

« La démocratie représentative s'est imposé dans son principe au moment où elle s'est fragilisée dans son fonctionnement »

*Pierre Rosanvallon,
La démocratie inachevée,
Histoire de la souveraineté du peuple en France, Paris 2000*

La démocratie directe a commencé de fonctionner fragilement au moment où ses principes ne se sont pas encore imposés.

Quality criteria for Direct Democratic (DD) procedures

Symposium Direct Democracy

Research in Europe

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Which are the basic (“principal”)products of Direct Democracy’s best practices?

**Individ. / collective
communication&deliberations**

Multiple deliberations

**Collective learning potentials
political openness et legitimate polity**

**Identification with the DD process
(« Democratic patriotism »)**

The quality of the design of the process determines the quality of the outcome and the quality of the side - effects

The design of the process is essential for the « usefullness » of DD for any community.

Each level (local, regional,national, transnational) requires a special design

The quality of DD (citizen empowerment) depends from achievements in:

Social opportunities (Resources)

Individual capacities (Education)

Polity Design (constitutional rights)

**Social opportunities
which improve the quality of DD:**

**No poverty / Established life chances for all
Pluralistic, open, discursive public sphere
Individual autonomy
culture of empathy, solidarity and equity**

**Individual capacities
which help to increase and realize
the quality of DD:**

Ability to speak, read and listen

Social competences (Meet, discuss and organise)

Ability to understand

Political judgement

Openness and empathy

Elements of the Polity Design (constitutional rights) to increase the quality of DD:

**Guarantee of the Human Rights (Rule of law)
Constitution of the peoples sovereignty
on all economic levels**

Fairness rules for the use of financial resources

Decentralisation of power and clear competence sharing

Freedom of information act

Time-sensibility (no quick fix), interactive/coop.settings

Ex. for high quality DD-Design (I) : **Free signature gathering**

Allows to address unknown fellow citizens

Increases serious deliberation opportunities

Protects anonymity

Facilitates the meeting of other social groups

Enforces the overcoming of prejudices

Ex. for high quality DD-Design (II) : Low % signature requirements

DD is an instrument for those who are not powerful

It helps to integrate minorities and diversity

All hear and see more when it's easier not to be overlooked

The Polity is more open and accessible for new ideas

Unsolved problems may be less overlooked

Ex. for high quality DD-Design (III)
No special majority qualifications (
“quorums”)

Those, who take part, decide

No invitations to play against the spirit of DD

You have to convince, when you want to win

The majority of those, who participated, decide

Ex. for high quality DD-Design (IV): No by passing of the Parliament

ID and DD are complementary

ID and DD have to build up a cooperative culture

Mutual Counterproposals increase the options

Institutional deliberations increase

the institutional learning and responsiveness