

# Citizen Engagement

*Science meets Regions*

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# Outline

- Rationales
- Methods
  - Citizen engagement through co-creation – a case on BiodiverCITIES
  - Citizen engagement through deliberation
- Planning
- The Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy














# Democracy Tracker

The Democracy Tracker provides monthly, qualitative data on key events with the potential to impact the state of democracy and human rights in 173 countries. The tool highlights how each event affects specific aspects of democracy and provides users with context-based analysis. Click on the country hexagons below to read the most recent developments.

## Positive and Negative Events in August 2023







August 2023

**Bulgaria**

Following a brutal attack on an 18-year-old woman and subsequent mass protests, the parliament passed amendments to the Criminal Code...





\*Assessments are relative to each country and do not represent comparisons or rankings between countries.

• <https://www.idea.int/democracytracker/>

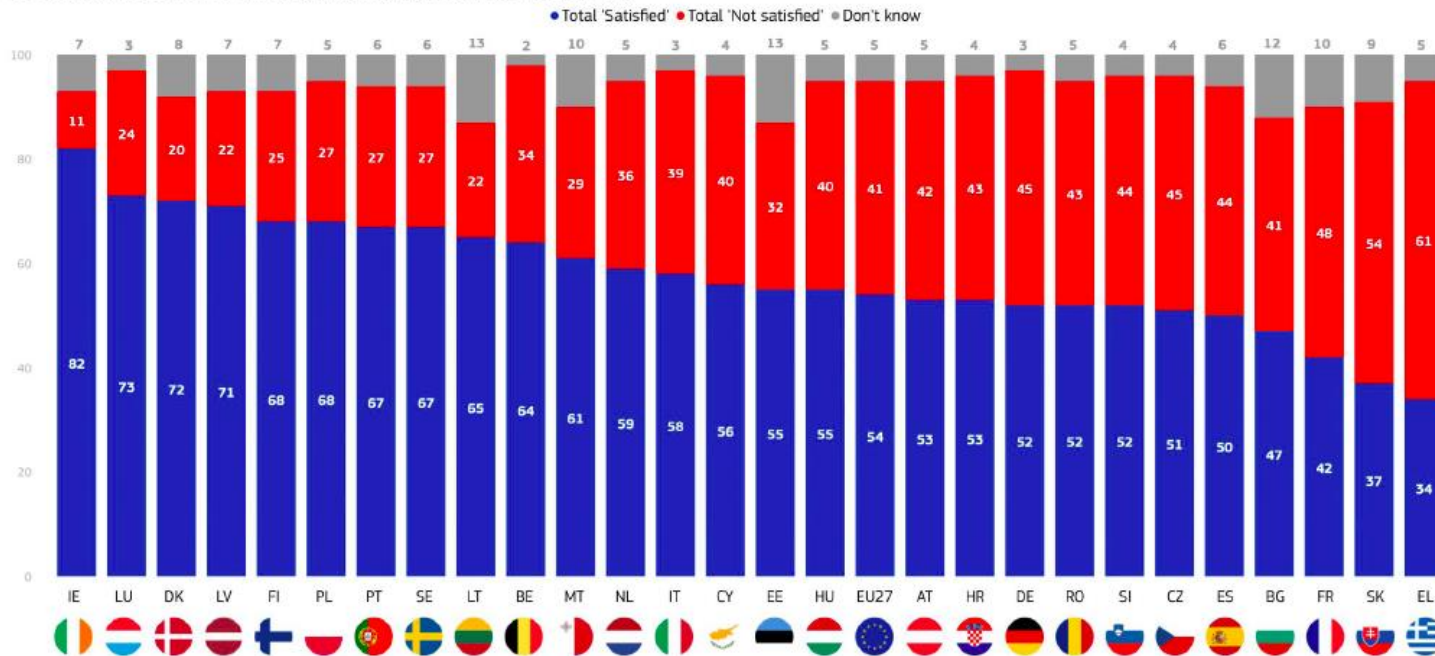


# Dissatisfaction with democracy

SPECIAL EUROBAROMETER 99.1 | EB043EP

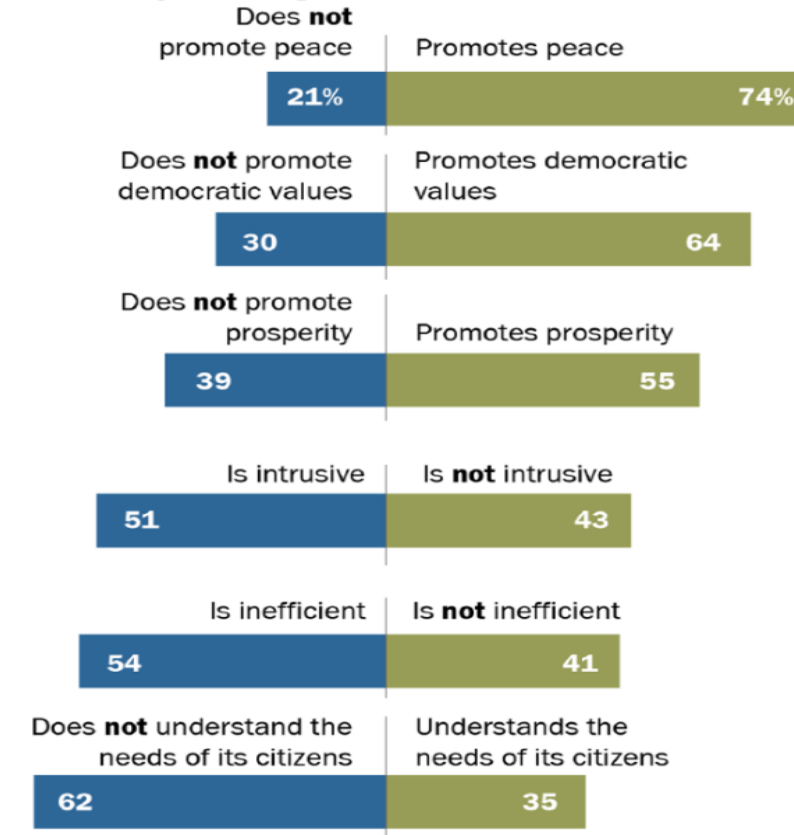
In France (48%), Slovakia (54%) and Greece (61%) a majority of people are dissatisfied with the way democracy works in the EU

SD18b. And how about the way democracy works in the EU? (%)



Europeans say Brussels promotes peace, democracy and prosperity, but fails to grasp citizens' needs

% who say the European Union ...



Note: Percentages are medians based on 10 European countries.  
Source: Spring 2018 Global Attitudes Survey. Q42a-f.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

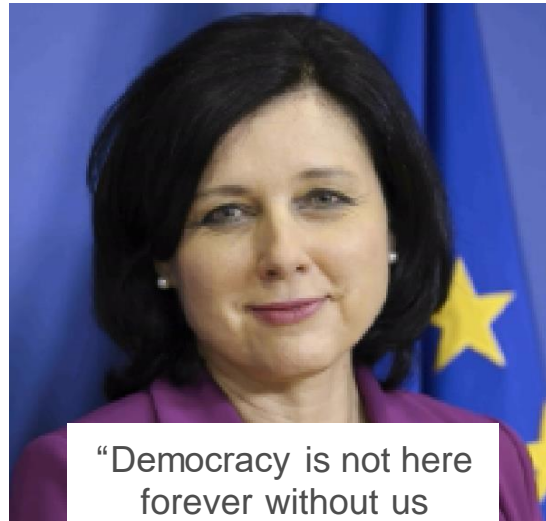
- <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/3093>

