

Team Europe Democracy (TED) Initiative

TED NETWORK ANNUAL MEETING 2026

June 16th, 13:00 – 18:30

June 17th, 09:30 – 17:00

Strengthening Governance, Defending Democracy

Les Ateliers des Tanneurs

Rue des Tanneurs 58-62

1000 Brussels

“Strengthening Governance, Defending Democracy” is the title of this year’s Annual Meeting of the Team Europe Democracy Initiative. It will convene over 120 TED Network Members in Brussels – bringing together representatives from EU institutions, member states, civil society, academia, and private sector – to reaffirm democracy as a core pillar in international cooperation.

In the context of new global challenges to democracy but also opportunities, the event will provide a platform for comprehensive discussion on international democracy support and partnership-building. Faced with global democratic backsliding, shrinking civic spaces and increasingly complex information ecosystems, defending democracy requires collaboration that reaches beyond siloed approaches.

Now more than ever, we must forge alliances for democracy support beyond traditional development as demands for democratic governance and accountability are rising. The EU’s Global Gateway strategy, that shapes EU and Member State (MS) engagements, presents an opportunity to engage and position the private sector as a central partner for capital, expertise and innovation. At the same time, it is essential to ensure that Global Gateway projects support conditions for sustainable economic development, as well as democratic values and high standards.

Bridging the sectors and closing the narrative gap requires structured dialogue and practical collaboration across EU, MS, private actors, DFIs, civil society, and media.

The TED Network Annual Meeting will present a platform to convene stakeholders, ensuring European investments remain value-based and sustainable.



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The meeting is designed to achieve four key goals:

1. To facilitate **exchange and harnessing synergies** on challenges and responses in democracy support, bringing renewed **commitment** to the rule of law and transparency, civic space, citizens participation and a strengthened information environment.
2. To **strengthen collaboration** and **build coalitions** among democracy actors.
3. **Identify approaches** to foster democratic resilience and shape new democracy narratives and messaging.
4. To generate **actionable outcomes**, including joint commitments, pilot collaborations, and a clear set of follow-up activities with defined ownership and timelines (TED Overarching Work Plan).

Following the priorities within TED's areas of work, the agenda is structured around three thematic areas:

1. **Accountability and Rule of Law,**
2. **Political and Civic Participation, and**
3. **Information Integrity.**

For each topic, focused panels will discuss evidence and trends. To translate the discussion into actionable steps, the panel will be followed by solution-focused workshops and interactive breakout sessions.



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AGENDA – DAY 1	
Time	Programme
11:30 – 12:00	Registration
12:00 – 13:00	Networking Lunch
13:00 – 13:30	Welcome to the TED Network Annual Meeting 2026 Chiara Adamo , Acting Director Human Development, Migration, Governance and Peace, DG INTPA G1 Marie-Alexandra Kurth , Team Lead, TED Secretariat
13:30 – 13:45	Keynote Martin Bille Hermann , Deputy Political Director and Managing Director for Multilateral Relations, Human Rights and Democracy, European External Action Service
13:45 – 15:00	1st Plenary Session: High-Level Panel Integrating Democratic Principles by Design in EU International Partnerships. Moderation: Lindsey Higgs Chiara Adamo , Acting Director Human Development, Migration, Governance and Peace, DG INTPA G1 Constanze Neher , Deputy Director General for Development Policy Issues, German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) Bart Pennewaert , Deputy Director General for Directorate-General for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid, Belgian Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation Mark Zellenrath , Director for Multilateral Organisations and Human Rights, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands Marie-Louise Koch Wegter , Director for Humanitarian Action and Civil Society, Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Translating Team Europe Approach through TED: Perspective from the Implementing Partners.



