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Team Europe Democracy Initiative (TED) Newsletter

#TEAMEUROPE



Updates on the Team Europe Democracy Initiative:

Provided by TED Secretariat

Dear Colleagues and Partners,

As 2025 draws to a close, this edition of the TED Newsletter looks back on a year of intense exchange, learning and collaboration across the network. Building on the momentum of the TED Annual Meeting in Brussels and the discussions around the International Day of Democracy, our community has continued to reflect on how democracy support can adapt in a rapidly changing geopolitical landscape.

In this issue, you will find a mix of highlights from TED's work over the past months: updates on grants and training, insights from our working groups, country-level engagements and selected contributions from TED members and partners, as well as a curated selection of external publications relevant to democracy, rule of law and media support.

We hope this final issue of 2025 offers useful food for thought and inspiration for your work. Thank you for your continued engagement throughout the year. We look forward to staying connected in 2026.

TED Secretariat

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TED Grants and Training Updates

Discover the TED Grants Portfolio: Project Overviews and One-Pagers

The TED initiative has published an overview of all currently funded grants, including a full list of grantees, short project descriptions, and downloadable one-pagers for each project. The projects span a range of themes and regions, including action-oriented research, civic participation, information integrity, and justice reform.

Grants are being implemented across diverse contexts – from Benin and Colombia to Côte d'Ivoire, Guatemala, Guinea, Mongolia, Senegal and Uganda – offering insights into locally led responses to democratic governance challenges.

[Read more »](#)



Building Democratic Resilience: Insights from TED's First Training Module



In November 2025, TED kicked off the training module Building Democratic Resilience. Through micro-learning, real-world case studies, and interactive exercises,

105 participants explored democratic backsliding, civil society's role, and human rights online, gaining practical insights to strengthen democracy in complex contexts.

[Read more »](#)



TED Network

Summary Booklet of the 2025 TED Network Annual Meeting Published



Discover the key discussions, insights, and priorities that shaped this year's TED Network Annual Meeting, now captured in the 2025 Summary Booklet.

The Annual Meeting was held in Brussels on 16-17 September 2025.

[Further information and download »](#)



Team Europe Perspectives on Democracy Support in a Shifting Geopolitical Landscape

The new TED narrative paper argues that democracy, rule of law and accountability are not just normative values, but core strategic assets for security, stability and sustainable development – including through the Global Gateway. Drawing on inputs from across the TED network and civil society, it offers a common framing and concrete entry points to keep democracy support at the centre of future actions. Readers are invited to use the paper as a reference for ongoing dialogue and future cooperation.

[Read more »](#)



Highlights from TED's Rule of Law & Accountability Community



In this edition of the newsletter, we take the opportunity to showcase recent contributions from TED's Working Group 1 members and partners, who have been active across a wide range of global justice and accountability initiatives over the past months.

At the 2025 Open Government Global (OGP) Global Summit, co-hosted with the Government of Spain, TED network members and partners advanced open governance commitments with 160 entities endorsing the Vitoria-Gasteiz Declaration. Among others, OGP initiated the Civic Space Lab Reformers' Program, relaunched the OGP Coalition on Justice and hosted the Democracy Narratives Campaign – Global Democracy Coalition, as well as other side events by TED members such as the Hague Institute for Innovation of Law on people-centered justice.

The World Justice Project released the latest Rule of Law Index, highlighting continued global Rule of Law recession trends in 2025.

Colleagues from the Justice Action Coalition convened in Spain for a high-level meeting, followed by the OECD's 2025 People-Centered Justice Roundtable focusing on issues shaping the justice systems of tomorrow – from trustworthy artificial intelligence and justice data ecosystems to climate-responsive justice and local service delivery.

In November, the EU's Transitional Justice Policy Framework marked its 10-year anniversary. On this occasion, TED experts presented a report "How the EU and EU Member States can support Transitional Justice Processes in Sub Saharan Africa" to the Working Party on Human Rights (COHOM) at the Council of the European Union. The report will be available on TED's Cap4Development page shortly.



"More Money for Justice, More Justice for the Money": The Justice Action Coalition's New Framework for Smarter Justice Investments



How can countries ensure their justice systems meet people's everyday needs? The Justice Action Coalition has just launched the Justice Financing Framework (JFF), providing practical guidance on financing justice in ways that strengthen the social contract, promote security and stability, and deliver real results for citizens.

In this interview, Pathfinders, ODI Global, and HiIL explain what the JFF is and why it matters, how countries can implement it on the ground and what are linkages to the TED network.

[Read more »](#)



In conversation with Jean Van Wetter: How TED and the Practitioners' Network for European Development Cooperation Drive Democratic Cooperation



As global democratic norms face increasing strain, Europe reaches a decisive moment.

In this conversation, Jean Van Wetter, CEO of Enabel and co-president of the Practitioners' Network for European Development Cooperation, reflects on how TED and the Practitioners' Network can act as a complementary ecosystem, connecting international cooperation, investment and democratic governance.

