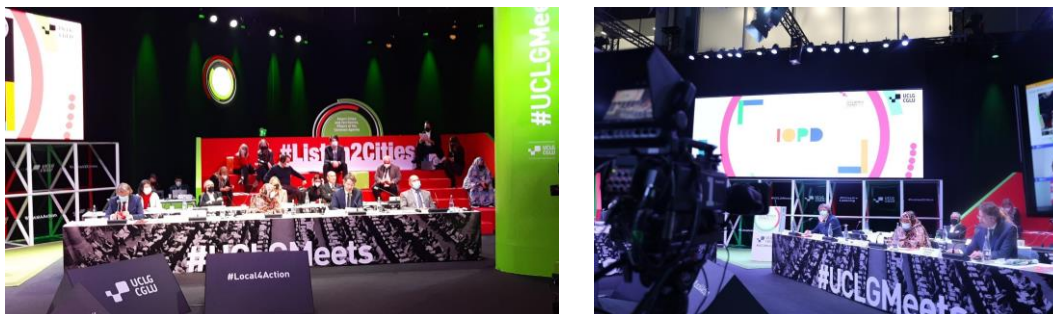
Online Interactive Workshop on Climate Commitment for Systems Change in the framework of COP 26

On November 9, the IOPD participated in the [interactive workshop](#) held live in Glasgow during the COP26 conference. During the session in which IOPD took part, the discussion focused on the role of cities in strengthening climate commitment.



UCLG World Council

From 16 to 18 November, the UCLG World Council took place, in this framework, the winners of the 15th edition of the Award have been [announced](#).



Communication and social networks

The website www.oidp.net is the hub for all information and content on the network. The secretariat maintains the site and updates the information: new experiences, news, calendar of events, publications. All this content is disseminated through different communication



channels, such as the monthly bulletin, which is sent to a database of more than 1,700 subscribers, or social networks: [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

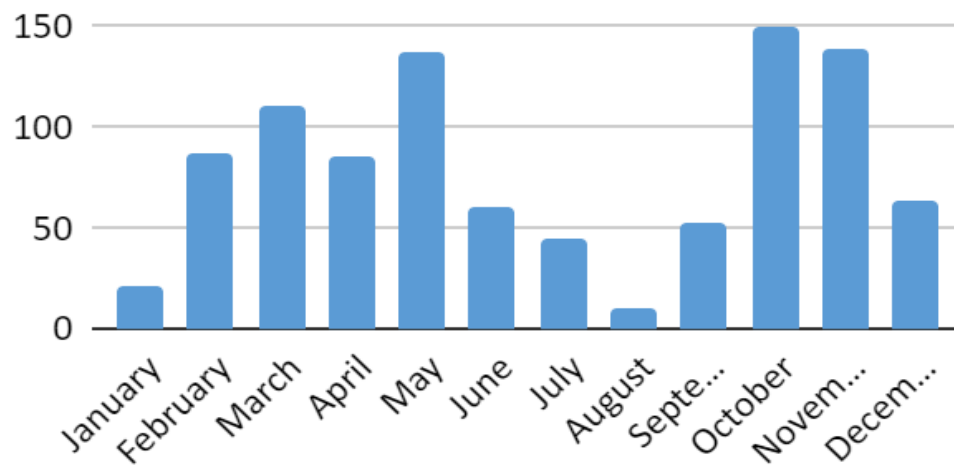
Web statistics

2021		2020	
Visits	46151	Visits	22765
Unique visits	33737	Unique visits	15547
Pages	91831	Pages	56123
Countries	176	Countries	165