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	<p>Jean Van Wetter, CEO, Enabel</p> <p>Kristian Lempa, Director of Division for Global Policy, Governance and Cities, GIZ</p>
15:00 – 15:30	Coffee break
15:30 – 16:45	2nd Plenary Session Leveraging Alliances for Team Europe, Democratic Governance Support and Private Sector
	<p>Moderation: Lindsey Higgs</p> <p>Christina Dahlman, Senior Policy Specialist, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)</p> <p>Angela Rodriguez, Director of Netherlands Institute on Multiparty Democracy (NIMD) Colombia, TED Grantee</p> <p>Clare Cook, Head of Journalism and Media Viability, International Media Support (IMS)</p> <p>Victoria Kyritsi, Head Strategy and Business Development Division, European Investment Bank (EIB) Global</p> <p>Géraldine Smeets, International Relations with EU Stakeholders at Euro Cámara Argentina, Vice Chair of the Board of Directors, European Business Organisation (EBO) Worldwide Network</p>
16:45 – 17:00	Closing of Day 1
17:00 – 18:30	Networking Reception – Members Fair
	<p>Exhibiting members: Raoul Wallenberg Institute, OCCRP, Transparency International, Association Francophone des Commissions, Association Francophone des Commissions Nationales des Droits de l'Homme, Protection International, Wilde Ganzen, CFI, International Media Support, Global Partners Digital, Gorée Institute, CiAAF, HiIL</p>



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AGENDA – DAY 2	
Time	Programme
09:00 – 09:30	Arrival and Coffee
09:30 – 09:45	TED Annual Meeting: Day 2 Opening
	Moderation: Lindsey Higgs
09:45 – 10:30	3rd Plenary Session Democratic Resilience: Myth or Reality?
	Moderation: Richard Youngs , Senior Fellow, Carnegie Europe and co-founder of the European Democracy Hub
	Mandeep Tiwana , Secretary General, CIVICUS
	Joan Hoey , Europe Consultant, The Economist Intelligence Unit
	Tin Gazivoda , Development Director, D-Hub
10:30 – 11:15	4th Plenary Session TED Grants on action-oriented research Proof over Promise: Advancing on the democratic agenda in our partner countries
	Moderation: Jakob Rieken , Deputy-Head of Division Democracy, governance and media BMZ
	Rachel Taylor , Justice Sector Advisor, Hiil
	Expedit Ologou , Senior Researcher and Founder, Civic Academy for Africa's Future (CiAAF)
	Latyr Tine , Senior Program Officer, Gorée Institute
	Rodrigo Barahona , Learning Lead on Civic Space, Oxfam Intermon
	Batsugar Tsedendamba , Team Leader, Independent Research Institute of Mongolia (IRIM)
11:15 – 11:45	Coffee Break



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11:45 – 13:00	Workshops
	Mainstreaming Integrity in the Global Gateway: Operationalising good governance and transparency in development investments Open Government Partnership (OGP), Transparency International
	Accountability for electoral manipulation and corruption: The role of the justice sector in protecting political and electoral rights Partnership for Integrity, U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Center
	Turning Scenarios into Action: Practical Pathways to Safeguard Civic Space German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Open Government Partnership (OGP), Brot für die Welt, ECDPM
	Strengthening People-Centered International Solidarity Initiatives: Strengthening people-centered initiatives and local philanthropy through trust-based and equitable multi-stakeholder partnerships Wilde Ganzen, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands
	Why Journalism Matters: Evidence of its impact on security, economy and society DW Akademie, International Fund for Public Interest Media, UNESCO, International Media Support, Global Forum for Media Development
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 16:30	TED WG Sessions
	WG1 Accountability and Rule of Law
	WG2 Civic and Political Participation
	WG3 Information Integrity
16:30 – 17:00	Closing Session Team Europe Democracy: Shared Directions, Collective Commitments
	Moderation: Lindsey Higgs
	Markus Handke , TED Coordinator, DG INTPA G1
	Kristina Hrbková , COHOM Delegate on Human Rights, Permanent Representation of the Czech Republic to the EU
	Joëlle Coureau , Head of Unit State Reforms, Human Rights and Fragility, French Ministry of European and Foreign Affairs



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