# Political momentum and commitment



“We need to engage the citizens from the beginning to gain their ownership of our policies.

Policymakers have a lot to gain with their early involvement.”



“Democracy is not here forever without us protecting it. (...) We have to listen to the people who are telling us (...) democracy does not deliver justice and security (...). And they think that democracy is failing.”



“democracy contains the seeds of its own recovery. Participatory and deliberative techniques are part of those seeds, and they are flourishing in the European Union.”



# OECD

- November 2022: Declaration on Building Trust and Reinforcing Democracy
- ‘creating opportunities for inclusive public participation and deliberation’
- Sources:  
<https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/en/instruments/OECD-LEGAL-0484>  
<https://www.oecd.org/governance/reinforcing-democracy/>



# Council of Europe

- ‘recognises the importance of civil participation in the democratic process and sees that opportunities for direct participation are increasing’ suggesting that ‘deliberative initiatives could be an effective way to engage citizens in public decision making and to improve the delivery of public services, but current initiatives will benefit from harmonised guidance from public institutions in terms of standards to be adhered to’.
- >> **recommendation** September 2023, on deliberative democracy, which follows up on Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)4 on the participation of citizens in local public life adopted in 2018 at the 1311th meeting of the Ministers’ Deputies -  
[https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result\\_details.aspx?ObjectId=09000016807954c3](https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=09000016807954c3)



