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 EA
PIC number:	941964479
Project name and acronym:	Democratic Digital Commons - DDC

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	6
Event name:	Online assembly 3
Type:	assemblies
In situ/online:	online
Location:	online
Date(s):	30.09.2026
Website(s) (if any):	
Participants	
Female:	194
Male:	89
Non-binary:	43
Austria	14
Belgium	23
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1
Cyprus	1
Czechia	18
Denmark	2
Estonia	1
Finland	3
France	28
Germany	71
Greece	25
Hungary	5
Ireland	5
Italy	40
Lithuania	1
Luxembourg	5

Malta	1
Netherlands	21
Poland	3
Portugal	13
Romania	8
Serbia	5
Slovenia	1
Spain	29
Sweden	2

Total number of participants:	326	From total number of countries:	25

Description

Provide a short description of the event and its activities.

Online Assembly 3

The third online assembly of the Democratic Digital Commons (DDC), and the sixth assembly of the overall project, continued the transnational process of collective reflection on artificial intelligence, democratic participation and digital justice.

Bringing together participants from across Europe and beyond, the assembly explored how algorithmic systems can reproduce and intensify existing inequalities & biases, and how AI might be constructed in another way. Looking at algorithms impact on hate speech & fake news online, participants examined how algorithmic decision-making reproduces existing societal biases, particularly impacting marginalised groups such as racial minorities. In addition to how this affects speech online, building upon case studies explored during previous in-person assemblies, the assembly also explored how this impacts everyday lives, including access to employment, welfare, migration processes and public services.

Rooted in the belief that citizens should actively participate in shaping the technologies that govern their lives, the assembly followed the DDC's four-part methodology of education, deliberation, imagination and contribution. Through expert presentations, facilitated breakout discussions and collaborative exercises, participants explored the causes and consequences of algorithmic discrimination and developed proposals for more equitable, transparent and participatory AI systems.

Where?

The assembly took place online, providing a shared transnational space for participants from different countries, sectors and lived experiences to engage in collective dialogue and deliberation.

When?

The assembly took place on September 30th, 2026.

Who?

The assembly brought together participants from diverse professional and social backgrounds, including citizens, researchers, civil society representatives, activists, technologists and individuals interested in AI governance, digital rights and social justice.

The session featured contributions from two invited speakers:

Pia Sombetzki, Senior Policy Manager at AlgorithmWatch, introduced the concept of algorithmic discrimination, exploring how biases emerge within automated systems and how they can be identified, monitored and challenged. Drawing upon AlgorithmWatch's work on AI accountability, platform regulation and fundamental rights, her presentation provided participants with a framework for understanding the causes of algorithmic discrimination.

Amina Soulimani, A+ Alliance Program Director and AI & Equality Team Lead, explored how AI systems can be developed through feminist, intersectional and inclusive approaches. Drawing upon the work of the A+ Alliance for Inclusive Algorithms, she introduced examples of how AI can be designed to challenge discrimination rather than reproduce existing inequalities, emphasising the importance of lived experience, care and the inclusion of marginalised communities.

A facilitation team supported the assembly's deliberative process, enabling participants to engage in smaller breakout groups and collectively develop proposals for democratic AI governance.

AGENDA Online Assembly 3

|17:30 - 18:00 | Welcome: Assembly consultations and preparatory participation

| 18:00-18:10 | Introduction to the Assembly : Welcome and overview of the objectives

| 18:10-18:30 | Icebreaker in Breakout Groups : Video examples and initial reflections on algorithmic discrimination

| 18:30-19:00 | Expert Presentation : Algorithmic bias and discrimination with Pia Sombetzki, AlgorithmWatch

| 19:00-19:10 | Q&A

| 19:10-19:40 | Breakout Group Discussion : Identifying and reflecting on the failure modes of AI

| 19:40-19:50 | Break

| 19:50-20:20 | Expert Presentation : Inclusive algorithmic technology with Amina Soulimani, A+ Alliance

| 20:20-20:30 | Q&A

| 20:30-21:10 | Breakout Groups and Proposal Development –:Democratic demands, non-negotiable principles and concrete proposals

| 21:10-21:30 | Closing Plenary : Visualisation of proposals and next steps

Preparation Phase

The preparation process built upon the methodologies established throughout the Democratic Digital Commons project, focusing on the relationship between algorithmic discrimination, structural inequalities and democratic accountability.

The assembly was designed to move from understanding algorithmic bias, towards recognising its consequences in social & everyday life and imagining alternative approaches to technological design and governance.

The four pillars of the DDC methodology structured the programme: expert presentations supported **education**, facilitated breakout discussions enabled **deliberation**, collective reflection & learning about feminist algorithms encouraged **imagination**, and the development of concrete proposals **contribute**d to the ongoing Citizens' Charter for Democratic AI.

Preparatory work included identifying examples of algorithmic discrimination, developing a shared framework of five AI failure modes, a communications program to advertise, and preparing collaborative boards to support discussions and proposal development.