Drawing on 2025 lessons from localisation, narrative competition, private sector engagement and Global Gateway, he argues that Europe's competitive advantages lie in its democratic credibility and explains what it will take to uphold this in 2026.

Jean Van Wetter
© Belgium Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation

[Read full interview »](#)



Celebrating 15 Years of European Centre for Electoral Support: Europe's Strategic Future with José Manuel Barroso



The European Centre for Electoral Support (ECES, TED Working Group 2 thematic lead) marked its 15th anniversary with a high-level conversation in Brussels featuring José Manuel Barroso, former President of the European Commission. Moderated by ECES Founder Fabio Bargiacchi, the discussion spoke to Europe's strategic role amid geopolitical competition, democratic pressures and rapid technological change. Mr. Barroso reflected on the EU's legacy as a peace project, stressing the link between democracy and lasting stability, while warning of the risks posed by AI-driven manipulation.

The event underscored the need for principled, cooperative European leadership and reaffirmed ECES's commitment to democracy, dialogue and strengthening electoral institutions through inclusive, transparent and conflict-sensitive support.

[Read more »](#)



TED and D4D Hub Webinar: 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence (GBV)



The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence is an annual global campaign taking place from 25 November – International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women – to 10 December – Human Rights Day.

#NoExcuse for online abuse was the focus of the 16 Days of Activism in 2025 as 1.8 billion women and girls have no legal protection from digital violence.

The Team Europe Democracy Initiative together with the Digital4Development Hub are organising the webinar “Team

Europe united against Technology-facilitated Gender-based Violence: Building inclusive and democratic digital spaces” – join us on December 16th online.

Date: December 16

Time: 14:00 CET

[Register here](#)



Association for Progressive Communications Input: Situating Feminist, Global South Approach to Researching Technology Facilitated Gender Based Violence



As digital spaces expand across the Global South and beyond, they are not socially neutral, rather they reflect and amplify the same inequalities, power imbalances, and norms that shape offline life.

Since 2006, the Association for Progressive Communications (APC) has documented and analysed how

those inequalities are reproduced online, labelling the resulting harms under the term technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV). Find out more about APCs work in this article.

[Read more »](#)



Interview with Virginia Bolatti and Laura Porrini from the Team behind the Women's and Feminist Funds Solutions Initiative



Technology-facilitated gender-based violence is rapidly reshaping civic space across Latin America.

DG INTPA has conducted an interview with Virginia Bolatti and Laura Porrini, from the team behind the Women's and

Feminist Funds Solutions initiative, who explain why this violence must be understood as political, how it threatens democratic participation, and what locally rooted strategies are proving most effective in responding to it.

[Read full interview »](#)



Partner Country Engagement Updates

TED Support to the DRC on Transitional Justice

Team Europe+ is stepping aims to strengthen coordination and coherence on transitional justice support in the DRC. TED is mapping all EU and Member State + initiatives and developing strategic options for a more coordinated response. Following consultations in Kinshasa and Europe, the team will propose multiple plans to guide collective engagement, with a confidential draft report expected in mid-December.

[Read more »](#)



TED Supports the EU and Member States in Guatemala to Strengthen Reform Processes and Enhance Support to Partners

Guatemala faces overlapping crises on political, demographic and economic fronts. The need for strong coordination between donors, international agencies, civic space and the private sector is essential to mitigate duplication, policy incoherence, and ultimately enhance overall impact.

TED supported the EU Delegation and Member States by providing an analysis of the civic space, justice sector reforms, open government reforms to facilitate the pooling resources and aligning strategies to support systemic reforms and enhance the impact of Team Europe's efforts and Global Gateway. This analysis further informed the design of an Action in territorial development specifically within the component on governance, anti-corruption, and access to justice measures.

[Read more »](#)



Events

16 December (16:00-17:30 CET): Repainting the Climate Justice Canvas: How the World's Highest Courts are Leading the Way



Publications

Recent Resources for Democracy, Rule of Law and Media Support

HiiL's study on Justice Needs and Satisfaction in Tunisia offers detailed insights into people's everyday legal problems and resolution paths, while the OECD's Toolkit for Access to Justice and People-Centred Justice Systems and Supporting Businesses through Better Justice Systems papers translate people-centred justice principles into concrete guidance for public institutions and SMEs.

IDLO's brief People-Centred Land Governance for Peace, Security and Stability links land, rule of law and conflict prevention, while GFMD's publications Democracy at Risk: Why the EU Must Prioritise Media Freedom in the Next MFF and the joint letter Invest in Free Media: Europe's Democratic Foundation set out arguments for sustained EU support to independent media in the next MFF.

On journalist safety, ARTICLE 19's resources From Impunity to Accountability and Equally Safe: Towards a Feminist Approach to the Safety of Journalists advance intersectional and feminist approaches to protection.

At EU level, the Civil Liberties Union for Europe's Rule of Law Report 2025, the European Commission's 2025 Enlargement Package and the Joint Communication on the European Democracy Shield provide an up-to-date picture of rule of law trends, accession dynamics and the EU's emerging internal democracy agenda.

[Further Information and Downloads »](#)



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