



European Democratic Citizenship Awards

Presentation

In view of its tenth anniversary in 2015, the European Civic Forum launched the European Democratic Citizenship Award, aimed at promoting citizens' engagement. The 2015 edition will take place in the light of the 10th anniversary activities, in October in Strasbourg.

Since 2014, these Awards are rewarding outstanding initiatives and civil society stakeholders, who bring in a real democratic citizenship with an innovative dimension and with a concrete impact on their communities' life, be it at the local, regional, national or European level.

The European Civic Forum defends the notion of a European democratic citizenship based upon the vision of the Council of Europe, which implies a process of ownership and a feeling of belonging that:

- Includes all the aspects of living into a democratic society, which covers many areas such as education, culture, sustainable development, fight against discriminations, integration of minorities, participation of disabled people, gender equality and especially the equal representativeness of women and men in decision-making processes, etc.;
- Guarantees every citizen and civil society representative – including the most underprivileged groups – the right to take part in the democratic life and the shaping of public policies at all levels.

To do so, four categories of initiatives illustrate this concept of democratic citizenship:

1. The **"Citizens' campaign of the year"** Award aims at supporting raising-awareness or advocacy campaigns which occurred in 2014, with a strong impact on community's life or on public decisions;
2. The **"NGO of the year"** Award recompenses organisations which made a significant action towards the promotion of European values;
3. The **"Personality of the year"** Award is given to individuals who had an outstanding contribution to democratic life and to the development of a community or a cause;
4. The **"Media initiative of the year"** Award, rewarding participatory initiatives by, for and with citizens who played an active part in reinforcing participation, relaying information and developing the civic space. A particular attention will be paid to initiatives promoting freedom of expression and freedom of media.

Impact and outreach of the Awards

Divided into three stages, the European Democratic Citizenship Awards witnessed a strong success in the first edition, as 10 000 online voters participated to the ballots. This was principally due to different communication means, such as:

- The diffusion of the call for nominees and the regular follow-up via our monthly newsletter, sent in average to 3000 recipients (MEPs, members of the European Commission, research fellows, scholars, NGOs, individuals);
- The promotion on our social media and on ECF website, relayed by the nominees to a broader audience, not necessarily used to European affairs. All in all, it is estimated that about 25 000 people were concerned by these notifications;
- Regional and European media, which decided to share the call for nominees and were present at the Awards' ceremony, in Strasbourg (*see media clipping enclosed*).

Building upon this inaugural success, the European Civic Forum will notably rely on significant media players for the 2015 edition.

The European Civic Forum, the laureates, but also all the partners of the event will benefit from an increased public exposure, reinforced by numerous journalists and media representatives during the Awards ceremony. The ECF will also promote the ceremony on various communication supports (flyers, booklets, banners). Partners' logos and visual identity will naturally be represented on these materials.