



# International IDEA

The International Institute for Democracy  
and Electoral Assistance

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At a glance



# Our mission

In a world where democracy cannot be taken for granted, the mission of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) is:

» *to support sustainable democratic change through providing comparative knowledge, and assisting in democratic reform, and influencing policies and politics.*

In addressing our mission we focus on the ability of democratic institutions to deliver a political system marked by public participation and inclusion, representative and accountable government, responsiveness to citizens' needs and aspirations, and the rule of law and equal rights for all citizens.

## We undertake our work through three activity areas

■ **Providing comparative knowledge and experience derived from practical experience on democracy building processes from diverse contexts around the world.**

■ **Assisting political actors in reforming democratic institutions and processes, and engaging in political processes when invited to do so.**

■ **Influencing democracy building policies through the provision of our comparative knowledge resources and assistance to political actors.**

## Our work encapsulates two key principles

- We are exponents of democratic change. The very nature of democracy is about evolving and adapting governance systems to address the needs of an ever changing society.
- We are supporters of change. The drivers of change must come from within societies themselves.

## Our programme

Democracy cannot be imported or exported, but it can be supported. And because democratic actors can be inspired by what others are doing elsewhere around the world, International IDEA plays an instrumental role in supporting their initiatives by:

### **Providing comparative knowledge and experience in:**

- elections and referendums
- constitutions
- political parties
- gender in democracy and women's political empowerment
- democracy self-assessments
- democracy and development

### **Assisting political actors in national reform process**

As democratic change ultimately happens among citizens at the national and local levels we support, upon request and within our programme areas, national reform processes in countries located in:

- Latin America
- Africa and the Middle East
- Asia and the Pacific

### **Influencing democracy building policies**

A fundamental feature of strengthening democracy building processes is the exchange of knowledge and experience among political actors. We support such exchange through:

- dialogues
- seminars and conferences
- capacity building

### **Seeking to develop and mainstream understanding of key issues**

Since democratic institutions and processes operate in national and international political contexts we are developing and mainstreaming the understanding of how democracy interplays with:

- development
- conflict and security
- gender
- diversity

## Our approach

Democracy grows from within societies and is a dynamic and constantly evolving process; it never reaches a state of final consolidation. This is reflected in our work: in supporting our partners' efforts to make continuous advances in democratic processes we work step by step with them with a long-term perspective.

We develop synergies with those involved in driving democratic processes – regional political entities (the European Union (EU), the Organization of American States (OAS), and the African Union (AU) for example), policy makers, politicians, political parties, electoral management bodies, civil society organizations – and strategic partnerships with the key regional, international and multi/bilateral agencies supporting democratic change and different United Nations bodies.

Quintessentially, we bring experience and options to the table but do not prescribe solutions – true to the principle that the decision-makers in a democracy are the citizens and their chosen representatives.

**International IDEA** is an intergovernmental organization that supports sustainable democracy worldwide. International IDEA's Member States are all democracies and provide both political and financial support to the work of the Institute. The Member States include Australia, Barbados, Belgium, Botswana, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ghana, India, Mauritius, Mexico, Namibia, the Netherlands, Norway, Peru, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and Uruguay. Japan has observer status.



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