

# Massembly 2024



Over 450 people took part in our incredible Massembly at Upgrade Democracy, to discuss the question: "How can we take meaningful steps to Upgrade Democracy?"

The 'Massembly' took place in-person at Windsor and also online and a second online 'massembly' took place in Oct 2024.

## The input and questions for discussion

### [Massembly Information Cards](#)

## Summary of Results

### Sat 31st August 2024 In person and online

Over 450 people took part in our incredible Massembly at Upgrade Democracy, to discuss the question: "How can we take meaningful steps to Upgrade Democracy?"

#### **1. Citizens' Assemblies and Participatory Democracy**

- Advocacy for the widespread use of citizens' assemblies at local, regional, and national levels (e.g., replacing the House of Lords, setting up assemblies for long-term issues, starting at the local level to build trust).

- Emphasis on participatory budgeting and decision-making processes that involve ordinary citizens.
- Support for creating spaces and opportunities for grassroots democratic participation, including community assemblies and participatory budgeting.

## **2. Civic and Political Education**

- The need for better and earlier civic education, starting from primary school, to empower young people and encourage political engagement.
- Incorporation of political and ecological education, including rights of nature, to create a culture of informed and active citizenship.
- Promoting a culture of democracy through experiential learning in schools and community involvement.

## **3. Accountability and Transparency in Politics**

- Calls for effective mechanisms to hold elected representatives accountable, ensuring transparency in decision-making and reducing the influence of lobbyists and vested interests.
- Proposals for job descriptions for MPs, declarations of outside employment, and transparency in funding and lobbying.
- Introduction of independent bodies for fact-checking and monitoring disinformation.

## **4. Political Reform and Representation**

- Criticism of the current political system as serving a minority elite, with proposals for reforms to make it more representative and fair (e.g., replacing the House of Lords, limiting political donations).
- Support for fair and transparent government funding of political parties to reduce the influence of private and corporate interests.
- Encouraging inclusivity and diversity in political processes, ensuring that all voices, including marginalized groups, are heard and represented.

## **5. Environmental Protection and Rights of Nature**

- Advocacy for legal rights for nature and the criminalization of ecocide.
- Proposals to integrate environmental considerations into all aspects of policy-making, including the appointment of commissioners or legal guardians to protect future generations and ecosystems.
- Calls for a nature-based curriculum in schools and the protection of the interests of future generations.

## **6. Building Trust and Confidence in Democracy**

- Emphasis on rebuilding public trust in the political system through inclusive, transparent, and participatory processes.

- Encouragement of civic engagement and community involvement as a means to foster trust and counter populist movements.
- The role of local projects and assemblies in building understanding and confidence in democracy.

## **7. Long-term and Future-focused Governance**

- Proposals for creating positions like a Commissioner for Future Generations to ensure policies are assessed for their long-term impacts.
- Calls for policies and governance structures that consider the well-being of future generations and the planet.
- Use of frameworks like doughnut economics to assess policy decisions and their impact on planetary boundaries.

## **Sun 13th October 2024 Online**

447 participants voted, 43,153 votes were cast, 96.54 votes per participant on average, 137 commented, 453 comments submitted.

### **1. Citizens' Assemblies and Participatory Democracy**

- Citizens' Assemblies offer inclusive platforms for deliberation on important issues, involving diverse voices and opinions.
- Citizens' Assemblies should be used at local, regional, and national levels, with legally binding decisions and integration into parliamentary processes.
- These assemblies are tools for rebuilding trust in democracy by involving ordinary citizens in decision-making.

### **2. Education for Democratic Participation**

- Civic and political education should begin early to develop responsible, engaged citizens who understand democracy and governance.
- Schools and educational institutions should implement assemblies and participatory budgeting to foster democratic practices.
- Media literacy and experiential learning are key to preparing future generations to resist misinformation and participate effectively.

### **3. Reducing Corporate and Private Influence**

- Corporate lobbyists, political donors, and mainstream media often wield disproportionate power, distorting democracy.
- Regulations are needed to limit donations, increase transparency in lobbying, and prevent private interests from influencing public policy.
- Fair media regulation, including accountability and fact-checking mechanisms, is crucial to protect the integrity of democracy.

#### **4. Long-term Thinking and Future Generations**

- Decision-making should prioritise long-term impacts, taking into account the well-being of future generations and environmental sustainability.
- Legal frameworks should recognize the rights of nature, criminalise ecocide, and integrate environmental protection into democratic processes.
- A Future Generations Commission or Commissioner should assess policies for their impact on the unborn and natural ecosystems.

#### **5. Transparency and Accountability in Governance**

- Transparent decision-making processes and public accountability are essential for restoring trust in politics.
- Governments should publicly record expert advice and decisions, ensuring that citizens understand the reasoning behind policies.
- Transparency in political funding and lobbying is necessary to reduce undue influence and promote fair, evidence-based decisions.

#### **6. Inclusivity and Diversity in Decision-Making**

- Democracy should be inclusive, promoting representation of marginalised groups and fostering gender equality and diverse community participation.
- Grassroots initiatives, such as participatory budgeting and local assemblies, help empower underrepresented voices in the political process.
- Special provisions should be made to include non-voters (e.g., children and future generations) in decision-making.

#### **7. Reforming Democratic Structures**

- The structure of political institutions, such as the House of Lords and electoral processes, needs reform to better represent citizens.
  - Deliberative and participatory processes, such as Citizens' Assemblies, should replace outdated and hierarchical systems.
  - Introducing non-oppositional, collaborative decision-making spaces could enhance democratic functionality and reduce polarisation.
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