



Issue No. 6 | October 2025

Team Europe Democracy Initiative (TED) Newsletter



Updates on the Team Europe Democracy Initiative:
Provided by TED Secretariat

Dear Colleagues and Partners,

This edition of the Team Europe Democracy (TED) Newsletter comes to you following a period of exchange and collaboration across our community. Marking the International Day of Democracy and coinciding with the International Week of Democracy, TED's Annual Meeting brought together practitioners, policymakers and partners to explore how we can deepen democratic resilience, safeguard civic space, and strengthen coordination across our efforts.

Many of the insights, tools and stories featured in this issue emerged directly from these discussions. As always, we hope the updates inspire your work and strengthen connections across the TED Network.

We wish you an engaging read and look forward to continuing this journey together.

TED Secretariat



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- » Rule of Law and Accountability for Inclusive Investments
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TED Grants and Training Updates

As part of its ongoing capacity-building efforts, the Team Europe Democracy (TED) initiative has launched a needs assessment to inform the design of upcoming training modules. Based on input from a structured inventory of existing training offers, the resulting programme will consist of four thematic modules: Building Democratic Resilience, Mainstreaming Democratic Governance, Innovations in Democracy Support, and Supporting Democracy through the Global Gateway. Each module will combine a self-paced micro-session, a practitioner-led case study, and an interactive workshop to support peer learning and practical application. The first module will begin in November 2025. The modules are intended for practitioners from Member States, European institutions, international organisations, and other TED members, depending on the topics offered.



TED Network

People-Centered Justice for Enabling Environments: Practical Guide from TED Rule of Law Clinics



The practical guide captures key insights from the 2024-2025 Rule of Law Clinics organised by the TED Working Group on Rule of Law and Accountability. Focusing on people-centered justice, the clinics brought together EU Member States, EU Delegations and network members for peer learning and practical exchange.

Grounded in the 2023 OECD Recommendation on Access to Justice, the clinics tackled data-driven approaches and customary justice, as well as land rights and inclusive investments under the Global Gateway.

The guide distils lessons learned and shares tools from worldwide practice for integrating people-centered justice into European justice programming.

[Read more »](#)



Rule of Law and Accountability for Inclusive Investments



At the TED Network Annual Event, Working Group 1 on Rule of Law and Accountability members explored practical ways to integrate the 360° Approach principle of Good Governance and Transparency into Global Gateway projects.

The group initially reflected on building a narrative containing key value proposals that would resonate with stakeholders in the GG landscape. The session then brought together insights from field practice of HiiL, IDLO, OGP, TI and WJP. The last segment discussed upcoming activities focusing on transparency, people-centered justice, and inclusive economic development.

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Eastern Partnership Focus: Interview with Amy Eaglestone on Elections in Moldova



The recent parliamentary elections in Moldova were widely seen as a test of democratic resilience at Europe's eastern frontier.

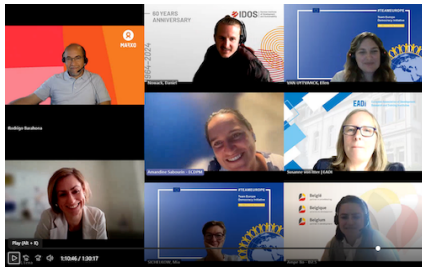
Despite economic strain, disinformation campaigns, and direct interference attempts, voters once again endorsed a pro-European course, though with growing polarisation and fatigue.

The interview offers a nuanced analysis of these elections, unpacking the interplay between Russian influence operations, domestic discontent, and the strategic calculations that kept the ruling party in power.

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Civil Society at a Narrative Crossroads – a TED Working Group 2 Webinar



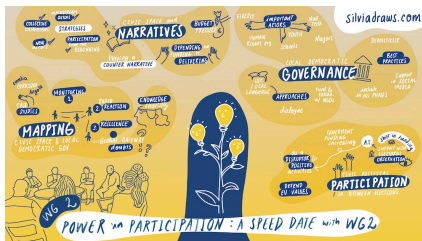
Authoritarianism no longer waits for legal measures to silence civic actors: it rewrites the very narrative of democracy, weaponising language and stories to erode legitimacy before repression even begins.

Europe now faces a strategic choice: how to strengthen democratic resilience and remain engaged without fuelling accusations of foreign interference. Its credibility will depend on placing civic voices at the heart of its global agenda.

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‘Speed Date’ Session at TED Network’s Annual Meeting: Power in Participation



At the TED Annual Meeting, Working Group 2 put civic and political participation front and centre as democracy's frontline defence. From youth-led demonstrations dominoing from Serbia, Togo, Peru to Nepal, it is clear: people power drives change.

