

# Partnering for a Stronger Democracy

The City of Brussels is the  
European Capital of Democracy  
**2027**



**European Capital  
of Democracy**

# The City of Brussels will be the European Capital of Democracy in 2027.



Get involved in shaping the Democracy Year 2027



Innovating local democracy in Europe's most diverse city.



Brussels must become DemoCrazy, from the local level to Europe.



## Bruxelles désignée Capitale européenne de la démocratie en 2027

La Ville de Bruxelles a été désignée Capitale européenne de la démocratie 2027, a-t-elle annoncé mardi. La ville accueillera pendant un an la participation citoyenne, au dialogue

## Bruxelles portera en 2027 le titre de Capitale européenne de la démocratie



## Capital of the free world ? City of Brussels crowned European capital of democracy

Friday, 10 April 2026 TBT+  
By Maïthé Chini



# Why Now?

**Under the motto "Brussels must be DemoCrazy", the City of Brussels submitted its candidacy at a time of global democratic backsliding, marked by growing threats to human rights and democratic freedoms.**

[Discover the dossier application here.](#)



## **A decisive European moment**

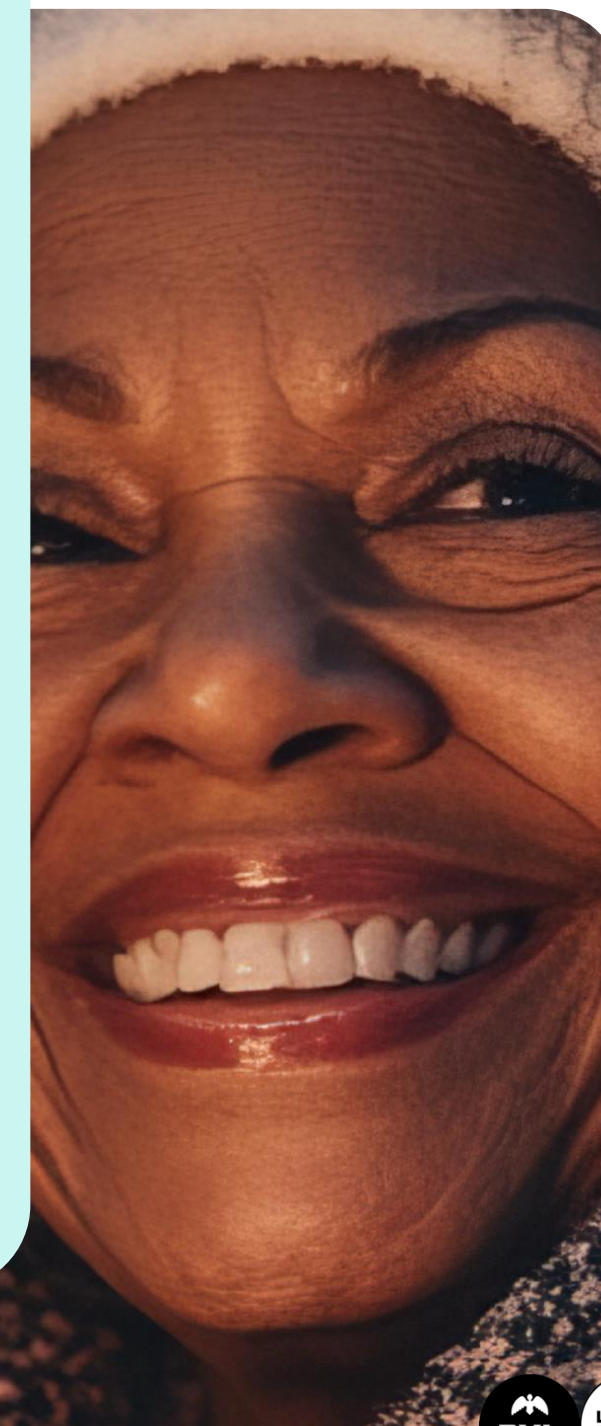
The initiative aims to highlight Brussels' unique role as the capital of Europe and a centre of democratic values, as well as its pioneering work in innovative forms of local democracy.