# A wave...

## Climate Assemblies



<https://knoca.eu/>



# TU TVORÍME NAŠE MESTO



## Participatory Budgeting

- Started in **Brazil almost 40 years ago in PORTO ALEGRE**
- More than 1000 of these institutionalized processes in EU cities and regions
- SK: in 2019, 6
- SK: Murray Svidroňová, M., & Klimovský, D. (2022). Participatory Budgeting in Slovakia: Recent Development, Present State, and Interesting Cases. *International Trends in Participatory Budgeting: Between Trivial Pursuits and Best Practices*, 247-269.
- Džinić, J. (2022). Participatory budgeting in Croatia: a mixed bag of good, bad, and indifferent. *International Trends in Participatory Budgeting: Between Trivial Pursuits and Best Practices*, 113-129.





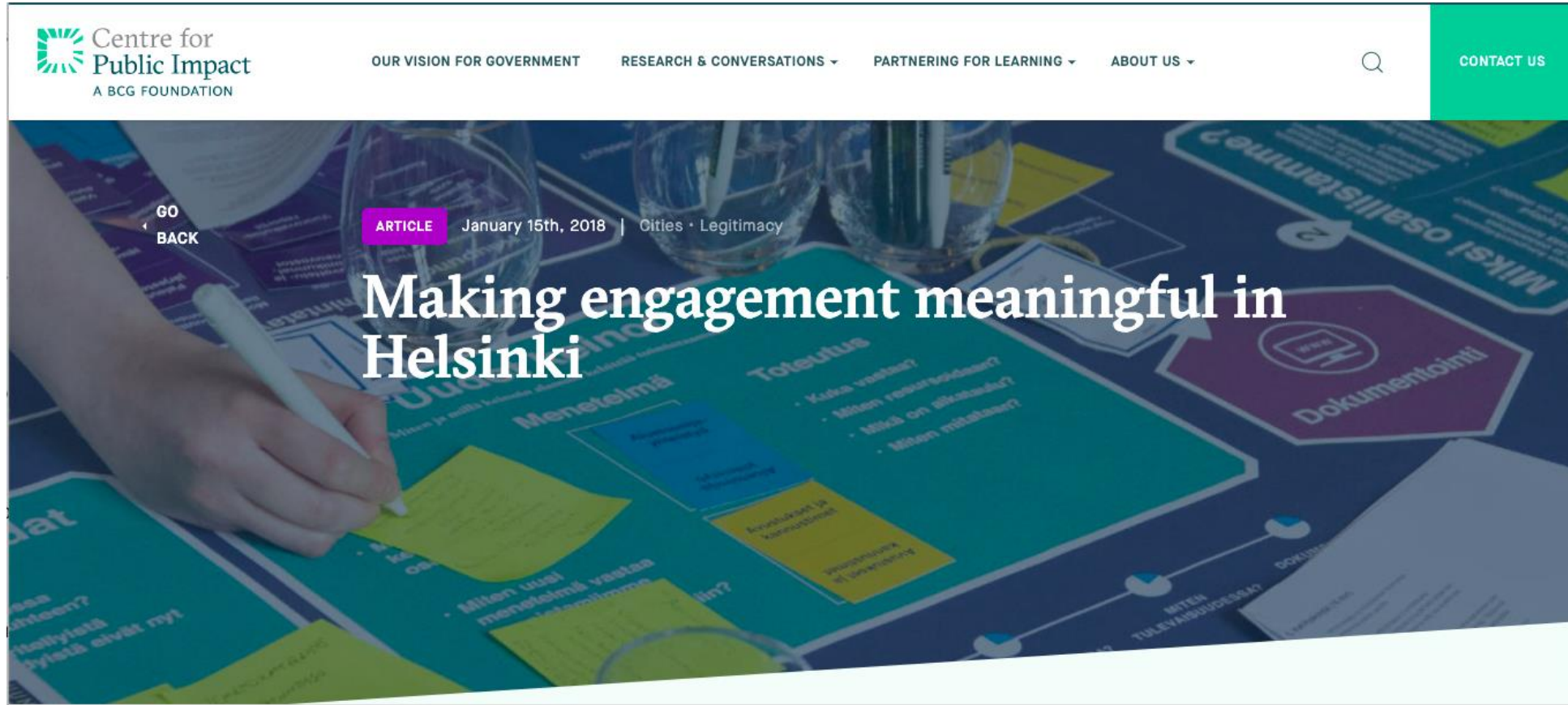
**free open-source participatory democracy  
for cities and organizations**

