

source: <http://www.iniref.org/steps.pdf>
print version

I&R
citizens' initiative and referendum

**PROPOSAL FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW
DEMOCRATIC PROCEDURES IN GREAT BRITAIN AND
NORTHERN IRELAND**

Our proposal, presented here for discussion, has a three-step procedure:

STEP 1. Initiative (citizens' proposal) which can lead to **debate of the proposal by parliament**. In order to proceed to Step 2 an agreed number of endorsements by fellow citizens ('signatures') must be collected without time limit or within a period which may be limited to, say, six months or one year.

If parliament rejects the citizens' proposal then we can proceed to --->>>

STEP 2. People's referendum demand. The procedure from here can vary. A simple application by the proposers may suffice to trigger a referendum, or the collection of further endorsements may be required. If the referendum demand succeeds, the referendum must be held within an agreed period, say six months --->>>

STEP 3. Referendum. The decision of the electorate has the power of law.

NEW DEMOCRATIC PROCEDURES ...

This scheme has a number of good features.

It encourages reforming and creative proposals to emerge -- an "ideas greenhouse" (term attributed to Nordfors).

The best proposals compete and are selected to go forward only if they collect enough endorsement by (many) fellow citizens.

The proposal goes to parliament (or local council, as appropriate) which is allowed a generous period during which to inform, debate and decide upon the proposal.

Our system integrates parliamentary and citizens' democracy. It brings citizens and MPs together to consider and debate issues of real concern to the electorate. Negotiation often occurs.

The elected parliament may put forward its own proposal as an alternative to the citizens' proposal. The proposing group may accept this, or both proposals may be put to the people in referendum.

During the various stages and steps, which take many months, there is ample time and much opportunity for information about the proposal, public debate and deliberation of the issue (consider also the role of internet).

**Comments may be sent to
Citizens' Initiative and Referendum <comments@iniref.org>**

from: <http://www.iniref.org/>

I&R