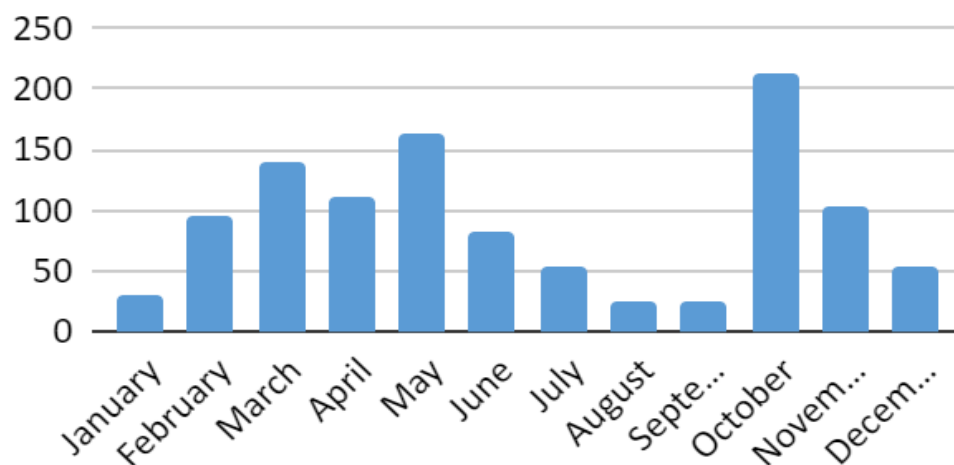
The Twitter account @oidpoidp is, along with the web, our main channel for dissemination and communication. Below we present more detailed information about our profile on this social network.



Tweets

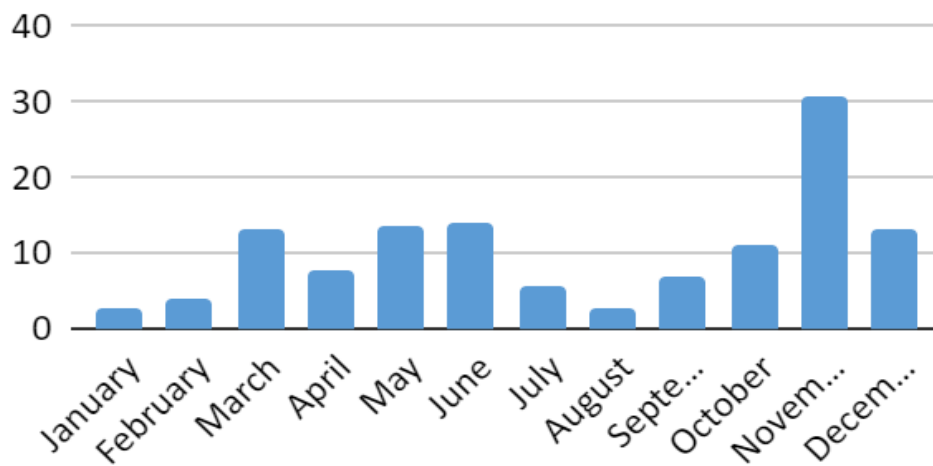


Tweet Impressions (thousands)

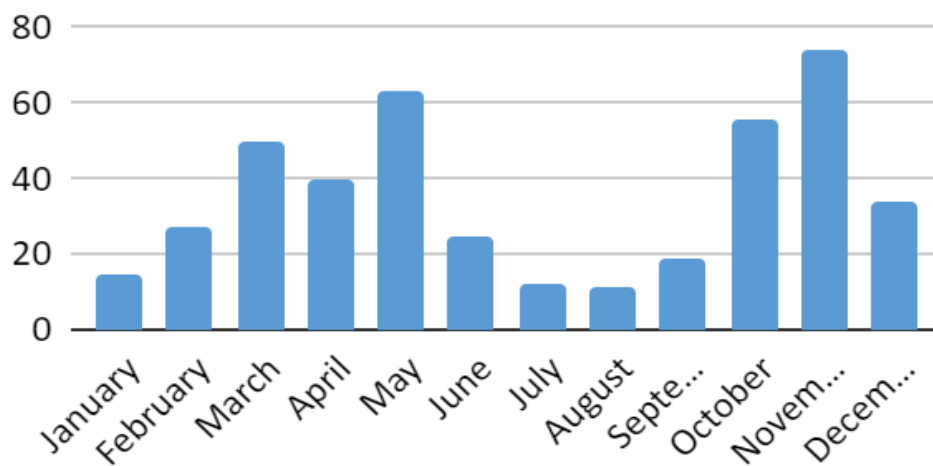




Profile Views (thousands)