## **The capital of the free world**

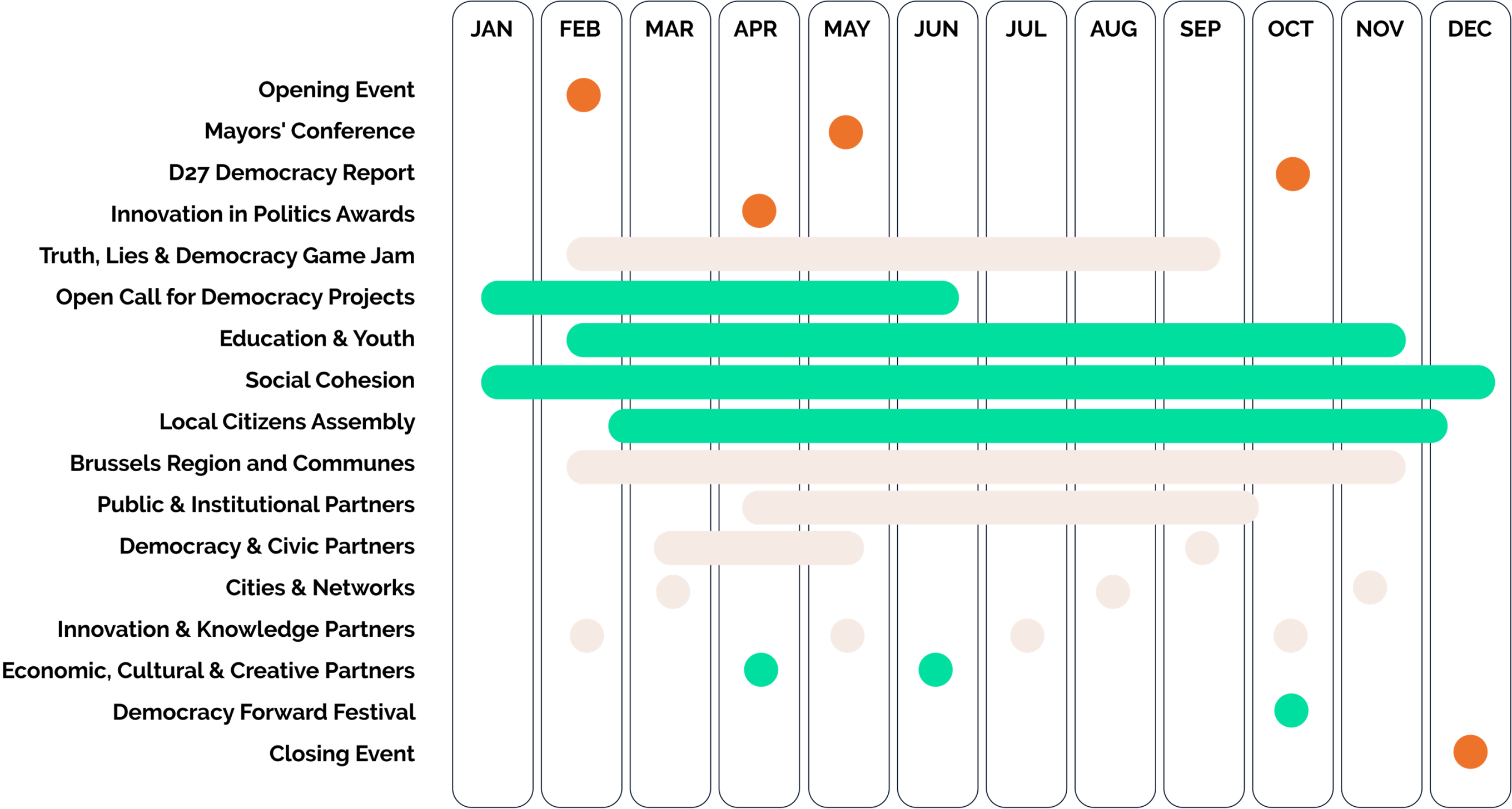
As the European Capital of Democracy, Brussels intends, more than ever, to position itself as a strong and credible defender of democracy in a world facing an acceleration of authoritarian tendencies.

## **Democracy starts with citizens**

During the Year of Democracy 2027, we want to strengthen democracy where it begins: at the local level, through concrete initiatives, experimentation and dialogue with citizens.