During a “speed dating” of strategies and practices, the members connected work done on civic space, local governance and democracy between the ballots to pressing geopolitical priorities: security-defence mobilisation, the Global Gateway, private sector accountability and women’s and youth political participation. Backed by shared expertise, Working Group 2 enters the 2025–2026 workplan ready to track civic and political participation as impact across TED.

[Read more »](#)



Reinforcing Information Integrity Across Sectors: A Conversation with Christina Dahlman, New Co-Chair of TED Working Group 3

In this interview, Christina Dahlman, newly appointed Co-Chair of TED’s Working Group 3 on Media and Digital, shares Sida’s evolving priorities on media freedom, digital governance, and safeguarding information integrity.

Reflecting on her experience at the TED Annual Meeting, Christina highlights the importance of cross-sectoral collaboration, transparency, and resilience in the face of disinformation and democratic backsliding, pointing to the growing relevance of media and digital engagement in supporting democratic governance and just transitions.



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Ensuring Information Integrity in a Time of Crises with the Team Europe Approach



Information integrity sits at the intersection of media support and digital democracy, ensuring that public discourse remains trustworthy, inclusive and resilient.

At the TED Annual Meeting, Working Group 3 reaffirmed this as a strategic priority, launching the new Media Support Toolkit and calling for broader engagement and coalition-building.

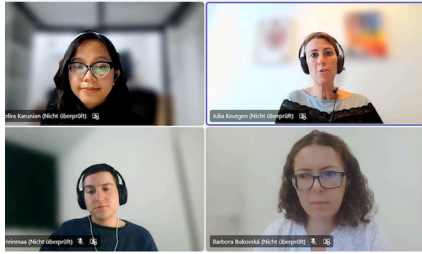


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Democratic Resilience in the Age of Artificial Intelligence – TED joint webinar

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming democracy and electoral processes, by expanding opportunities for participation while at the same time driving disinformation, fuelling online gender-



based violence and eroding public trust.

At TED's October webinar on "Safeguarding Democracy and Elections in the Age of AI," experts shared research and country examples on how to protect rights, reform regulation and strengthen local resilience against AI-driven manipulation.

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Partner Country Engagement Updates

Supporting Social Accountability in Global Gateway Investments in Malawi: A Framework for Engagement

As programmes increasingly align with the Global Gateway strategy, particularly the democracy, good governance and transparency principles of the 360-degree approach, governance units in EU Delegations and Member States are exploring entry points to protect civic space. This includes building bridges between infrastructure-related discussions with banks and the private sector, and broader governance objectives.

One example is the development of a social accountability framework for Global Gateway investments, aimed at strengthening civil society's role as a watchdog — as demonstrated in Malawi.

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TED Support to the EU Delegation and Member States in Tanzania on Coordinated Human Rights and Democracy Support

In 2025 the TED Secretariat provided support to the EU Delegation and 11 Member States in Tanzania to strengthen coordination on Human Rights and Democracy. Through comprehensive mapping studies, contextual analyses and dialogue, TED assisted to identify shared priorities to guide future potential engagements.

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Events

- 28 October (15:00-16:00 CET): Rule of Law Index 2025 Release (webinar)

- 16 October (15:30-18:00 CET): AI for social good and Africa's strategic choices
- 03-07 November: 10th Regional Conference in Latin America – Business Integrity Week – Alliance for Integrity
- 11-12 November: Copenhagen Conference on Information Integrity

The full list of events can be found [here](#).



Publications

What Future for Democracy Support?



With international democracy support facing growing disruption – from shifting U.S. priorities to global authoritarian pushback – this paper by Carnegie Endowment for International Peace calls for a fundamental rethinking of established approaches. It explores how the erosion of traditional leadership, the rise of competing narratives, and constrained funding environments demand new models, methods, and partnerships for more resilient, inclusive democracy support.

Six key challenges are outlined, offering a starting point for reimagining the field in a more multipolar and contested world.

[Further Information and Download »](#)



Diverse Influencing Approaches in Closing Civic Space Contexts: Experiences from Oxfam and Partners



Civic space is shrinking around the world, but communities keep finding ways to act.

Oxfam's new learning report, "Diverse Influencing Approaches in Closing Civic Space Contexts", explores how local actors and their allies adapt in restrictive environments. From grassroots programming and locally led partnerships, to digital storytelling, evidence-based research and international advocacy, the report reveals practical strategies for staying resilient, protecting rights and pushing for change.