Opening and Shared Reflection

The assembly opened by introducing the central question: who gets to design algorithmic systems, and what would it mean to design them differently?

Participants began in smaller breakout groups with an icebreaker exercise based on video examples of algorithms and their influence on hate speech, fake news & exaggerating social biases online. They were invited to share their immediate reactions and consider who was being judged, what information was being used, who created the rules and who experienced the consequences.

Understanding Algorithmic Bias and Discrimination

Pia Sombetzki introduced participants to the mechanisms through which algorithmic bias emerges, exploring how inequalities can become embedded within training data, technological design and the contexts in which automated systems are deployed.

Drawing upon AlgorithmWatch's work, the presentation encouraged participants to critically examine the assumption that algorithms are neutral, highlighting how apparently objective technologies can reinforce existing forms of exclusion and discrimination.

The presentation was followed by a Q&A in which participants could further explore questions of accountability, regulation and the challenges of identifying discriminatory outcomes.

Breakout Groups: Identifying the Failures of AI

Following the presentation, participants divided into facilitated breakout groups to reflect on how algorithmic systems fail and who is most affected by these failures.

Using a collaborative board, discussions were structured around five principal failure modes:

- Data poisoning and representational bias: training data that excludes or misrepresents marginalised communities, leading to discriminatory outcomes.

- Deployment mismatch: systems developed for particular contexts that fail when introduced into different social or cultural environments.

- Appeals blackout: automated decisions that cannot be meaningfully challenged or reviewed by a human.

- Vendor lock-in: public institutions becoming dependent upon private technological providers and closed infrastructures.

- Metrics gaming: systems prioritising measurable performance indicators over human wellbeing and social justice.

Participants were encouraged to identify which failures they recognised from their own experiences, which felt most urgent and whether important examples were missing.

Examples discussed included discriminatory recruitment systems, biometric technologies failing to recognise certain identities, automated migration and residency decisions, and predictive policing. Participants also raised concerns about AI hallucinations and the reduction of complex human experiences into simplified categories.

A recurring observation was that algorithmic discrimination does not necessarily create new inequalities, but frequently reproduces longstanding patterns of exclusion through increasingly automated and opaque systems.

Feminist Approaches to Inclusive AI

The second expert presentation, delivered by Amina Soulimani, invited participants to explore how alternative approaches to AI design might actively challenge discrimination, and become tools of education & anti-polarisation.

Drawing upon the work of the A+ Alliance for Inclusive Algorithms, the presentation introduced feminist and intersectional approaches to technology governance, highlighting the importance of including communities whose experiences are frequently excluded from technological development.

The session encouraged participants to consider how participatory design, interdisciplinary collaboration, open-source approaches and attention to lived experience could help create more equitable technological systems.

Breakout Groups: Collective Proposals

The final breakout session invited participants to move from identifying algorithmic failures towards developing shared demands and concrete proposals for democratic AI governance.

Participants were asked to consider two central questions: *What do we demand from AI? What should be non-negotiable when an algorithm makes decisions about people & their speech?*

Participants first brainstormed principles and red lines before developing proposals identifying a specific problem, the actors responsible for addressing it and the actions required.

Across the discussions, participants highlighted several shared priorities:

- Transparency and the right to understand and challenge automated decisions.

- Human oversight, particularly where decisions affect fundamental rights.

- Strong data protection and public control over digital infrastructures.

- Meaningful participation of marginalised communities in AI development.

- Regulation and enforceable safeguards against discriminatory profiling.

- Recognition of different languages, identities, cognitive styles and lived experiences.

Participants questioned whether certain decisions affecting people's lives should be automated at all, and emphasised that technological efficiency or financial savings should never take precedence over human dignity and democratic accountability.

Emerging Proposals and Shared Principles

The collaborative exercise resulted in first proposals addressing the structural causes of algorithmic discrimination.

1. Participatory and Inclusive AI Development: Nothing About Us Without Us

Participants proposed moving beyond understanding AI as a technological product towards

recognising it as a system that must be designed and governed through participatory, inclusive and interdisciplinary processes.

Developers, policymakers, companies, civil society organisations, unions and affected communities, including disability rights groups and other underrepresented communities, should collaborate throughout the development and implementation of AI systems.

This requires dedicated resources, realistic development timelines, open-source approaches and meaningful opportunities for participation, particularly for those directly affected by new technologies.

The proposal recognised lived experience and community expertise as essential forms of knowledge for identifying and preventing algorithmic discrimination and ensuring inclusive and accountable AI governance.

2. Protecting Human Dignity in Automated Systems

Participants highlighted the risks associated with biometric identification, border management and automated migration procedures.

Public authorities should ensure transparency around the development, training and deployment of these systems while providing accessible mechanisms through which affected individuals can understand and challenge automated decisions.

The proposal reaffirmed that human dignity and fundamental rights must take precedence over technological efficiency, particularly in contexts where discrimination can have severe consequences for people's lives.

