

## EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

*(To be filled in and uploaded as deliverable in the Portal Grant Management System, at the due date foreseen in the system.*

 *Please provide one sheet per event (one event = one workpackage = one lump sum).*

PROJECT	
Participant:	1 - Alternatives Européennes (EuroAlter)
PIC number:	941964479
Project name and acronym:	The Democratic Odyssey - ODYSSEY

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	Deliverable D14 Work Package 8
Event name:	FOURTH ASSEMBLY SESSION
Type:	Online assembly
In situ/online:	online
Location:	Zoom
Date(s):	3rd April 2025
Website(s) (if any):	<a href="https://euroalter.com/assembly-online-session/">https://euroalter.com/assembly-online-session/</a>
Participants:	
Female:	114
Male:	88
Other/non-binary:	11
Albania	14
Austria	2
Belgium	2
Bosnia-Herzegovina	2
Bulgaria	8
Croatia	1
Cyprus	7

Czech Rep	2		
Denmark	1		
Estonia	1		
Finland	1		
France	5		
Germany	18		
Greece:	59		
Hungary	4		
Ireland	2		
Italy	42		
Latvia	1		
Lithuania	3		
Luxembourg	1		
Malta	1		
Netherlands	1		
Poland	5		
Portugal	1		
Romania	10		
Serbia	1		
Slovakia	1		
Slovenia	2		
Spain	3		
Sweden	3		
Ukraine	9		
Total number of participants:	213	From total number of countries:	31
<b>Description</b>			
<i>Provide a short description of the event and its activities.</i>			

# Democratic Odyssey

*This report provides an overview of the deliverable 14 (D14) on the fourth assembly session*

## **REPORT ON FOURTH ASSEMBLY SESSION**

The Democratic Odyssey is a crowdsourced campaign advocating for a “permanent peoples’ assembly for Europe” by mobilising a wide-ranging and pluralistic group of actors, including academics, practitioners, journalists, institutional representatives and civil society. Inspired by the tentative efforts of past EU legislatures to institutionalise citizen participation, it seeks to go further.

As part of this journey, the Democratic Odyssey launched a pilot transnational assembly, designed to bring together a representative group of citizens in multilingual, transnational deliberations. This assembly is not a single event but a dynamic, evolving process that unfolds across multiple European cities, incorporating both in-person and online formats. Each stage of the journey serves as a stepping stone towards greater citizen involvement, planting the seeds for a more participatory European democracy.

The Online Gathering of April 3rd, 2025, was a critical milestone in this process. Taking place after the second in-person assembly in Florence (February 21–23, 2025), this session offered assembly members a valuable opportunity to further refine and consolidate the recommendations developed onsite. Participants revisited the proposals emerging from the Florence deliberations, clarified areas of disagreement, integrated additional perspectives, and worked toward stronger consensus. The gathering also allowed those who had not been present in Florence to engage with the evolving content, reflect collectively on the journey so far, and help build momentum toward the final phase of the deliberations in Vienna (May 2025).

This online space was designed to be inclusive and participatory, offering interpretation in Greek, and Italian. It allowed the 213 assembly members, who were selected through a civic lottery, to remain engaged beyond the physical meetings. By leveraging digital tools such as Miro and interactive methods, the

gathering facilitated meaningful dialogue and collective sense-making, reinforcing the assembly's role as an evolving, transnational, citizen-driven platform.

**Participants:**

The Online Gathering on 3rd April brought together a total of 213 participants from 31 countries. The majority of attendees were assembly members who had participated in the Athens Assembly in September and the Florence assembly in February. Additionally, the gathering included facilitators managing the break out groups and the presentation of the recommendations to participants as well as interpreters.

**What?**

The gathering was structured into two parts:

**Part 1: Qualitative feedback on recommendations.**

The session began in the main room, where participants received a collective reflection on why we are here, what has happened so far, and who is in the (virtual) room. The agenda for the day was presented, along with a reminder of the ambassador selection process.

The core of the gathering focused on a presentation of the process and recommendations emerging from the second in-person assembly in Florence. The facilitation team explained the deliberative steps taken to arrive at the current proposals and outlined the structure of the online session.

Participants were then divided into breakout groups of approximately 10 people, each supported by a facilitator, with interpretation provided where needed. Each group followed a structured process to provide qualitative feedback on a set of recommendations.

In each breakout group, participants had a presentation of the specific set of recommendations assigned to the group. Facilitators then led a clarification round to ensure everyone understood both the content of the recommendations and the process ahead. The group was introduced to the post-it process using Miro, with alternatives provided for those unable to use the tool. Participants engaged in a collaborative discussion, posting their thoughts, exchanging feedback, and

deliberating on the proposals with gentle facilitation to support inclusive and meaningful dialogue.

After group work, everyone returned to the main room for a celebratory moment. Participants were randomly mixed into groups of three in a "Mix and Match" activity to share insights and experiences with fellow citizens they hadn't yet met.