[Further Information and Download »](#)



Localizing Development to the Grassroots: Potentials and Limits of Engaging with Community Groups



A recent IDOS policy brief explores the promises and pitfalls of channelling development aid to local community groups. Drawing on a case study in Nakuru City, Kenya, it highlights the persistent gap between localisation rhetoric and practice, noting that only a fraction of ODA to civil society reaches local actors directly.

While grassroots engagement is essential for inclusive development, the policy brief cautions against assuming community groups are inherently representative. It offers practical recommendations for donors, including investing in public services, understanding local power dynamics, and strengthening participatory governance at the local level.

[Further Information and Download »](#)



Co-ordinating Action for Civic Space



This OECD toolkit offers practical guidance to adherents to the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Recommendation on Enabling Civil Society in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance.

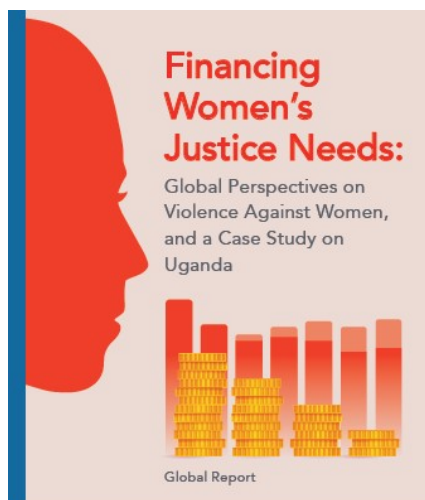
It focuses on how providers can co-ordinate – with civil society, within provider governments, among providers, and with international bodies and other development actors – to protect and promote civic space, while recognising the need to coordinate with partner-country governments throughout.

The toolkit offers interesting coordination examples, including the EU System for an Enabling Environment for Civil Society (EU SEE), the EU Civil Society Roadmap, the Digital Democracy initiative or Team Europe Democracy.

[Further Information and Download »](#)



Financing Women's Justice Needs: Global Perspectives on Violence Against Women, and a Case Study on Uganda



The report published by IDLO, UNDP and partners, examines the global financing landscape for addressing violence against women, with a detailed case study on Uganda. It underscores that while women's right to live free from violence is a basic human right and part of the SDG agenda, funding for justice initiatives continues to be severely insufficient.. Despite Uganda's progress in gender-responsive budgeting, justice services for survivors are still underfunded.

The report calls on governments and development partners to increase investments, close justice gaps and ensure accountability in addressing violence against women.



[Further Information and Download »](#)



AI for Justice and Justice for AI: Why Access to Justice Enables Better AI Governance

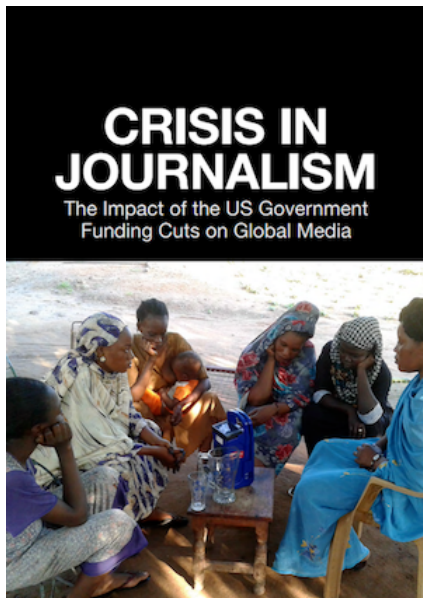
As AI reshapes our societies, global governance must evolve in step. A new analysis argues that equal access to justice can serve as a critical foundation for more inclusive and equitable AI governance. By centring people's legal needs and reducing power imbalances, justice systems can help unlock AI's positive potential while guarding against elite capture and exclusion. If governed inclusively, AI can expand access to justice through innovation.

The paper, by the Center on International Cooperation New York University, calls on multilateral actors to integrate justice and human rights into AI frameworks and to treat SDG 16.3 as a vital tributary for the responsible AI revolution.

[Further Information and Download »](#)



Crisis in Journalism: The Impact of the US Government Funding Cuts on Global Media



A report by Free Press Unlimited highlights the devastating global impact of the 2025 U.S. foreign aid cuts on independent media.

Led by Internews Europe, BBC Media Action, and Free Press Unlimited, the assessment spans over 50 countries and reveals media closures, rising risks to journalists, and growing disinformation threats.

With trusted local news disappearing in fragile contexts, the report calls for urgent, flexible support and renewed investment to sustain public interest journalism and protect press freedom worldwide.

[Further Information and Download »](#)



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