**decidim is a digital platform  
for citizen participation**

**Free and safe technology.  
With all democratic guarantees.  
Reprogramming democracy is now possible with Decidim.**



# public spaces as invited citizen engagement sites





# Ocean Alive: Community engagement

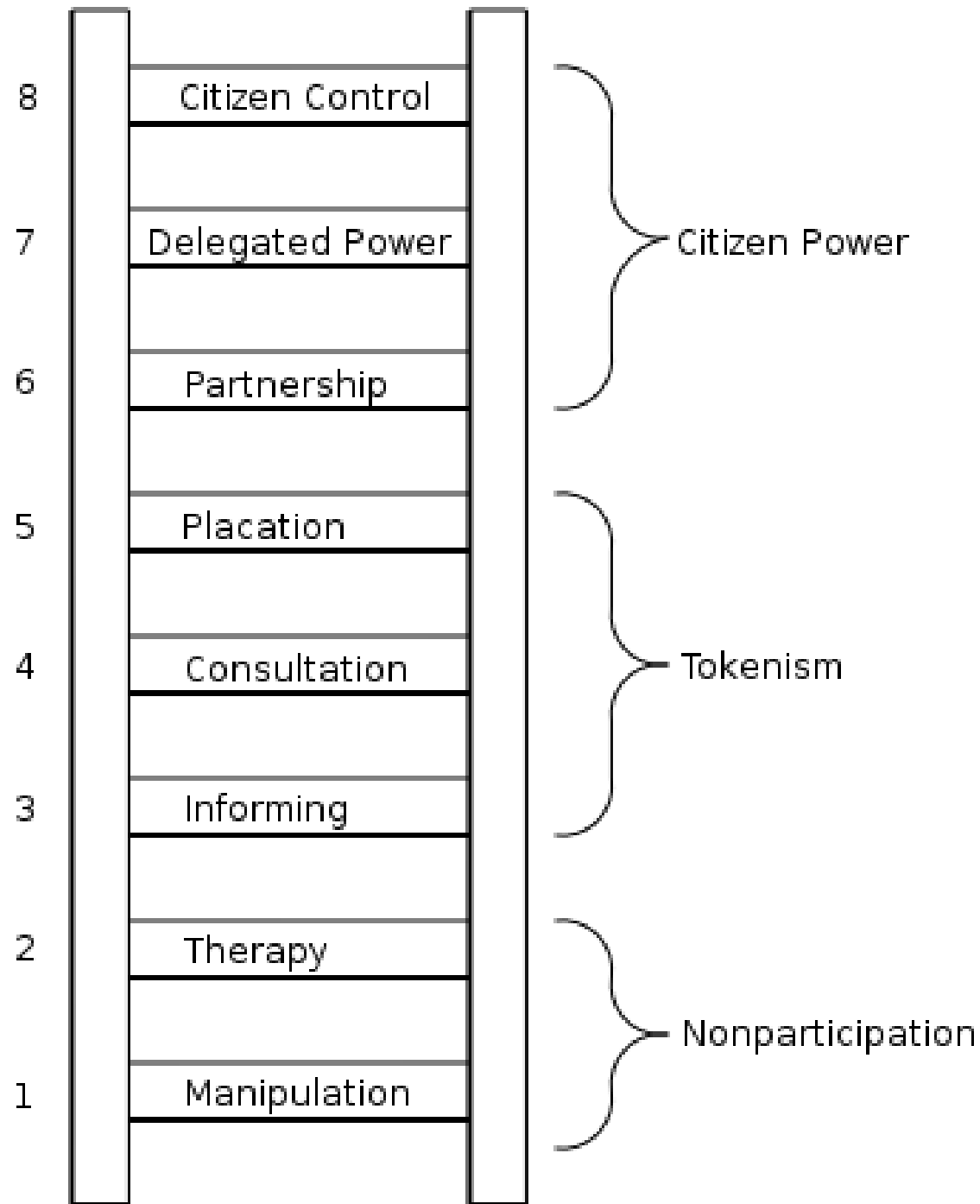


OCEAN ALIVE

<https://www.ocean-alive.org/en/about-us>

- Ocean Alive: Ocean Alive's project is focused on the Sado estuary, where seagrass meadows are the nursery habitat for both the prey of the resident dolphin population, and for the fish and shellfish which the fishing community's economy depends upon.
- Their goal is to protect the seagrass meadows with the engagement of local fisherwomen, our *Keepers of the Sea*.
- They act through a program of marine education, awareness-raising campaigns and through monitoring and evaluating their project's impact on the seagrass meadows.