### **The recommendations**

The below ten recommendations were discussed in dedicated breakout groups during the online gathering, where participants offered qualitative feedback based on their perspectives and experiences. Citizens commented on the clarity, relevance, and feasibility of the proposals, highlighting areas of strong consensus as well as points requiring further refinement. Facilitators will review this input integrating the participants' suggestions into the final version of the recommendations. The updated set will serve as the foundation for the next deliberative phase in Vienna.

RECOMMENDATION	EXPLANATION
<p><b><u>Recommendation 1:</u></b></p> <p><b>(Crisis) Create Permanent Citizen's Assemblies and institutionalise them on local, national and European level, with the support of European Institutions</b></p>	<p>Core Principle: Nothing about us without us! If Citizen's Assemblies are institutionalised, trust and accountability will be enhanced.</p> <p>Key Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Assembly must be organised by sortition, taking representation into account.</li> <li>○ Migrant residents and Global Citizens should be able to partake in the Citizen's Assembly.</li> <li>○ Participants are able to access training (see Recommendation 4)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Accountability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Citizen's Assemblies are a body of regulation and accountability, inclusion and diversity.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Executing authority shall ensure shared responsibility and accountability between all actors to guarantee checks and balances</li> <li>○ Relevant authorities shall use other engagement tools beyond the citizen’s assembly (referendum, online consultation, calls) to pick between different protocols/ strategies, when during Crisis.</li> <li>○ The effectiveness of the citizens assembly shall be assessed.</li> <li>● Decision Making             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The first demand of all assemblies across Europe should be for their recognition as legitimate political institutions, and the EU should take action to recognise them.</li> <li>○ Topics can be proposed from the local level to European Coordination to decide on agenda.</li> <li>○ Petitions can be submitted to the Citizens Assembly. If the assembly supports the petition, the EU must take action.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Assembly must include ambassadors from other assemblies.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ensure participation from “local” Assemblies</li> <li>○ Ensure ambassadors from Autonomous Deliberative Communities are present and ensure the independence and self-governance of them.                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Integrate a government representative or civil servant into community</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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	<p>discussions, once the community is ready, ensuring that this representative does not dominate the discussion but serves as a liaison and information resource.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Composition             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ For cities from 20000 to 100000 inhabitants, there should be 20 people</li> <li>○ For cities over 100000 there should be 100 people</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Recommendation 2:</u></b></p> <p><b>Empower citizens for crisis preparedness and not wait for emergency</b></p>	<p>Core Principle: Complexity not Simplicity! Citizens should be credibly empowered to effectively engage in civic life across all stages, from routine governance to crisis response without waiting for the crisis to become acute.</p> <p>Key Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A continuous civic infrastructure should be designed to be activated at times of crisis.</li> <li>● Targeted civic education and confidence training: Governments must offer crisis management training for people to be prepared to adapt and react to future crises, both in caring about themselves and for others.</li> <li>● Informal Duty of Participation: Implement an informal duty, akin to jury duty, to participate in citizens' assemblies, replacing a mandatory voting requirement but with soft obligation to participate and with compensation.</li> <li>● Citizen Platforms: Establish and support citizen-led platforms for engagement and collaboration specifically in times of crisis</li> <li>● Enhanced Public Consultations: Strengthen and expand public consultation processes that can simply rely on existing email or social media list</li> <li>● “Act where you know best”: Expert citizen</li> </ul>

	<p>involvement: engage citizens in areas where they possess relevant expertise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Launch a European Civic Alliances for Transnational Crisis Action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Offer adaptable policies to take into account the changes in the labour market</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendation 3:</b></p> <p><b>Enhance citizens power to engage in difficult conversations</b></p>	<p>Core Principles: Train to Deliberate: Before, During, After! Citizens should be able to access spaces and training to gain deliberative skills, enhancing their involvement in local decision making (especially for those that directly impact their lives).</p> <p>Key Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Create a European Citizen Training School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Train citizens in deliberative skills, crisis management, and digital literacy.</li> <li>○ Partner with municipalities and the Erasmus Student Network for diverse representation.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Regular local dialogues</li> <li>● Regular spaces for learning deliberative skills (Ideally every 1-5 years)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendation 4:</b></p> <p><b>Empower the emergence and inter-connection of Neighborhood Assemblies and other autonomous communities for In-Person and Digital Engagement</b></p>	<p>Core Principle: Neighbourhood Voices Matter! Support neighborhood assemblies combining in-person and digital tools to improve citizen engagement and crisis management. These assemblies aim to foster community trust, belonging, and effective crisis coordination.</p> <p>Outcomes: a) Strengthened community bonds and engagement, b) Faster, coordinated responses to crises, c) Empowered citizens in local decision-making and crisis management.</p> <p>Key Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Establish Neighborhood Assemblies: Local platforms for residents to discuss issues and collaborate on solutions.</li> <li>● Develop a Digital Crisis Management Platform: A tool for real-time</li> </ul>



