

A referendum was held on 20 October 2012 as to whether to build a new constitution on the Councils' recommendations. Two-thirds of the voters said yes but voter turnout was disappointing at only about 50%.

Eiríkur Bergmann, who discusses the process in a forthcoming book*, was an elected member of the Constitutional Council. He says that it is perhaps an exaggeration to talk about the world's first crowdsourced constitution, quite simply because the Council had only four months to complete its task.

"The Council welcomed the focus on crowdsourcing in the media and even played on it and used it to its advantage in domestic politics", Mr. Bergmann told In Focus. "This was however, never a realistic description of the drafting. Despite this extraordinary open access, the Council was not able to systematically plough through all the extensive input as it only had four months to complete its task."

Even if it is debatable as to what extent the constitutional process was crowdsourced, it is clear that enthusiasts of open government around the world can -and already do - point to Iceland as a pioneer in an inclusive and participatory decision making process.

* *Eiríkur Bergmann: **Iceland and the international financial crisis: Boom, Bust & Recovery.** Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.*

□ *Illustration: A cartoon by Halldór Baldursson published in the Icelandic daily Fréttablaðið.*