# The Year of Democracy 2027 at a glance



# What events?

## 3 Axes

Brussels, Capital of the free world.  
*From the European Political Capital to Everyday Democracy*  
= Europe (Macro)

Brussels, Europe's most diverse city  
*From Europe's most diverse city to democratic innovation*  
= City of Brussels (Micro)

Brussels, Democratic Arena  
*From Human Rights to Democratic Resilience*  
= Freedoms and Democracy

## Partners

ECoD Initiative

City of Brussels

The Region and the municipalities

Institutional Partners

Cities & Networks

Democracy & Civic Partners

Cultural & Creative Partners

## Formats

Game Jam   Webinar   Conference   Expo

Workshop   Concert   Forum   Field Trip

Assembly   Project Call   Film   Podcast

Art   Debate   Ceremony   Summit

Seminar   Roundtable   Lab   Barcamp

# Some highlights of the Year of Democracy

2026

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**15/09**

## **Teaser: Democracy Forward Inspiration festival**

A festival dedicated to the future of democracy, which brings together citizens, researchers, politicians, civil society actors and democratic innovators around the major challenges of our time. Jointly organised by the National Lottery for Democracy Fund, the King Baudouin Foundation, BOZAR, BELvue and the City of Brussels.



**Democracy  
Forward  
Inspiration  
Festival**

**15/09**

## **Democracy Podcast with the Babbeleir**

A new podcast that gives a voice to those who bring democracy to life in Brussels, in Europe and beyond.



## 15/09 From Brussels to the world (UNDP)

An international event organised by the City of Brussels and UNDP, bringing together cities, international institutions, researchers and democratic actors to explore how democratic innovations developed in Brussels can inspire Europe and the world, and how international experiences can enrich local democracy.



2027

## ?? /02 Opening Brussels ECoD 2027

An inaugural ceremony marking the official launch of the European Year of Democracy in Brussels, in the presence of European representatives, partner cities, civil society actors and citizens.

+ Partnerships



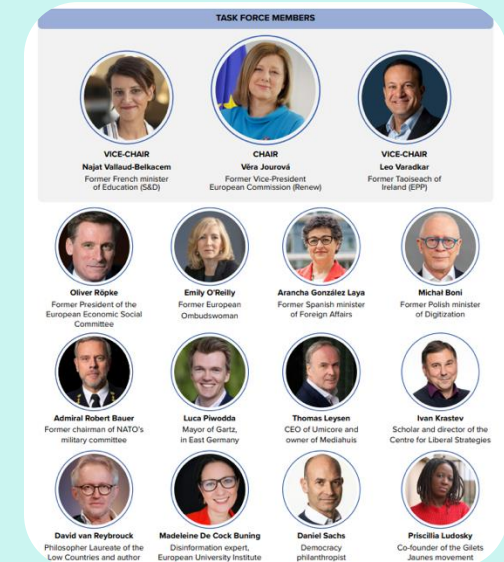
## ?? / 03 Call for Project 'Democracy'

A call for projects open to citizens, associations and local actors to bring out innovative initiatives in favor of democracy. A unique opportunity to strengthen citizen participation, inclusion and engagement in the neighbourhoods, and to make Brussels a real laboratory for democratic innovation.

democracy

## ?? / 03 Democracy 27 (D27): A European initiative to rethink democracy

A European initiative led by civil society to strengthen democracy, citizen participation and trust in institutions.



## ?? / 04 Truth, Lies & Democracy

A European game jam bringing together young people, developers, designers and democratic actors.

+ Partnerships



## ?? /05 Youth Debate on Democracy

A programme of debates organised in schools in the City of Brussels, giving young people a voice on the major democratic issues of our time. An opportunity to develop critical thinking, civic engagement and dialogue between generations. (with Cab Hariche + Cab Maes)

+ Partnerships



## ?? /?? YOUR EVENT ?

Your event can become part of Brussels 2027, European Capital of Democracy. Together, we can spark conversations, build connections, and shape the future of democratic participation.

## ?? /09 Innovation in Politics Award

A European ceremony that honours the most innovative political and democratic projects carried out by cities, elected officials and institutions across Europe. A moment of inspiration and exchange to promote the best initiatives in terms of citizen participation.

+ Partnerships



European Capital  
of Democracy

## ?? /10 Youth Decide 2040

A European initiative that gives young people a voice to imagine the future of Europe by 2040. Through workshops, debates and exchanges between young people from different countries, the project encourages democratic participation and the development of common visions for the future.