	<p>communication, resource sharing, and coordination during crises.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ensure Diversity and Inclusion: Make assemblies and platforms accessible to all, including marginalized groups and non-citizens.</li> <li>● Prioritize outcomes that lead to tangible, community-driven actions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendation 5: Representative authority must set up and engage a (compensated) PEOPLES PANEL before, during and after crisis.</b></p>	<p>Principles: Consult the Panel in crisis! The People’s Panel can ensure “emergency representation” of citizens, when a full Citizen’s Assembly is not possible and offers an agile, accessible and representative additional body.</p> <p>Key Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The People’s Panel must present, discuss prevention, roles, money, protocol with a group of experts, who will produce decisions in an accessible language.</li> <li>● The local authority informs citizens well in advance (in accessible language) (informed by experts before and after making their decision).</li> <li>● The citizens panel monitors if the plan is implemented. The citizens panel informs the citizens about the government's actions</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendation 6: Imagine a world where transparency has become the modus operandi of all authorities in Europe</b></p>	<p>Core Principles: To rebuild trust citizens must demand transparency and hold institutions accountable ensuring that information is always accessible because it is for citizens to decide</p> <p>Key Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Governments must regularly publish detailed reports on policy outcomes, resource allocation, preventing corruption and restoring public trust</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendation 7: Citizens should be involved in welcoming migrants and</b></p>	<p>Core Principle: Welcome Migrants in the respect of all</p>

<p><b>integrating migrants mechanisms</b></p>	<p>Key Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Build an EU mechanism to ensure respect of the values of EU by all, both authorities, citizens and migrants themselves, as a coordinated system across Europe</li> <li>● Welcome Committees in which citizens are involved (language, culture, ambassadors)</li> <li>● Awareness Campaigns &amp; Cultural Celebrations to ensure understanding of local and other cultures and languages and connections</li> <li>● Cooperation between citizens and between other levels of government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ensure bottom up feedback citizens to citizens and from citizens to relevant authorities about welcoming migrants mechanisms</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendation 8: Participatory budgeting ought to become widespread at all levels of governance, including planning for times of crisis</b></p>	<p>Core Principle: No taxation without participation Key Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● This committee could be within the Permanent EU level Assembly.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendation 9: The way AI is understood, managed, and regulated in Europe must be democratized, from schools to the EU's AI office.</b></p>	<p>Core Principle: Democratize EU AI Office! The EU AI Office should not solely be an expert-driven body but must integrate civil society organizations (CSOs), citizen representatives, and regional voices into its governance. This ensures AI regulation and deployment align with EU values of democracy, inclusion, and transparency. Key Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Evaluate the AI Office: Assess its current structure, mandate, and effectiveness in incorporating public concerns and diverse expertise.</li> <li>● Revamp the Expert Group: Expand participation to include CSOs, citizen representatives, and regional experts to</li> </ul>

	<p>avoid technocratic dominance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Establish Regular Expert Groups &amp; Subgroups: Develop a structured process whereby thematic and regional subgroups meet regularly, ensuring ongoing dialogue and responsiveness. A flowchart model should guide decision-making.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendation 10: Counteract Extremism by mobilising collective intelligence</b></p>	<p>Core Principle: The European sphere of debate inside and between our countries should be principally designed and managed to counter extremists, not only through regulations that control or ban certain types of expression, but better through the crowdsourcing of intelligence pushback.</p> <p>Key Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Synergies with Independent Platforms: Foster collaboration with reputable independent platforms (e.g., Demagogues in Czechia).</li> <li>● Checklists and Standards: Develop and utilize checklists of positive and negative actions and behaviours, focusing on areas such as corruption and manipulation.</li> <li>● Monthly Citizens Assemblies oversight: Conduct regular public debates within monthly citizens' assemblies that debate on the basis of these reputable platforms, designate the citizens' assembly to oversee platform management, including transparent selection and temporary mandates for platform administrators.</li> <li>● Dissemination of verified Information: Independent organisations should have resources to promote the widespread dissemination of credible and verifiable facts.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Platform Management and Independence: Maintain the platform's independence from external influence by exploring crowdfunding models</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Part 2: Ambassadors selection**

For the second part, participants were part of the selection of ambassadors that would be invited to join in Vienna. Assembly members were invited to put themselves forward —individuals who would represent the broader group in the upcoming in-person assembly. The role of the ambassador involves sharing the outcomes of past discussions, bringing forward the voices and perspectives of their peers, and actively contributing to shaping the final recommendations. The selection aimed to ensure diversity, inclusion, and continuity, with a focus on maintaining a balanced representation of the different pools that the transnational assembly comprises. Thirty participants were randomly selected as ambassadors.

The insights and recommendations shared in this online gathering will feed directly into the final phase of the pilot process in Vienna (May 2025), where collective energy will culminate into a shared vision for a permanent European Citizens’ Assembly.



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**

HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	01.04.2022	Initial version (new MFF).