Closing Plenary and Participation Beyond the Assembly

The assembly concluded with a collective visualisation of the proposals developed across breakout groups, bringing together participants' demands and reflections into a shared framework for future work.

The final proposal *Protecting Human Dignity in Automated Systems* was a nice tie over to the next assembly of the process taking place in Athens on new technologies & border control.

The collaborative proposals will contribute to the wider Democratic Digital Commons process and the ongoing development of the Citizens' Charter for Democratic AI.

Next steps

The discussions contributed several principles to the development of the Citizens' Charter for Democratic AI, particularly regarding participatory technological design, intersectional inclusion, public accountability, human dignity and safeguards against discriminatory profiling.

The assembly also raised broader questions that will continue to inform future deliberations, including whether certain decisions should be automated at all, how public institutions can remain accountable when relying upon privately developed technologies and how feminist and community-centred approaches can reshape the development of AI.

Communication

1. EU Visibility

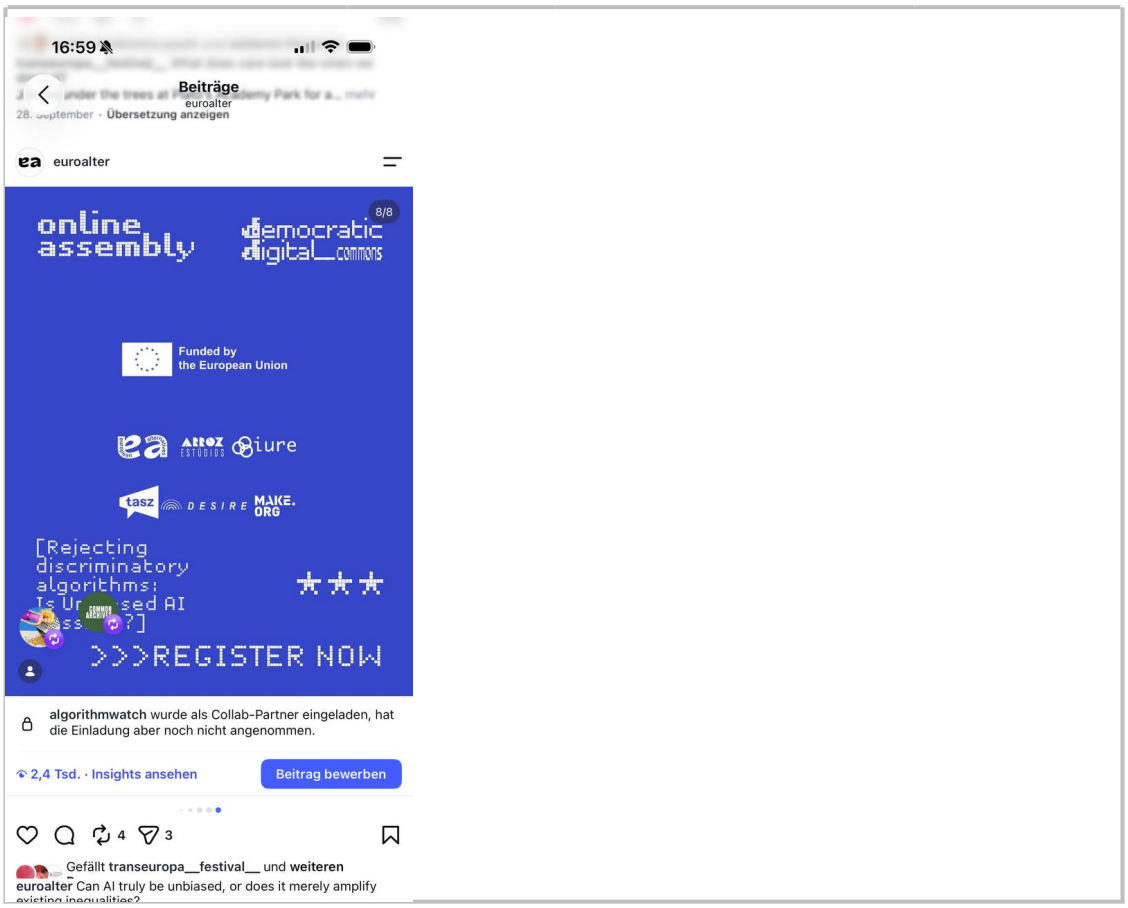
Visibility of the EU CERV Programme's support was integrated into the assembly's communications, including the event presentation, project website, social media materials and participant resources.

2. Stakeholder Mapping

Stakeholders from civil society organisations, academic institutions, digital rights networks, feminist technology initiatives, democratic innovation organisations and AI accountability communities were engaged through consortium networks and invited to participate in the assembly.

3. Dissemination

Dissemination activities included social media promotion, newsletters, direct outreach through consortium networks, engagement with partner organisations and continued communication through the Democratic Digital Commons online platforms.



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

Funded by the European Union