+ Partnerships



## ?? /012 Closing Event ECoD

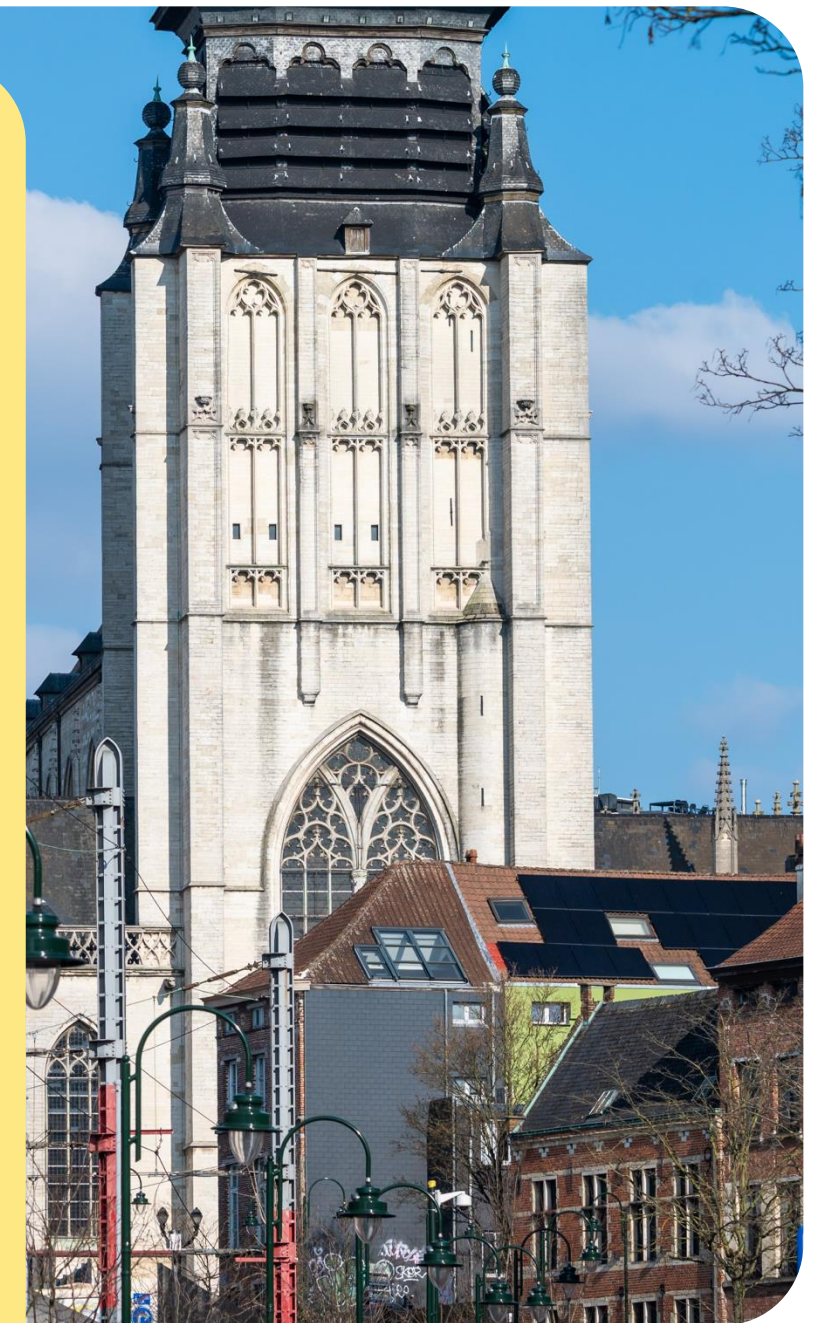
+ Partnerships

democrazy

# Empowering Democracy in Europe's Most Diverse City.

Brussels is already putting democratic participation into practice: through citizen assemblies, co-creation in urban projects, a new digital participation platform, and a strong focus on inclusive, multilingual engagement. Public spaces and partnerships with civil society and universities further anchor participation in everyday city life.

As Europe's most diverse city and its political capital, Brussels is a natural testing ground for democracy. Its proximity to citizens, combined with real urban challenges, makes it an ideal "living lab" to experiment, innovate, and scale democratic solutions across Europe.



# Contact us, we would be delighted to collaborate with you

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