

**Empowered citizens as the heart of
good governance and a strong
democracy :**

**Autonomy(ies) as a way to
and as a part of it**

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**In modern and free societies
citizens are the subjects,
not objects of politics**

Freedom means the right, the
capacity and the possibility to
act and participate in the way the
common life is organized and
functions

Without being free, involved and invited to participate:

- You can not identify yourself with your state
 - You are not able to learn
 - You can not be integrated
 - You will be manipulated
- You can prevent conflicts to become violent
- You can bridge the gap between society and state/political class

Today's Democracies are in a double crises

- They are too national, although the nation-state is too small for the real big issues
- They are too national and too centralistic

In order to be able to realize the promises of Democracy, it has to become more transnational, more direct and more dezentralised

**Strong Democracy provides
the society with the
institutions and proceedings
free citizens need :**

- **Decentralisation of political powers**
 - **Open electoral systems**
(Candidate cumulation and panachage)
- **Citizen Referenda, Initiatives and
Motions to the Parliament and
Constitut.Court**

Decentralisation might be:

- ◆ Symmetrical , then we speak about federalism
- ◆ Asymmetrical, when specific communities have specific autonomies;

They might have:

- A territorial logic/base
and/or
- A cultural base.

Decentralisation and participation are twins:

- ◆ Decentralization needs a specific integration effort
 - ◆ This integration moment is provided by the participation (of citizens and regions) in the making of the Constitution and laws

**Participatory democracy is not a
contradiction to a
representative democracy:
It makes representation only
more representative !**

Participation is a process allows mutual
information and learning:

1. Citizens start to think about a issue, get
informed and involved.
2. Politicians learn to know what citizens want
and expect and might represent them better.

**Citizens' participation and territorial decentralization have a common modern soul:
The sharing of power**

Sharing power is a constitutive element of democracy

as well as an element of its protection:

Shared powers provide checks and balances !