“The idea of citizen participation is a little like eating spinach: no one is against it in principle because it is good for you.” (Arnstein 1969: 216)



John Dewey

## Epistemic rationale

- The Public and its Problems (1927)
  - "it is not necessary that the many should have the knowledge and skill to carry on the needed investigations; what is required is that they have the **ability to judge of the bearing** of the knowledge supplied by others **upon common concerns.**" (p.365)
  - Knowledge is not external to **experience** and Intelligence is practical - and so is public intelligence (democracy)



# Why do we need citizen engagement?

- Give voice to the voiceless and unrepresented – **epistemic justice**
- Framing the problem – **avoiding type III error**
- Address highly controversial issues and their taming with different types of knowledge and knowledge-holders – working and governing within complexity and uncertainty with all sources of '**evidence**'
- Science for Policy is **post-normal science** – engage the 'extended peer community'

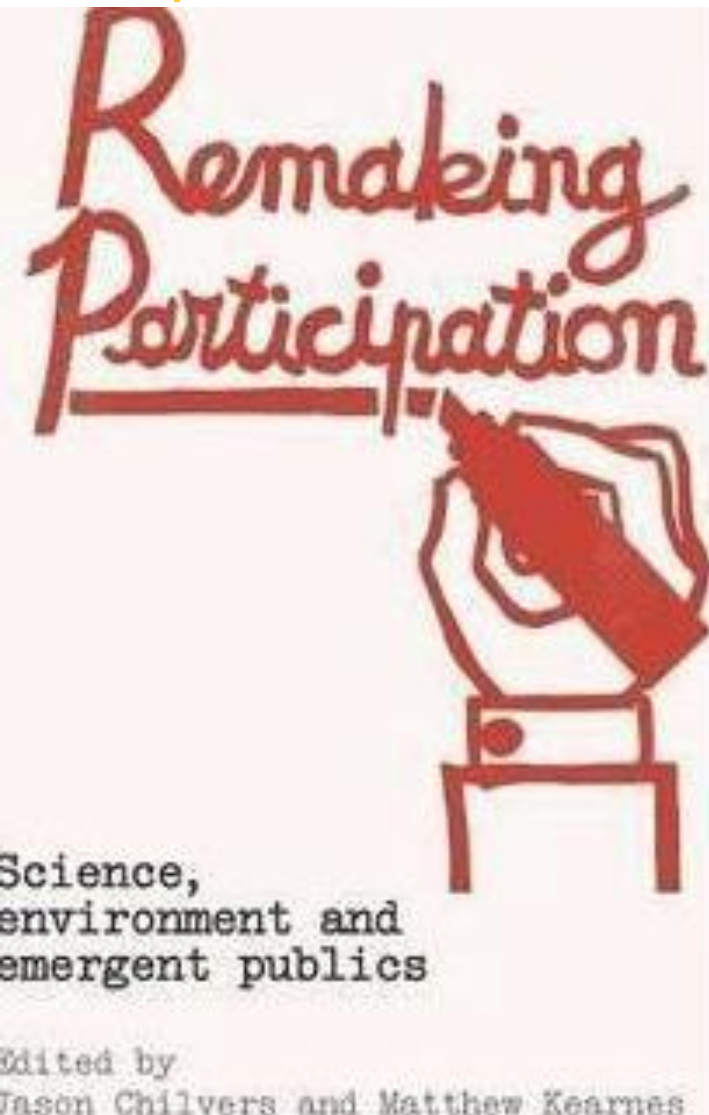
# CE processes are situated

The chosen methodology to INVITE citizens into dialogue about their matters of concern and care cannot be dissociated from the political context, the geography and the publics, as well as culture of dialogue in the polity.

There are **no** panaceas.



## Beyond surveying opinions...



“[invited] citizen engagement is not just about exploring opinions and interests, or eliciting knowledge and values, “but about **openly discussing matters of ‘concern’ and controversy**”

*based on Chilvers and Kearnes, 2015*



# Thank you



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