Civil democracy

What we do

Civil democracy brings the ballot to the 21st century.

The ballot's ingenious invention enabled large scale democracy by overcoming the grassroots-overstretch problem:

- Democracy implies everyone's involvement in politics, but daily participation exceeds most peoples' abilities.
- The solution is trust turned into representation through storing trust relations – in the ballot.

But the ballot is rigid – "we will not solve 21st century problems with 19th century institutions built on 15th century technology" (P. Mancini)

- The paper ballot erects rigid boundaries between those to make decisions and those to be doomed to trust.
- It erects rigid boundaries between the supporters of different trusted actors. The one mark on the ballot forces every political actor to have answers to all questions and every voter to take sides and choose one package. .

Digital technologies can do better. We can store trust in political actors in a flexible way:

- Allowing voters to express their trust in all political actors they deem trustworthy,
- thereby allowing political actors to take responsibility just in the area of their expertise,
- and allowing voters to decide on a case-by-case basis for which decisions they prefer to be represented and for which they want to participate.

Why we need that

The rigidity of the ballot was less of a problem in some societies – but they are history.

- It worked in a specific (mainly Christian) cultural setting that divided people into groups, demanded respect for overarching institutions, and thus made group representation possible.
- But it does no longer work in the West as 50 years of individualization have ended group demarcations.
- It doesn't work well outside because the group/institution culture did never exist. In the Islamic world, in Africa, Latin America, Asia – bad institutions everywhere, as democratic responsibility either does not exist at all or exists in the inappropriate ballot model.
- It does not work at the supranational and global levels because interest conflicts do not take place between national societies, but between conflicting interests, even within one person.

Civil democracy is **the only way to return to stable, problem-solving institutions.**

How we go for it

Civil democracy can be applied anywhere.

- But most existing decision-making institutions are defended as a warrant of stability.
- Of all applications, the void is on the highest level: A Civil democratic voice of global civil society would complement UN conferences to press for more sustainable world policies.

We hence start with a Global Sustainability Council.

- It is the voice of all world citizens who are willing to enter responsibility
- supported by all their trusted political actors.
- It discusses issues of global sustainability, starting with climate protection.
- It prepares decisions for the world population.

We proceed in the following steps:

1. CSO grassroots members: We address CSO local organization members to convince their umbrella organizations to participate.
2. Candidates: We ask people to run for the GSC: activists, scientists, or politicians.
3. Open Actors: We look for political actors who are willing to rank first these candidates and later upcoming decision options.
4. Financing: We search for funding. 100k US$ give one usual international conference – or Civil democracy as the common voice of world population.
5. Programming: A Civil democracy platform will be coded as an Open Source project.
6. Start of the GSC: Now the OAs ask all their supporters to support them as voters on the platform. The candidates with the most support form the first GSC.
7. An agenda for sustainability-related decisions is set by the GSC. Important questions are left to Civil democratic decision making, smaller decisions are made by the GSC itself, but a qualified minority can declare any question 'big'. Voters adapt or adopt the decision templates or are represented through their stored trust relations.
8. Practical politics: After the Civil democratic model has shown its potential, parties and movements will use it to negotiate better decision-making models in their contexts, sometimes complementing established institutions and sometimes changing them.

If you want to support this project, please contact hanno.scholtz@civil-democracy.org.