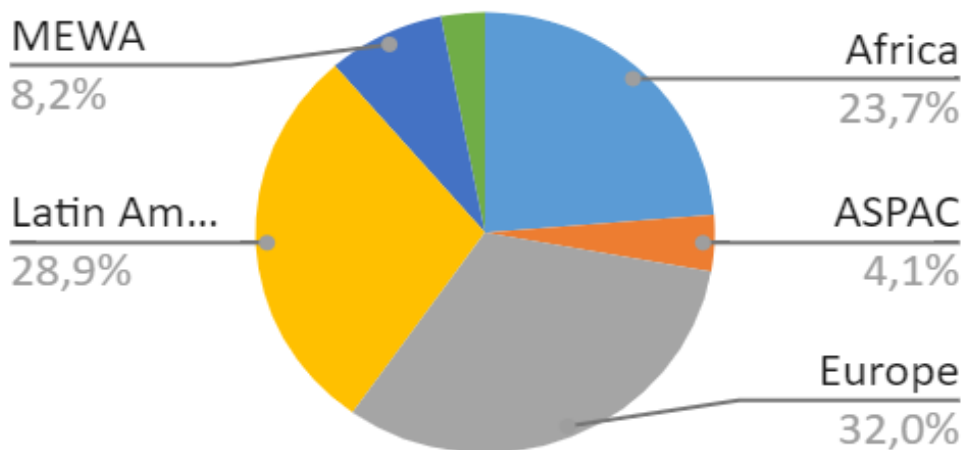
New Followers



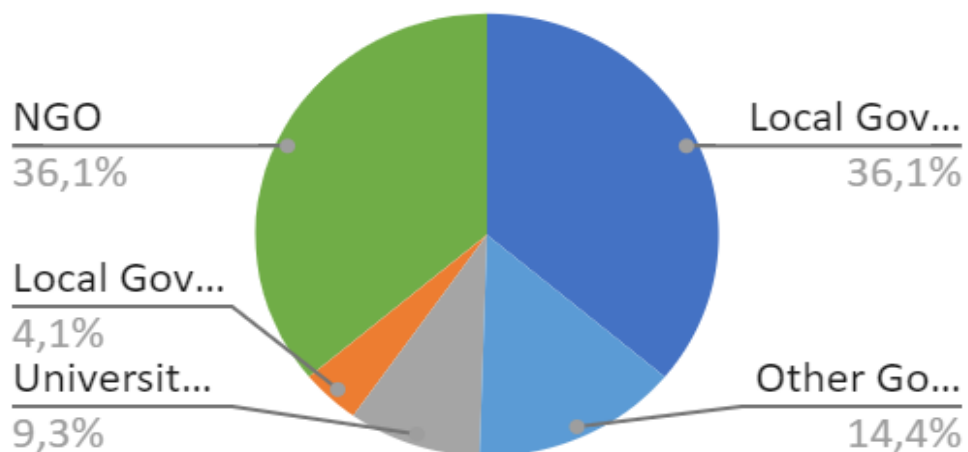
New network members

In 2021, the IOPD received dozens of applications for membership. In total, the Coordination Committee accepted **97 new members** of all kinds (local governments, regional governments, research centers, NGOs...) from more than 37 countries. Currently, the International Observatory of Participatory Democracy has more than [1,349 members](https://www.oidp.net). On the next page you will find some key figures on the new members that have joined the network.

Geographical distribution



Typology of new members





THE WORK OF THE OBSERVATORY HAS BEEN POSSIBLE THANKS TO THE
GENEROUS CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS:



SUPPORTED BY:

